

LISTENING TAPESCRIPT
(Please, read twice)

You will hear an extract from a book in which a writer is talking about the media.

As readers of newspapers and viewers of television, we readily assume that the Nine O'Clock News, or the front page of the *Daily Express* or the *Guardian*, consists of faithful reports of events that happened 'out there' in the world beyond our immediate experience. At a certain level, that is of course a realistic assumption: real events do occur and are reported – a coach crashes on the motorway, a postman wins the pools, a cabinet minister resigns. But real events are subject to conventional processes of selection: they are not intrinsically newsworthy, but only become 'news' when selected for inclusion in news reports. The vast majority of events are not mentioned, and so selection immediately gives us a partial view of the world. We know also that different newspapers report differently, in both content and presentation. The pools win is more likely to be reported in the *Mirror* than in *The Times*, whereas a crop failure in Africa may be reported in *The Times* but almost certainly not in the *Mirror*. Selection is accompanied by transformation, differential treatment in presentation according to numerous political, social and economic factors.

As far as differences in presentation are concerned, most people would admit the possibility of 'bias': The *Sun* is known to be consistently hostile in its treatment of trade unions, and of what it calls 'the loony Left'; the *Guardian* is generous in its reporting of the affairs of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. Such disaffections and affiliations are obvious when you start reading carefully and discussing the news media with other people.

The world of the press is not the real world, but a world skewed and judged. Now what attitude might one take towards this 'bias'? There is an argument to the effect that biases do exist, but not everywhere: The *Daily Express* is biased, the *Socialist Worker* is not.

In a good world, all newspapers and television channels would report the unmediated truth. This view seems to me to be drastically and dangerously false. It allows a person to believe, and to assert complacently, that their newspaper is unbiased, whereas all the others are in the pocket of some political parties, or that newspapers are biased while TV news is not because the camera cannot 'lie'. The danger with this position is that it assumes the possibility of genuine neutrality, of some news medium being a clear undistorting window. And that can never be.

ROLEPLAY

Student

You have just finished secondary school and would like to take a gap year before going to university. You would like to relax, buy a motorbike and travel to several countries in Europe, trying out new activities and sports, meeting new people and seeing interesting places.

Your parents don't like this idea; they think you should go to university first. They think that it is very dangerous and that you are not independent enough to travel alone and, what is more, that you are too young for such an adventure.

Try to persuade them to let you go and even contribute some money because you are sure it would be a very useful experience for you.

You start: So...

ROLEPLAY

Teacher

Your son/daughter has just finished secondary school. S/he has decided to take a gap year and relax, buy a motorbike and travel round Europe trying out new activities and sports, meeting new people and seeing interesting places.

You are not happy with this idea as you think it is better for him/her to go to university first. You claim that s/he is not independent enough to travel abroad alone, that riding a motorbike is dangerous and that s/he is too young for such an adventure.

S/he is trying to persuade you to let her/him go and even asks that you finance her/his trip as it would be a very useful experience for her/him.

PICTURE STORY

Look carefully at the picture.

Create a story about the people and the situation in the picture.



A N S W E R K E Y

GRAMMAR – 15 points

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. will/'ll be doing / are/'re doing | 9. borrowed |
| 2. will/'ll be | 10. was not / wasn't working |
| 3. ask | 11. have/'ve worked / have/'ve been working |
| 4. died | 12. are/'re thinking |
| 5. have/'ve met / have/'ve been meeting | 13. performed |
| 6. love | 14. have/'ve always wanted |
| 7. has visited | 15. has been |
| 8. suffered | 16. was |

8 points (0.5 pt each)

9A 10D 11C 12D 13C 14B 15A

7 points

VOCABULARY – 10 points

- | | | | |
|----------|---------|---------|-----------|
| 1. any | 6. or | 11. the | 16. why |
| 2. where | 7. More | 12. not | 17. at |
| 3. what | 8. such | 13. but | 18. the |
| 4. meant | 9. This | 14. It | 19. where |
| 5. form | 10. for | 15. to | 20. For |

10 points (0.5 pt each)

READING COMPREHENSION – 10 points

1K 2L 3H 4B 5E 6A 7D 8M 9I 10G
(C, F and J are extra)

10 points

LISTENING COMPREHENSION – 5 points

1C 2C 3B 4B 5D

5 points

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