

READING LEVEL B1+

TEST 1

You are going to read an adapted magazine article about people who have dream jobs. For questions choose from the people A C.

Which person had to cancel a meeting?

1. took a drop in salary in order to do the job?
2. now has another role to play?
3. often has to travel at a moment's notice?
4. has to do some very boring duties?
5. says his/her job was more important than it appears?

A Doris Moor

Doris Moor rings from the taxi taking her to the airport. She can't make the appointment tomorrow because her boss wants her to be in Boston instead. When you're personal assistant to a famous actress, you're expected to jet around the world at the drop of a hat. Doris loves her job and gets on well with the star.

There's just one minor problem – she can't stand flying. "On a nine-hour trip to Florida I usually take sleeping tablets to help calm me down," she admits.

Offices in Cardiff and London occupy her when she comes down to earth. There's mundane paper work to get through – organising the diary, sitting in on meetings with solicitors and accountants, sorting out itineraries and making yet more travel arrangements.

B George Eastman

George Eastman is the editor of the "Food and Drink" pages of a daily newspaper and one of his less difficult tasks is to sample what's on offer in the finest restaurants.

What does he think about restaurants that charge exorbitant prices? "For those who can afford it, it's up to them," he says. "I'd rather spend £ 130 on a meal I'll remember for the rest of my life than buy a microwave."

It was his talent as a cook that led to the offer of a food column from a friend who happened to edit a Saturday Review. For George, at the time director of an advertising agency, it was a useful secondary income. He was 39 when another newspaper rang to offer a fulltime job. "It meant 45 per cent cut in guaranteed income," he says. "But it was a chance to convert my passion into profession."

He still does all the cooking at home and tries to keep his waistline under control by cycling.

C Peter Green

Peter Green has been an accountant and a golf caddy, a man who carries a golfer's bags. On the whole, he preferred the golf. Well, so would you if golf was your passion. He was 28 when he first caddied for the golfer, John Mahony. "You're not just carrying bags. You're offering advice and trying to read the course."

His accountancy skills were recently recognised by European Tour Productions when they made him statistical data administrator. From cards brought in by caddies, he compiles and analyses the statistics of each day's play. The results are sought after by golfing magazines and the golfers themselves.

TEST 2

From an adapted newspaper article

An unprecedented crisis is shaping up in the country's health services. It has been simmering for some time as government hospital doctors engaged in various types of labour actions to protest the Treasury's refusal to grant them pay raises, in the form of the overtime allotments that were arranged within the Histadrut's Kupat Holim health fund.

But then the rug was pulled from under the government doctors' demands by a lastminute piece of smuggled legislation, presumably at the behest of the Finance Minister, which in effect declared illegal the Kupat Holim agreement. According to this legislation, any organization which receives government subsidies is barred from concluding wage agreements without the Treasury's approval.

When the Histadrut Secretary General informed the Treasury that Kupat Holim would observe the law, the health fund's doctors closed all hospital operating theatres to all but emergency cases. Now after some second thoughts the Secretary General has instructed his lawyers to determine whether in fact the Knesset action is binding since it is retroactive legislation.

The Health Minister shunted aside by the Finance Minister, has appealed, justifiably so, to the Prime Minister (PM) for his personal intervention to avert catastrophe. He and his Cabinet as a whole should now take responsibility for who lives and who dies in this country. The whole situation has been complicated by wide latitude the Prime Minister has given the Finance Minister to run the government's economic affairs.

This makes it all the more difficult for him to step in when the Finance Minister feels he is battling to save the Treasury's overall policy.

The Finance Minister:

- A has had some involvement in illegal action.
- B has been repeatedly ignored by the Health Minister.
- C has declared the Kupat Holim agreement illegitimate.
- D has been given an allowable margin of freedom by the PM.

According to the article the crisis is due to:

- A outdated bills.
- B internal quarrelling.
- C the persistent strikes on behalf of medical staff.
- D the lack of concern on the part of the Government.



TEST 3

You are going to read an article about space weather effects. Five paragraphs have been removed from the article. Choose from the paragraphs (A-E) the one which fits the gaps 31-35.

