

Министерство образования и науки Российской Федерации
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высшего образования
«Оренбургский государственный университет»

Кафедра иностранных языков

Г.В. Терехова

**LISTEN TO BBC
(МАТЕРИАЛЫ ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ
ЯЗЫКУ ДЛЯ САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНОГО
АУДИРОВАНИЯ СТУДЕНТАМИ
УНИВЕРСИТЕТА)**

Рекомендовано к изданию Редакционно-издательским советом федерального государственного бюджетного образовательного учреждения высшего образования "Оренбургский государственный университет" в качестве методических указаний для студентов, обучающихся по программам высшего образования, по всем направлениям подготовки

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Рецензент – кандидат филологических наук О. П. Симутова

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Методические указания содержат рекомендации для студентов по овладению умениями аудирования текстов на английском языке; систему коммуникативных упражнений; лексический справочный материал, направленный на развитие умений студентов аудировать аутентичные тексты из различных сфер жизнедеятельности.

Методические указания предназначены для самостоятельного выполнения упражнений по аудированию для студентов 1-2 курсов неязыковых специальностей всех направлений подготовки.

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Введение

Данные методические указания составлены в рамках ООП по дисциплине «Иностранный язык», предназначены для обучения студентов пониманию аутентичных аудиозаписей общей тематики на английском языке, направлены на интенсивное расширение вокабуляра и развитие умений и навыков студентов понимать иностранную речь.

Целью методических указаний является развитие умений и навыков аудирования. Текстовый материал знакомит студентов с различными областями человеческого знания.

Методические указания предназначены для студентов неязыковых специальностей всех направлений подготовки.

Методические указания состоят из 12 разделов. В первом разделе студентам предлагаются рекомендации по овладению аудированием. Остальные разделы содержат задания на проверку понимания прослушанного текста и направлены на изучение лексики для активного применения; список слов, обязательных для изучения; в приложении даны тексты (скрипты) для проверки правильности выполнения упражнений. В списке использованных источников дан адрес сайта BBC, на котором представлены аудиозаписи диалогов.

Практическая ценность методических указаний заключается в наличии аутентичного материала, системы разнообразных упражнений на развитие умений и навыков аудирования, которые можно использовать при самостоятельной работе во внеаудиторное время.

1Unit1 Учимся аудированию

Тот факт, что иностранный язык стал необходимым элементом человеческой культуры, уже ни у кого не вызывает сомнения. Развитие международных отношений стало причиной того, что каждый уважающий себя профессионал старается общаться со своими зарубежными коллегами на их родном языке, а не пользоваться услугами переводчика. Общение предполагает умение говорить на иностранном языке и понимание речи оппонента на слух.

Понятие аудирования - это процесс восприятия и понимания иноязычной речи на слух.

Ученые и практики выделяют следующие механизмы аудирования: речевой слух, память (долговременную и кратковременную), предвидение событий и внутреннюю артикуляцию.

Речевой слух существенен для адекватного восприятия устной речи, но одного его недостаточно. Услышанное необходимо удержать в памяти, соотнести со знакомым значением и запомнить. Оба вида памяти (кратковременная, когда услышанная информация удерживается в памяти в течение 10 секунд, и долговременная) важны для процесса понимания услышанной речи. Если быть совсем точным, для аудирования нужна также оперативная память, которая является подвидом кратковременной памяти, в это время информация удерживается более 10 секунд.

Еще один механизм аудирования – это предвидение происходящего, что дает возможность с самого начала обозначить возможное завершение прослушанного фрагмента по слову, словосочетанию или предложению.

Смысловое прогнозирование наиболее важно для понимания, так как запомнить всю полученную информацию, объединить части в целое поможет только направленное внимание, интерес к сообщению, знание контекста.

Немаловажным механизмом является внутреннее проговаривание, когда вы преобразовываете звуковые образы в артикуляционные.

Для самостоятельного изучения аудирования надо знать, что существуют разные виды аудирования:

- аудирование с пониманием основного содержания, которое на практике называется - *skim listening (listening for gist)*;
- аудирование с полным пониманием (*listening for detailed comprehension*);
- аудирование с выборочным извлечением информации (*listening for partial comprehension*), (*selective listening*);
- аудирование с критической оценкой (*critical listening*).

Первый вид аудирования означает обработку информации, полученной от прослушивания, чтобы определить, где новое, а где уже известное для вас; отделить важную информацию от второстепенной; закрепить в памяти самые важные сведения. Данный вид развивает догадку о содержании текста по заголовку, определение темы высказывания и намерений говорящего.

Для второго вида аудирования требуется высокий уровень автоматизации навыков, высокая концентрация внимания и напряженная работа памяти. При таком процессе обучения аудированию с полным пониманием вы слушаете аудиотекст, зная, какие послетекстовые задания вас ожидают: подробно пересказать текст; ответить на вопросы; составить план; закончить отрывок; дополнить фактами.

Задачей третьего вида аудирования является выделение в прослушанном фрагменте необходимой информации, не обращая внимания на второстепенную. К такому виду информации относятся важные детали, факты, ключевые слова, примеры или такие данные, как числа, даты, географические названия или имена собственные.

Для четвертого вида аудирования требуется высокий уровень понимания устного высказывания, точного и полного обозначения коммуникативного намерения и точки зрения автора. К этому виду аудирования относят развитую способность отличать факты от умозаключений, оценивать точку зрения говорящего, объяснить полученные сведения.

При изучении аудирования необходимо учитывать, каким языковым и речевым материалом вы владеете; и насколько вы умеете концентрироваться на том, что должны слышать.

Аудирование аутентичных текстов является дополнительной трудностью для студентов, так как понимание речи носителя языка - это достаточно сложный процесс, результат которого влияет на уровень самооценки и степень мотивированности в изучении иностранного языка.

Тексты для прослушивания нельзя упростить или сократить. Следует подготовиться к восприятию текстов любого объема и разнообразных в плане лексики, грамматики и фонетики. Для успешного аудирования, преподаватели делят работу на три этапа: предтекстовый (before listening), текстовый (while listening), послетекстовый (after listening).

