

Reading Comprehension – Read & Choose the Correct Option

My name is John Rhys, and I'm one of a team of four cycle paramedics of the London Ambulance Service's traffic-busting bicycle ambulance service. We attend 999 emergency calls in the City of London – the financial centre called the Square Mile. The bike itself is the same as those used by the successful cycle units operating in London's West End, which regularly reach patients faster than conventional ambulances.

The team's bikes are fitted with blue lights and sirens, carry a range of equipment, including a heart-starting defibrillator, oxygen, pain-relieving gas, and even a maternity pack for delivering babies.

Where the patient is believed to be in a life-threatening condition, we are sent at the same time as a regular ambulance crew so that we can start treatment before they arrive. Where the patient is understood to be suffering from a more minor injury or illness, we are initially sent on our own and then are able to request further assistance – freeing up ambulances to attend other, more potentially life-threatening, 999 calls elsewhere in the City.

More than 300,000 people work in the City of London and their numbers are swelled by the several million



tourists who visit the area each year. Using the bike gives us an opportunity to save potentially vital seconds in starting treatment, especially in the narrow streets which we can negotiate more quickly and easily than ambulances. For example, my colleagues in the West End Cycle Response Unit regularly reach 100 per cent of the most serious, 'Category A', 999 calls within eight minutes. This response is much quicker than the government standard for this category of call of 75 per cent.

1. Cycle paramedics in the City of London operate in **the Square Mile / all areas of London**.
2. The West End cycle units reach patients **faster than conventional ambulances / at about the same time as conventional ambulances**.
3. The bikes carry equipment for **both life-threatening and minor conditions / only for minor conditions**.
4. When the case is serious, cycle paramedics are dispatched **at the same time as a conventional ambulance / only after an ambulance has already started treatment**.
5. When the case is less urgent, cycle paramedics are sent **first on their own / always together with an ambulance**.
6. The use of bicycles helps free up ambulances to attend **other life-threatening calls / routine hospital transport**.
7. The number of people in the City of London is increased by **tourists / emergency workers**.
8. Cycle paramedics can save time mostly due to **narrow city streets / longer suburban roads**.
9. In the West End, cycle paramedics reach **100% of serious calls within eight minutes / 75% of calls within ten minutes**.
10. John Rhys is one of a team of **four cycle paramedics / forty cycle paramedics**.

Listen to a conversation between a doctor and a patient, and choose the correct answer.

1. What was the first symptom Barbara experienced before collapsing?

- a) Vomiting
- b) Feeling unwell and dizzy
- c) Loss of eyesight

2. How did Barbara fall to the ground?

- a) She suddenly dropped with a loud cry
- b) She crumpled down slowly and silently
- c) She fell after hitting her head

3. Which unusual movement did the patient's wife show after fainting?

- a) Trembling hands
- b) Twitching violently
- c) Repetitive coughing

4. What sensory problem did Barbara report before fainting?

- a) She saw flashing lights
- b) She couldn't see clearly
- c) She wasn't hearing clearly

5. What did the patient suspect his wife might have had?

- a) A seizure or epilepsy
- b) A heart attack
- c) A stroke

6. How many times had Barbara experienced a similar episode before?

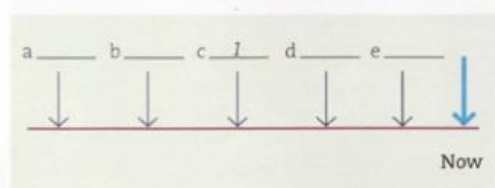
- a) Never before
- b) Once, about a month ago
- c) Several times that week

Rapid tense change

Understanding the sequence of events and hence the tenses is important for correct diagnosis. What are the tenses of the highlighted phrases?

¹We were shopping in Cambridge Street in town, when suddenly Barbara, my wife, ²just fainted. ³We tried to get her upright and ⁴she started twitching quite violently. ⁵It was quite scary. ⁶She came round very rapidly. But ⁷we dialled 999 and a paramedic appeared almost instantly and then the ambulance almost immediately afterwards. ⁸She had been complaining of feeling a bit unwell, and ⁹had almost fainted and ¹⁰she felt a bit woozy. ¹¹She was a bit dizzy and ¹²she was yawning repeatedly and then all of a sudden, ¹³there she was, lying on the ground. When I come to think of it, ¹⁴she passed out once before about a month ago. ¹⁵She hasn't been feeling well on and off over the summer. ¹⁶We thought it was the heat.

2 Place sentences 1, 2, 8, 9, and 15 on the timeline.



Complete the sentences using the verbs in brackets in the correct past tense.

- 1 We _____ (walk) along the street when she _____ (pass) out suddenly.
- 2 She _____ (have never) the pain before till now, but she _____ (experience) some bleeding the first time.
- 3 After he _____ (admit), he _____ (become) suddenly worse, but he's started responding to treatment.
- 4 He _____ (never suffer) a fit before, but he _____ (feel) unwell since this morning.
- 5 He _____ (yawn) repeatedly, which he _____ (not do) before, and then he just _____ (faint).
- 6 After he _____ (fall), he _____ (start) twitching violently when we _____ (try) to get him up.