A In addition to space travel, high altitude flights on polar routes during geomagnetic storms can expose crew and passengers to increased radiation. Airlines monitor space weather forecasts and sometimes make changes to flight paths during solar storms to lessen this exposure.

B Indirectly, space weather can affect satellites by heating the upper atmosphere and causing it to expand. The expanded atmosphere is denser at higher altitudes, and this greater density puts a drag on orbiting satellites. Slowed by this drag, satellite orbits decay and ultimately require "boosting", lest they burn up in the earth's dense lower atmosphere.

C Another example is a historical event called the Maunder Minimum, a 65year dip in solar activity that caused a period of global cooling on earth in the late seventeenth century. During this time, known as the Little Ice Age, temperatures plunged and the Baltic Sea froze over regularly.

D A geomagnetic storm on March 13, 1989, caused a major blackout in Quebec, leaving six million people without power. With warning from space weather forecasters, power companies can take steps to minimize failures.

E Meanwhile, geomagnetic storms may affect animal navigation too. Many migratory animals have internal biological compasses, thanks to tiny grains of a magnetic mineral (magnetite) in their brains. Geomagnetic storms may disorient these animals, causing whales to beach and carrier pigeons to lose their way.

Space Weather and You

The sun is a dynamic system, and its dynamics can and do affect us here on earth.

Let's look at some of the effects due to solar activity:

Satellites and Spacecraft

Satellites and spacecraft are affected by solar activity both directly and indirectly. High energy particles from the sun can have direct impact by destroying sensitive microchips. Incoming charged particles can create buildups of charge inside electronics, resulting in destructive arcing and false signals.

(31) _____

Navigation

Most navigation systems rely on GPS, the Global Positioning System, which in turn relies on carefully timed and triangulated signals from satellites. Geomagnetic storms cause sudden variations in the density of the ionosphere. As a result, GPS signals from satellites arrive at GPS receivers slightly early or late, leading to inaccuracies.

(32) _____

Electric Power Transmission

Geomagnetic storms induce electric currents in the cables and transformers of electric power systems. These induced currents can damage equipment, leading to power failures.

(33) _____

Astronauts and High Altitude Travelers

Radiation and high energy particles from the sun can damage living tissue. Here on the ground, we are protected by the combined action of the magnetosphere and the atmosphere. However, astronauts are subject to potentially lethal doses of radiation.

(34) _____

Climate

It is already known that changes in the energy output of the sun can affect the climate here on earth. For example, the sun undergoes an 11-year cycle of activity, also known as the solar cycle. During solar maximum, the peak of the 11-year cycle, the sun shines a tiny bit brighter (up to one half of a percent). Studies of tree-ring thickness show that plant growth follows the ups and downs of the solar cycle.

(35) _____

Scientists are speculating that galactic cosmic rays (high energy particles from outside our solar system) may also affect the earth's climate. Some think that cosmic rays are involved with cloud formation in our atmosphere because they create ions (charged particles) in our atmosphere; ions act as "seeds" (or nucleation centers) for clouds.

TEST 4

For statements 36- 40 below the text, decide whether they are true (T) or false (F):

ARRC prepares to set sail for Afghanistan tour

The British-led Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) is gearing up for a possible spring 2006 deployment to Afghanistan.

The 450strong command and control unit will begin training for the move this month. One of its key goals will be to integrate coalition efforts across the country. Taking over from the Italian Rapid Deployment Corps, the ARRC's deployment is expected to last between nine months and a year. Soldiers would be rotated during that period.

News of the deployment came as Lt Gen David Richards was named as the corps' new commander. He said: "It will be some time since Headquarters (HQ) ARRC's last operational tour, to the Balkans in 1999, and the headquarters is now firmly focused on taking over the NATO Isaf role in 2006. Next year should be a key period for the international military mission in Afghanistan. The opportunity for significant progress is clear and much will be expected of the headquarters."

36 ARRC is gradually starting to prepare for a new deployment.

37 ARRC should replace the Italian Rapid Deployment Corps in Afghanistan.

38 Each soldier taking part in the mission would stay for 9 to 12 months.

39 The last mission Lt Gen Richards commanded was in 1999.

40 The HQ plays an important role in the success of the mission.