На первом этапе вы преодолеваете языковые трудности восприятия текста и трудности понимания его содержания. Вам предлагаются упражнения для ознакомления с темой; для изучения незнакомой лексики; упражнения, направленные на создание ситуации и мотива для общения. Для вас формулируется коммуникативная задача, а также предлагаются упражнения для преодоления трудностей восприятия.

Цель второго этапа – уяснение содержания аудиозаписи, активизация речемыслительной деятельности. Вам будет предложен комплекс различных упражнений: расставьте утверждения по порядку; заполните таблицы; заполните пропуски в тексте; ответьте на вопросы, которые помогут восприятию и пониманию текста и извлечению необходимой информации.

На третьем этапе происходит проверка понимания текста и правильного использования в процессе прослушивания аудиозаписи предоставленных на предтекстовом этапе маркеров восприятия; осуществляется контроль понимания содержания и использованных в аудиотексте языковых и речевых средств. Здесь вам предстоит выполнить такие упражнения: определите верность утверждений (true/false); выберите верный вариант ответа (multiple choice); ответьте на вопросы;

исправьте заведомо ложную информацию; заполните таблицы; кратко перескажите услышанное. Эти упражнения обеспечивают контроль понимания смысла текста.

Существуют некоторые рекомендации для студентов по эффективному изучению аудирования:

1. предварительно, перед прослушиванием, ознакомьтесь с вариантами ответов и предположений о содержании аудиозаписи;

2. обратите внимание на похожее оформление одних и тех же понятий в прослушанном тексте и в вариантах ответа;

3. после первого прослушивания аудиозаписи мысленно сформулируйте собственные варианты ответов;

4. необходимо внимательно отнестись к отрицательным формам.

Категорически не допускается полагаться на одинаковое звучание слов в вариантах ответа и в самом тексте; пытаться перевести каждое слово; ограничиваться лишь одним, известным вам, значением многозначных слов; механически использовать значение интернациональных слов.

Без овладения аудированием как видом речевой деятельности, вы не сможете достичь успешной коммуникации. Аудирование развивает вашу способность общаться на иностранном языке. Умения и навыки слушать и слышать дают вам возможность понять то, что вам говорят и адекватно реагировать на сказанное, помогает правильно изложить свой ответ собеседнику.

2 Unit 2 War on the roads

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2012/12/1212>

[13_6min_cycling.shtml](#)

2. 1 Before listening match the words and expressions from columns A and B

A	B
1. gladiators	a) a military unit;
2. aggressive minority	b) to do something about solving a problem;
3. to address the problem	c) small number of people who behave in a dangerous and challenging way;
4. vulnerable	d) in large numbers;
5. battalions	e) in danger;
6. in droves	f) professional fighters in ancient Rome;

2. 2 Learn new words and make up sentences with them

2.3 Listen to the dialogue and choose the correct answer: a), b) or c)

1. How do the authors call the streets of London?

- a) friendly;
- b) hazardous;
- c) peaceful.

2. How many cyclists have been killed on the UK's roads in 2012?

- a) more than 100;
- b) above 100;
- c) 13.

3. How does Jan Etherington a journalist and comedy writer think of cyclists in London? They behave like:

- a) warriors;

- b) monks;
 - c) motorists.
4. Who does Jan Etherington want to address the problem?
- a) dangerous motorists;
 - b) the cycling community;
 - c) cyclists themselves.
5. What way does cyclist Michael Hutchinson feel as a cyclist?
- a) in harmony;
 - b) in danger;
 - c) at the havens.
6. What is a cyclist on a bike at 30mph?
- a) a risky rider;
 - b) a frightening pedestrian;
 - c) a harmful motorist.

2. 4 After listening put the words in order (see page 29)

1. painted there cycle onto many roads in London paths are.
2. rarely the bikes from are traffic separated.
3. out to she that put on their some helmet and cyclists lycra and thinks go war.
4. something aggressive community she the cycling to do about cycling wants.
5. he would says only go war idiots on a to bicycle.
6. the London she has that Olympics, the problem thinks got where she since worse lives.
7. stopping journalist roads says the London`s cyclists on are not for anyone.

3 Unit3 Air pollution

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2014/04/1404>

[17_6min_smog.shtml](#)

3.1 Before listening try to give the definitions to the following words and word combinations:

air pollution, smog, choking, contaminated, pea-souper, fumes, poisonous, asthma, greener, renewable energy.

3.2 Check your answers (see page 32). Make up sentences with the words

3.3 While listening fill in the gaps

1. Polluted air is calledthat is a of smoke and fog.
2. When sometimes the air is so dirty and so thick people describe it as a '.....' – meaning as thick as
3. It certainly isn't good for your
4. Noise pollution is when loud or sounds like traffic noise spoil a quiet and peaceful environment.
5. They are closing down any power stations within the city that coal.

3.4 Listen to the dialogue once more and answer these questions:

1. What problem has been affecting some of the big cities in China?
2. What word can describe anything that damages something that is pure?
3. Why were children in China not allowed outside and why were schools closed?
4. What city does pollution regularly go over the safety limits set by the World Health Organization?
5. How much are the Chinese authorities spending on cleaning up the air?
6. What cars will get priority in China?
7. What power stations are going to be closed down ?
8. What is a term to describe something that causes less pollution and is better for the environment?
9. What would reduce air pollution caused by burning coal?

3.5 After listening put the words in order (see page 32)

1. that within down coal closing they're any the power stations city burn.
2. on first greener will allowed the roads cars be.
3. officials believe that this green technology will clean up the air.
4. all these changes will take a long time.
5. China is also going to use more renewable energy.

4 Unit 4 What class are you?

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2013/10/1310>

[31 6min middle class.shtml](#)

4.1 Before listening match the words and expressions from columns A and B

A	B
1. obsession	a) changing to an economy based on industry;
2. possessions	b) economic problem where banks don't lend much money;
3. privileged	c) how someone is treated and educated when they are young - and how this affects their life;
4. disposable income	d) improving/ making more advanced;
5. well-off	e) a place where people think that buying and owning things is very important;
6. consumers	f) something or someone you think about all the time;
7. income	g) money that is left after paying for everyday things like bills;
8. industrialisation	h) having enough money to live well;
9. credit crunch	i) people who buy things;
10. upgrading	j) money someone gets for working or from investing money;
11. consumer society	k) having opportunities and advantages that some other people do not have;

12. upbringing

l) things/ objects you own;

4.2 Listen to the dialogue and choose the correct answer: a), b) or c)

1. What should you look at to say I am middle class?

- a) at my background;
- b) at my face;
- c) at my passport.

2. What does middle class consist of?

- a) well-educated people;
- b) very rich people;
- c) very poor people.

3. Why is the number of middle class people around the world rising?

- a) as people work a lot;
- b) as people want to be rich;
- c) as people earn more money.

4. What is the most important factor for being middle class?

- a) having a good education, a good job, owning your own home;
- b) having a number of possessions like a car or a TV;
- c) having disposable income.

5. According to the UN, how much you should earn to be middle class?

- a) you have to earn between \$1 and \$10 per day;
- b) you have to earn between \$10 and \$100 per day;
- c) you have to earn between \$100 and \$1000 per day.

6. What are people in China becoming leaving fields for cities?

- a) not just workers but consumers too;
- b) workers;
- c) consumers.

7. When will the people of middle class become upper class?

- a) they'll never get there;

- b) they'll get there with the help of money;
- c) they'll get there with the help of the family.

4.3 After listening put the words in order (see page 35)

1. I am if look background, you could at say I suppose my middle you class.
2. world the of middle rising class people number around the is as people more earn money.
3. enough we but always complain we we never have, don't money!
4. people now moving the city not just work to spend the find money they earn are to but to.
5. my would never money parents they don't spend have.
6. if be money borrow too crunch much people there could a credit.

5 Unit 5 London skyline

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2014/09/1409>

[18_6min_london_skyline.shtml](#)

5.1 Before listening give the definitions to the following words or find the meaning in the dictionary

Quirky, modest, dwarfed, sprung up, irreverently, obstruct, plain, tide, thrown up, (to have) a head for heights.

5.2 Listen to the dialogue and choose the correct answer: a), b) or c)

1. According to the speakers, what does “quirky” mean?
 - a) old;
 - b) beautiful;
 - c) ugly.

2. For many years, the tallest building in London was St Paul's Cathedral. When was it built? Was it completed in:

a) 1508 ;

b) 1608 ;

c) 1708.

2. What does the adjective “modest” mean?

a) small;

b) tall;

c) great.

3. Which word does the reporter use to say that the Cathedral now seems much smaller than the skyscrapers nearby?

a) little;

b) dwarfed;

c) small.

4. What's the height of St Paul's Cathedral ?

a) more than one hundred and twenty;

b) about one hundred;

c) one hundred and eleven.

5. What does “plain ugly” mean?

a) too ugly;

b) a little ugly;

c) neither ugly nor nice.

6. Have you got a head for heights?

5.3 After listening put the words in order (see page 38)

1. the home London of is also to a growing number skyscrapers.

2. nearby St Paul's is by the dwarfed skyscrapers.

3. not many buildings are with happy these tall new people.

4. of high-profile now a group to halt Londoners politicians and academics are campaigning this artisans incoming tide.

5. they it in actually started 1675 building back.

5.4 Be ready to retell the text in the classroom

6 Unit 6 Feeling good about your country

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2013/05/130530_6min_national_pride.shtml

6.1 Before listening try to give the definitions to the following words:

national pride, to fly the flag, to represent, delighted, an honour, privilege, respected, patriotic.

6.2 Learn new words and make up sentences with them

6.3 Listen to the dialogue and answer these questions:

1. Do you have a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction that you are connected with your country?

2. When do you usually take pride?

3. What words do we use to describe our feelings?

4. Why can people and places make give you pride?

5. What makes you patriotic?

6. What way can you show love for your country and being proud of it?

6.4 After listening put the words in order (see page 41)

1. he very to have is the opportunity to do lucky it.

2. the smaller United made Kingdom is up of countries.

3. So places give people and can make you pride.

4. proud that your love means showing for country and being of it.

5. win that's were and in the Olympics we proud to see British true athletes lots of medals 2012.

6.5 Be ready to say a few words about your feelings to this country to your classmates

7 Unit 7 Estate agents' language

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2010/11/1011>

[18 6min estate agents page.shtml](#)

7.1 Give the definitions to the following words and make up sentences with them

estate agents, characterful a word, illegal, discriminatory, synonyms, compact, bijou, panoramic, poetic, intellect.

7.2 Listen to the dialogue and answer the questions:

1. How do we call the people who help others to buy or sell houses or flats?
2. If they describe a house as 'characterful' – what would you think they meant by that?
3. What law dealing with selling houses was accepted in 1968 ?
4. What do estate agents have to be very careful about ?
5. How many ways can you say the word 'small' without putting people off?

7.3 After listening put the words in order (see page 45)

1. seem estate do to have a agents language all of their own.
2. was the central smallest built 1805 in house London.
3. sell the any estate won't the agent house people of other to religion.
4. use so estate agents to be very about the they to stay within the law have careful language.

5. more their they to make descriptions poetic decided.

8 Unit 8 Global traffic jam

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2013/03/1303>

[21_6min_traffic_jam.shtml](#)

8.1 Match the words and expressions from columns A and B

A	B
1. traffic jams	a) to start driving a car
2. gridlock	b) using a lot of fuel
3. a maelstrom	c) a point where you cannot continue any further
4. bumper to bumper	d) a situation where there are so many vehicles on the road that none of them can move
5. to get behind the wheel	e) cars travelling close together and almost touching
6. the end of the road	f) a situation that is confusing and chaotic
7. gas-guzzling	g) a queue of vehicles on a road that are not moving, or moving very slowly

8.2 Learn new words and make up sentences with them

8.3 While listening fill in the gaps

1. According to Jennifer, traffic jams – that's where too many cars, lorries and buses (1) in on the road.

2. According to Rob: It's quite a worrying thought because already there are (2)..... cars in the world. And by 2050 there will be (3) billion cars.

3. According to Jennifer: That really would cause some serious gridlock – that means roads in towns and cities(4)that traffic is unable to move.

4. According to Theo Leggett: Mumbai is (5), a fast growing city and a potent symbol of India's recent economic success.

5. According to Jennifer: a maelstrom –a confusing, chaotic mix of (6)..... which are crammed – (7).....

6. According to Bjorn Lomborg: The solution will have to be technological to find smart ways of getting (8).....and (9).....that can pack much tighter and get much more efficiently around town.

7. According to Rob (10)..... cars can save space on the road by driving closer to the car in front.

8. According to Jennifer: (11)..... are very safe at all time in my experience.

9. According to Rob: The traffic jam was (12).....km long. It happened on the Beijing to Tibet Expressway and lasted (13).....days!

8.4 After listening put the words in order (see page 48)

1. journey trying make they spend just to a relatively short to work could hours.
2. be the is not as would like it to to cut back on many cars solution.
3. in safe women very are at all time my drivers experience.
4. lasted on it the Expressway Beijing to Tibet and 12 happened days.
5. road can cars I've about robot that save on the by driving space closer to the car in front heard self-driving.

8.5 Be ready to speak about traffic jams in your own town with your groupmates

9 Unit 9 The extinction of men

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2012/03/120315_6min_english_extinct_men.shtml

9.1 Before listening try to give the definitions to the following words and word combinations:

Chromosome, hormones, pessimistic, ratio, extinction, breathe a sigh of relief, depleted, genes, natural selection, stereotypes.

9.2 Learn new words and make up sentences with them

9.3 While listening fill in the gaps

Some previous research suggested that the Y chromosome, which is responsible for men's sex organs and hormones, is rotting away!

Even the most pessimistic findings suggested that men had 100 thousand years left. Scientists compared the decline in the human's Y chromosome with that of the rhesus monkey, that's the monkey that we from 25 million years ago.

And their conclusion was that the Y chromosome is depleted but it's still got all of thebits.

The odds of the Y losing any more genes are pretty slim. It appears that it's been stable for 25 million years and that is a indication that's it going to be stable for many many millions of years to come and the genes that remain on the Y probably have very important functions and natural selection is doing a very good job of preserving those genes.

Natural selection is the way animals die when they are or living in unsuitable surroundings. Meanwhile the stronger ones to live.

Men's sex chromosomes are not as as female ones. It means men continue to live for a longer.

9.4 After listening answer these questions:

1. What is responsible for men's sex organs and hormones?
2. Why are men going to extinct in 100 thousand years?

3. What did scientists compare the decline in the male human's Y chromosome with?

4. What helps the stronger animals continue to live?

5. Whose sex chromosomes are more complex?

9.5 Be ready to speak about this problem with your groupmates

10 Unit 10 London English: Cockney

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2010/12/1012](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2010/12/101202_6min_london_english_page.shtml)

[02_6min_london_english_page.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2010/12/101202_6min_london_english_page.shtml)

10.1 Remember the vocabulary and definitions from the text and be ready to make up sentences with them

evolving - gradually changing, developing and adapting;

dialect - version of a language spoken by a particular group of people or in a particular area;

curator - person in charge of gathering objects for exhibitions in museums or galleries;

descent - here, a person's family background, specifically the nationality of their family;

immigrate - to come to live in a country after leaving your own;

code - here, a secret language or system of replacing words with others so that only certain people can understand its meaning;

ruling class - a group of the most powerful of people in charge of government;

sense of identity- special things about a particular group of people which they share and can be recognised by;

roots - here, the place where a person comes from;

delivering its services- making its products and help available to customers.

10.2 While listening fill in the gaps

Now the exhibition at the British Library tells us the 1500 year history of the English language, as used by peoplethe world. And of course, there's information about the Cockney in the section on London English too.

Cockney rhyming was, and is still sometimes used in the End of London, mainly by people. It's changed over the years.

In London today, we still hear that traditional Cockney that's been around for a long time, but also we get British Asian English speakers, London Jamaican speakers. And so that's been going for a thousand years – people coming contact with each other and gradually changing the sounds and the words and the vocabulary that we hear.

But of course, as people who speak traditional Cockney move of London, they also take that language them.

So, we can also hear it the East End of London too. London started speaking it because they didn't want the- class to understand their conversations. That's true. If we hear someone speaking Cockney or Cockney slang, we immediately know they've got in the East End.

10.3 After listening answer these questions:

1. What does "Bow bells" mean?
2. What does 'London English' mean?
3. How old is the English language?
4. What way is Cockney rhyming slang produced?
5. Who speaks London Cockney?
6. Who influences the sounds, the words, the vocabulary of London Cockney nowadays?
7. Why do people speak London Cockney?
8. What does Cockney rhyming slang give East Enders?
9. What does the phrase "please enter your Huckleberry Finn" mean?

10.4 After listening put the words in order (see page 55)

1. the the us year at the British tells the 1500 of English exhibition language Library history about.
2. sometimes End rhyming is still slang used in the East of Cockney London.
3. traditional we been do that Cockney that's around for a hear long time still.
4. their people of and of descent speak own of London English, including Asian Jamaican Cockney versions.
5. East we of also hear it the End too can London outside.
6. was around when me I a adults child speak in would Hackney it.

11 Unit 11 The London Tube

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2010/11/1011>

[25_6min_tube_page.shtml](#)

11. 1 While listening choose the correct answer a), b) or c)

1. What`s the name of the London Underground?
 - a) the Tube;
 - b) Metro;
 - c) the train.
2. What does a love-hate relationship mean?
 - a) we both love something and hate it;
 - b) we love something;
 - c) we hate something.
3. What does Yvonne hate most on a crowded carriage?
 - a) an armpit;
 - b) a crowd,
 - c) a smell.
4. What is there to love about the Tube?
 - a) It`s reasonably fast;

- b) Nobody speaks to each other on the Tube;
- c) Nobody looks at each other either most of the time.

5. Who is “beeping sound “ we hear as the doors open and close on the carriages important for?

- a) inhabitants of a big city;
- b) quite friendly people;
- c) visually impaired people.

11. 2 Listen to the text once more and fill in the gaps

Most people would agree that the London Underground – ‘.....’ - is the best way to get around this city. But many people have a relationship with the underground – they either love it or hate it.

There are – that's when the Tube is running late and doesn't come along when people expect it to. And that makes it unreliable.

And the thing some people hate most is that on a carriage – or compartment – they always have to stand under someone's armpit – and they don't always very nice!

Anyway, there is a lot to love the Tube as well. It's reasonably fast, it covers a wide area and it has a History.

Tourists and visitors to London find it quite simple to use and that the map is very good. It's difficult to get underground.

Nobody speaks to each other on the Tube; nobody looks at each other most of the time. When there are lots of people in small, public places, people eye contact or talking to other.

You hear a rumbling noise begin quietly, then grow louder and, building up to a noise explosion the train comes into the station. You hear the beeping ... and the doors open and close. You hear the sound of the track, a constant to people silently reading newspapers and books on the train. And this is about the Tube!

11.3 After listening to the text make up a story about the London Underground using the following words:

get around - travel around;

the Tube - the London Underground train system;

a love-hate relationship - relationship (often not romantic) where feelings towards someone or something vary from love to hate;

delays - when things are later than expected or planned;

unreliable - cannot be depended on;

get on with it - hurry up or do something you might find difficult;

eye contact - to look at someone while they are looking at you;

take for granted - don't understand the value of;

visually impaired - not able to see properly;

soundtrack - music used in or made for a film;

12 Unit 12 Scottish Independence

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2014/04/1404](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2014/04/140403_6min_independence.shtml)

[03_6min_independence.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/sixminute/2014/04/140403_6min_independence.shtml)

12.1 Before listening match the words and expressions from columns A and B

A	B
1. independence	a) a time when everyone in a country can vote on a particular issue
2. declaration	b) different opinions
3. campaigning	c) showing strong beliefs, enthusiasm or emotion
4. referendum	d) supporting an idea
5. in favour of	e) competing with each other
6. debate	f) remembered (a person or event)
7. divergent views	g) lies that damage someone's reputation
8. robust	h) a serious discussion of a subject in which many people take

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| | part |
| 9. passionate | i) an official statement saying something is going to happen |
| 10. smears | j) when people from a country or region choose their own government |
| 11. rivalry | k) (here) firm and determined |
| 12. commemorated | l) (here) freedom from political control by another country |
| 13. self-rule | m) trying to persuade other people or the government to change something |

12.2 While listening fill in the gaps

Today we're talking national independence - that's when one nation is free from control by another country.

We often hear about groups of people campaigning or fighting for independence the country that rules them, like the Basque people in Spain, or the Kurds in Iraq. This is when a certain group people want their own homeland to preserve – that's keep alive – their culture or beliefs. And sometimes, a whole nation wants to break from the country that rules it because it feels it would be better its people. That's what's happening in Scotland right now.

Not everyone in Scotland wants to break from the United Kingdom. This is a plan suggested the ruling political party in Scotland – the Scottish National Party. But they are asking people to vote on the decision.

Politicians who want Scotland to be separate from the UK are trying to persuade the public to vote in of independence. Other politicians are trying to persuade people to vote 'no'. Independence would mean Scotland would be to control things like its tax system, its immigration policy and people would have a Scottish passport.

Alex Salmond, the Leader of the Scottish National Party, says that views are the very of democracy. The exchanges, the criticism and the debate must be passionate. But let these contributions ... based on fact, reason, logic, rather than, or allegations or misinformation.

The idea of an independent Scotland isn't that The Act of Union, which brought Scotland together with England and Wales, only came into being in 1707. Before that, Scotland was independent.

12.3 Listen to the dialogue once more and answer these questions:

1. What nations are fighting for independence from the country that rules them?
2. What country does Scotland want to break away from?
3. Does everyone in Scotland want to break away from the United Kingdom?
4. Who was the plan suggested by?
5. What would independence mean for Scotland?
6. What are the very essence of democracy?
7. What should the debate be based on?
8. When Scotland was independent?

12.4 After listening put the words in order (see page 62)

1. from and only last fought for its Britain century Ireland independence.
2. independent succeeded and in rule 1947 India in becoming from British.
3. some unique want to share which are usually to a countries things country.
4. Union the trade member currency states of the European together in and some share work the same.
5. beginning this nation became was the of a new that the USA.
6. now celebrated Independence is every on the 4th of Day July.

Список использованных источников

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Приложение А (обязательное)

Tapescripts

1. War on the roads

Alice: Hi Rob.

Rob: Hi there Alice.

Alice: Now, Rob are you a cyclist?

Rob: Yes I ride a bicycle.

Alice: Even on the mean streets of London?

Rob: I do indeed – London streets are very dangerous for cyclists. Over 110 cyclists have been killed on the UK's roads in 2012, 13 of them in London.

Alice: That's quite a lot for one city. Although there are many cycle paths painted onto roads in London, bikes are rarely separated from the traffic. And many roads are very narrow. But some people think it's the cyclists themselves who are to blame for accidents. A documentary called 'The War on Britain's Roads' has been investigating the issue. Before we find out more, a question for you Rob. The website Bicycling.com has made a list of what it thinks are the best cities for cycling in in the world. Only one in the top five isn't in Europe. Can you guess where it is. Is it:

- a. Beijing, China
- b. Tokyo, Japan
- c. Bogota, Colombia

Rob: I haven't a clue really. But at a guess I'd probably say Tokyo.

Alice: As usual we won't hear the answer till the end of the programme. Now more about this 'battle' between cyclists and motorists on Britain's roads.

Rob: Now come on Alice, is it really a 'battle'?

Alice: Well some people think so. Here's Jan Etherington a journalist and comedy writer who thinks cyclists in London behave like gladiators in lycra – that's the stretchy material a lot of cyclists wear:

Journalist Jan Etherington:

It's not the mode of transport, it's the people. I think there are motorists and there are cyclists, who wake up in the morning not thinking if I can help somebody as I go along my way, but finding their inner gladiator. They immediately, in the cyclists case, put on the helmet and lycra and go out to war. And it's a minority, but it's the noticeable aggressive minority that I think the cycling community should recognise and address.

Alice: Journalist Jan Etherington who thinks that cyclists are to blame for dangerous cycling. She thinks that some cyclists put on their helmet and lycra and go out to war.

Rob: Ah – but she did say that it's a minority – so not all cyclists.

Alice: Yes she said it's the aggressive minority – the small number of cyclists who cycle in an aggressive manner.

Rob: Aggressive; so that's in a dangerous and challenging way.

Alice: Yes. Jan Etherington wants the cycling community to do something about aggressive cycling – she wants them to address the problem.

Rob: So how do cyclists defend themselves? Aren't cyclists just protecting themselves from dangerous motorists?

Alice: Well cycling writer and former British racing cyclist Michael Hutchinson thinks so. He says only idiots would go to war on a bicycle.

Cyclist Michael Hutchinson: You do feel quite vulnerable as a cyclist. Somebody drives past inches away, the first thing it is, is frightening. I certainly don't go to war, because frankly I'm not going to win. I'm wearing maybe lycra or maybe on my to work in t-shirt and a pair of jeans, I'm not going to win a battle with a forty ton truck. So only an idiot's going to go to war with a bicycle.

Alice: Cyclist Michael Hutchinson says cyclists feel vulnerable; in danger. It can be frightening when a big truck drives very close to you.

Rob: I agree. A forty ton truck driving very close to you, while you're trying to cycle on a narrow street, can be very frightening.

Alice: Jan Etherington though, still says that cyclists need to change their behaviour. She thinks that since the London Olympics, the problem has got worse where she lives, because more and more people are cycling on the roads. And she uses more battle

language. Battalions; we usually hear this word when we're talking about soldiers. And cyclists taking up the road, two or three abreast, in droves, like soldiers marching.

Journalist Jan Etherington: I live in the middle of the Olympic cycling route, now from dawn to dusk at the weekend the cyclists come not as single spokes but in battalions. There are two or three abreast of them, and they come in droves. They're not stopping for anyone. A cyclist on a bike at 30mph is a dangerous machine.

Alice: Journalist Jan Etherington who says cyclists on London's roads are not stopping for anyone.

Alice: So Rob – whose side are you on?

Rob: Well I'm a cyclist and a motorist – and a pedestrian – so I can see the problem from all sides.

Alice: And have you had a chance to think about the question I asked at the beginning of the programme. Bicycling.com made a list of the cities it thinks are best for cycling in. Only one in the top five wasn't in Europe.

Rob: I guessed Tokyo, Japan. Come on I've got to be right?

Alice: Well, actually it's Bogota, Colombia. The top five cycle cities according to that website are: Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Copenhagen, Denmark, Bogota in Colombia, Barcelona, Spain and Berlin, Germany. Have you cycled in any of those cities Rob?

Rob: No, I haven't. But I'd love to.

Alice: I love to cycle in any city that's quite flat. Beijing or Berlin would be my favourites. Well, thanks so much, Rob. And before we go, would you read us some of today's words and phrases.

Vocabulary and definitions

gladiators -	professional fighters in ancient Rome;
aggressive minority -	small number of people who behave in a dangerous and challenging way;
to address the problem -	to do something about solving a problem;
vulnerable -	in danger;
battalions -	a military unit;

in droves -

in large numbers;

2. Air pollution

Rob: Hello I'm Rob. Welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm joined today by Finn.

Finn: Hello Rob.

Rob: In this programme we're talking about a serious problem that has been affecting some of the big cities in China: that's air pollution.

Finn: Yes, or better known as smog. Smog is polluted air that is a mixture of smoke and fog. I've experienced this in Shanghai and it's not a nice thing to breathe in.

Rob: It certainly isn't good for your health. We'll talk more about this soon and explain some pollution-related vocabulary. But let's start with a question for you, Finn. According to research by the World Health Organisation, which country has the city with the world's worst air pollution? Is it:

- a) China
- b) India
- c) Iran

Finn: Well, I think it definitely used to be China. I'm going to say it's still China.

Rob: We'll find out if you are right later on. Let's talk more now about the pollution problem which is choking – or making it difficult to breathe in – many Chinese cities.

Finn: Pollution is a word that can describe anything that damages something that is pure. So light pollution is when a pure dark sky is contaminated – or spoiled by street lights and lights in the city. Rob: And noise pollution is when loud or annoying sounds like traffic noise spoil a quiet and peaceful environment. But the smog affecting Chinese cities is a form of air pollution – clean air has become dirty.

Finn: Yes. Well, smog used to be a problem in other world cities like London, where a combination of fog and smoke from factories and trains sometimes made the air quite dirty and dangerous.

Rob: Yes, sometimes the air was so dirty and so thick they described it as a 'pea-souper' – meaning as thick as pea soup!

Finn: A 'pea-souper' – that's good isn't it! In Los Angeles, fumes – that's the bad gases from car engines – and poor weather conditions used to cause poor air quality. But now, new laws and a change in technology mean the air in these cities is cleaner and safer. So, Rob, why is it bad in China now

Rob: Well Finn, China is becoming more industrialised. That means more factories are being built, and more electricity is needed, and that often comes from coal-fired power stations. And of course, more people are driving cars.

Finn: Yes they are. Well, at certain times last year, the air was so poisonous in Shanghai that children were not allowed outside and schools were closed.

Rob: Generally, the air is a threat to public health. It's particularly bad for people with asthma – and it could lead to lung cancer. In the capital Beijing, pollution regularly goes over the safety limits set by the World Health Organization (WHO). So what can be done?

Finn: Well, the BBC's David Shukman has been investigating the problem and found that the Chinese authorities are spending £180 billion on cleaning up the air. See if you can hear what the two main things are that they're trying to do in Beijing:

David Shukman, BBC Science Editor:

Well first, they're closing down any power stations within the city that burn coal, that's the biggest source of pollution; next they're trying to limit road traffic – greener cars will get priority. And officials say they're confident they can clean up.

Rob: So the plan is to close down coal-fired power stations because they are the source – or the place where most of the pollution comes from.

Finn: Yes, and the other plan is to limit – to set a maximum amount of – traffic on the roads. Greener cars will be allowed on the roads first – they will have priority.

Rob: Of course 'greener' isn't referring to the colour of the car, Finn – it's a term to describe something that causes less pollution and is better for the environment.

Finn: So these are the cars that use less fuel or might use cleaner fuel that has less particles in it that usually make the air dirty. Officials believe that this green technology will clean up the air.

Rob: China is also going to use more renewable energy – this is power made by natural materials that never get used up, such as wind and water. This would reduce air pollution caused by burning coal.

Finn: Yes, well of course, all these changes will take a long time. But Rob, it's time now for you to tell me the answer to today's question.

Rob: Yes, earlier I asked you, according to research by the World Health Organisation, which country has the city with the world's worst air pollution?

Finn: I thought it was a) China.

Rob: You did but the answer is Iran.

Finn: Is it now?! Which city?

Rob: Apparently the city of Ahwaz. Now, before we go, Finn, could you remind us of some of the vocabulary that we've heard today?

Finn: OK.

Rob: Well, that brings us to the end of today's 6 Minute English. We hope you've enjoyed today's programme. Please join us again soon.

Finn: Please do.

Vocabulary and definitions

air pollution -	particles that make the air dirty and difficult to breathe;
smog -	mixture of smoke, gases, chemicals and fog;
choking -	(here) preventing people from breathing properly;
contaminated -	made dirty or less pure;
pea-souper -	a slang term used to describe poor quality air that is difficult to see in;
fumes -	strong-smelling and dangerous gas;
industrialised -	having lots of heavy industry;
poisonous -	very harmful and could cause death;
asthma -	medical condition that makes it hard to breathe;

greener - (here) better for the environment;
renewable energy- power made from natural resources that never get used up;

3. What class are you?

Rob: Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English, I'm Rob and with me is Neil.

Neil: Hello.

Rob: Today we're talking about class. This is something of an obsession with British people; it's something they talk about and think about all the time! So Neil, what class are you – lower, middle or upper?

Neil: I suppose if you look at my background, you could say I am middle class. (1)

Rob: Yes, me too – middle class. So we belong to a social group that consists of well-educated people, who have good jobs and are neither very rich nor very poor. (2)

Neil: Well we are certainly not rich! But being middle class is not just a British thing.

Rob: No – the number of middle class people around the world is rising as people earn more money. (3) So, for your question today Neil, can you guess how many people are predicted to be middle class in the world by 2030?

a) 2.9 billion

b) 3.9 billion

c) 4.9 billion

Neil: Such large numbers, I don't know. I'll go for b) 3.9 billion.

Rob: We'll find out the answer later. So, being middle class involves a number of factors – good education, a good job, sometimes owning your own home and having a number of possessions like a car or a TV.

Neil: It's quite a privileged or comfortable position to be in – but the most important factor is having disposable income (4) – that's spare money to spend on more than just things you need for everyday survival, like food. That's what you've got Rob, right?

Rob: A little – spare money to spend on little luxuries like a holiday, a computer or a meal at a restaurant. But we always complain we never have enough money, don't we!

Neil: Yes, we do: the UN says to be middle class you have to earn between \$10 and \$100 per day. (5) In the UK I think that's quite a small amount so we could say, very generally, we are quite well-off – but in places such as Asia there has been a huge shift recently from people in poorer working class jobs to middle class ones.

Rob: It's interesting: that by 2030 there could be 3.2 billion middle class people in Asia – overtaking Europe and America. The BBC's John Sudworth can explain what is happening now in China. What does he say people are becoming? (6)

BBC reporter, John Sudworth:

Now there's a new chapter, the farmers leaving these fields for cities like Zhengzhou, are becoming not just workers but consumers too. In short – they're off to join the middle class.

Neil: So, people are now moving to the city not just to find work but to spend the money they earn. They are becoming consumers because their income – the money they earn – has gone up.

Rob: So, this is because of industrialisation – a change from an economy based on farming to a growth in factories making things. Now, this happened in China in the 1970s but it is now upgrading or improving its industries again making people wealthier.

Neil: This has led to a consumer society – that's where people are spending money on things like fridges and washing machines.

Rob: Let's hear from John Sudworth again, talking about a consumer from China – what does this woman do if she can't afford to buy something?

BBC reporter, John Sudworth:

Jessica Zhao earns a little more than \$12,000 US dollars a year and she spends every last bit of it, often with the help of a credit card. My parents would never spend money they don't have, she tells me, but attitudes are changing fast.

Neil: So that woman uses a credit card – it means she can buy now and pay later. It's a change in attitude – it's not what our parents or grandparents would do. I do it all the

time. You pay for the goods later but with a high interest rate. What have you bought with your credit card recently Rob?

Rob: A new carpet... a pair of jeans and some train tickets. But I'm not looking forward to my credit card bill!

Neil: Nor me. You might think we are spending a lot – in China 2,500 vehicles are sold every hour!

Rob: Goodness. Well, the rise of the middle class could be a good thing. As people's standard of living improves, global poverty could be reduced.

Neil: Ah, but if people borrow too much money there could be a credit crunch – that's a bad economic situation where banks do not want to lend as much money.

Rob: But what I really want to know is when will I become upper class? (7)

Neil: Sorry Rob, you'll never get there – it's all about your upbringing and your family – something you can't change, even with money. But let's prove how well educated I am by seeing if I got today's question right.

Rob: OK. Earlier I asked you how many people are predicted to be middle class in the world by 2030?

Neil: I said 3.9 billion.

Rob: You were wrong. The figure is 4.9 billion. Now, Neil, could you remind us of some of today's language?

Rob: OK that's it for this programme. Do join us again soon for more 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English.

Vocabulary and definitions

obsession-	something or someone you think about all the time;
possessions-	things/ objects you own;
privileged-	having opportunities and advantages that some other people do not have;
disposable income-	money that is left after paying for everyday things like bills;
well-off-	having enough money to live well;
consumers-	people who buy things;
income-	money someone gets for working or from investing money;

industrialisation-	changing to an economy based on industry;
credit crunch-	economic problem where banks don't lend much money;
upgrading-	improving/ making more advanced;
consumer society-	a place where people think that buying and owning things is very important;
upbringing-	how someone is treated and educated when they are young - and how this affects their life;

4. London skyline

Rob: Hello, I'm Rob. Welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm joined today by Neil.

Neil: Hi there Rob. Yes, I'm Neil.

Rob: Now Neil, tell me, when you think of skyscrapers – the very tall, thin buildings – which cities do you think of?

Neil: Oh, well, probably New York, Shanghai, and perhaps Dubai...

Rob: Well, London is also the home to a growing number of skyscrapers – with nicknames like the Gherkin, the Walkie Talkie and the Cheese Grater – but not everyone likes them... Do you like them, Neil?

Neil: Well, I like the nicknames – I think they're very fun. And actually, I quite like the buildings too – they're quirky – which means unusual, odd, in a nice way.

Rob: Yeah, I agree. But, today we'll be talking about why many people are unhappy about these new skyscrapers, and learning some language about towns and buildings. But first...

Neil: But first, a question, Rob.

Rob: Oh yes, of course! For many years, the tallest building in London was St Paul's Cathedral. But when was it built? Was it completed in:

- a) 1508
- b) 1608
- c) 1708

Neil: Well, I think... I think that it was c) 1708.

Rob: Well, we'll find out if you're right, or wrong, at the end of the programme... Well, let's start our discussion with that very building – St Paul's Cathedral in central London.

Neil: We're going to hear from BBC reporter Jonathan Savage. Which adjective does he use to describe the height of St Paul's, and which word does he use to say that it now seems much smaller than the skyscrapers nearby?

BBC reporter, Jonathan Savage:

This is St Paul's Cathedral in central London. It's a modest one hundred and eleven metres high, but for nearly 300 years it was the tallest building in this city. Now, it is dwarfed by nearby skyscrapers, many of which have sprung up in just the last few years. They've got irreverently British nicknames like the Gherkin, the Cheese Grater and the Walkie Talkie.

Neil: So, we heard those three skyscrapers again – but what about St Paul's? He said it was a modest one hundred and eleven metres high. Modest here means not large in size or amount – it means it's only one hundred and eleven metres.

Rob: That was the adjective. And the other word we asked you to listen out for was dwarfed. St Paul's is dwarfed by the nearby skyscrapers. If something dwarfs another thing, it makes it seem small in comparison.

Neil: Yes, and this has happened recently. He says the new buildings have sprung up in the last few years. When he says they've sprung up, he means they've suddenly appeared – and it's often used to talk about buildings.

Rob: And he also used a great word to talk about those nicknames – he said they were irreverently British nicknames – if something is irreverent, it doesn't show the respect you might expect for official things, and often treats serious subjects in quite a fun, jokey way.

Neil: By calling them irreverently British, he suggests that being irreverent is quite typically British! Now, Rob, you're quite typically British but are you irreverent?

Rob: I think I am. I joke about everything! But, whether these nicknames are respectful or not, as I mentioned, many people are not happy with these tall new buildings. What reasons does Jonathan Savage give?

BBC reporter, Jonathan Savage:

They are not universally popular. Some say they obstruct sightlines of old-fashioned landmarks like this one; that they threaten London's cultural identity; that they're just plain ugly. A group of high-profile Londoners, politicians, artisans and academics are now campaigning to halt this incoming tide. They say more than 200 more skyscrapers are being thoughtlessly thrown up across London.

Rob: OK, so, what were their reasons? They said they obstruct sightlines – they block the views of some older landmarks.

Neil: They also threaten London's cultural identity – and some think they're just plain ugly. Using the word 'plain' in this context emphasises the adjective that follows. Just plain ugly – means: very ugly.

Rob: Indeed, well that's the opinion of this group, but not of all Londoners. Nonetheless, they're working to halt – or to stop – the incoming tide of new skyscrapers. An incoming tide is the rise of the sea that happens every day, which makes it come further into the land. A strong image – and a lovely idiom to use when something is happening more and more.

Neil: Yes, earlier we heard the phrasal verb 'spring up'. Which similar phrasal verb was used by the reporter?

BBC reporter, Jonathan Savage:

They say more than 200 more skyscrapers are being thoughtlessly thrown up across London.

Rob: Thrown up. If something is thrown up, it's made quickly and without a lot of care.

Neil: But be careful – to 'throw up' also has a different meaning – which is to vomit or be sick! Rob, have you got a head for heights?

Rob: I've certainly got a head for heights and it doesn't make me sick being up high.

Neil: Well, in that case you are unlikely to throw up from the top of one of these buildings!

Rob: Indeed, well, back to the ground level to answer today's question! Earlier I asked you when St Paul's Cathedral was finished. Was it in 1508, 1608 or 1708?

Neil: And I said 1708.

Rob: OK. And you were right. They actually started building it back in 1675.

Neil: Ah yes, not too long after the Great Fire of London in 1666, which is why they had to rebuild it.

Rob: Thank you Neil, and thank you everyone for listening. Do join us again next time for more 6 Minute English. Bye.

Vocabulary and definitions

quirky-	unusual and odd, but in a good way;
modest-	quite small or insignificant compared with other things of the same type;
dwarfed-	made to seem small compared to something else;
sprung up-	suddenly appeared;
irreverently-	without showing proper respect;
obstruct-	stop, block, or make something difficult to do;
plain-	very; used for emphasising the adjective that follows it;
tide-	(here) increasing amounts of something;
thrown up-	built or made quickly and without much care;
a head for heights-	a feeling of being comfortable in high places;

5. Feeling good about your country

Rob: Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English from bbclearningenglish. Now, is there anything that makes you feel good about your country? This is what I'm talking about with Finn today. Hello Finn.

Finn: Hi Rob. Yes, this is something we call national pride. Pride is a feeling of pleasure and satisfaction that you get because you or people or places connected with you have done something good.

Rob: So it is a good feeling. We can also say 'to take pride in something' so we feel good about doing something.

Finn: Some people in Britain – or the United Kingdom - recently felt proud when it was announced the first ever British astronaut is to go to the International Space Station. An astronaut is a person who has trained to go into space.

Rob: We will talk more about this and what makes us proud soon. First I need to set you a question, Finn.

Finn: And hopefully I will take pride in getting it right, Rob?

Rob: Maybe. Do you know the nationality of the first astronauts to live in the International Space Station back in the year 2000?

- a) Russian
- b) Ukrainian
- c) American

Finn: I'm going to say a) Russian.

Rob: I will let you know the answer later on. So, let's talk more about national pride. Commander Tim Peake is to be the first British man to go to the International Space Station.

Finn: Many people in the UK feel pride that he is going to fly the flag for Britain. In other words, he is going to represent Britain in space.

Rob: Yes, it's a good feeling to know that a person from your country is involved in space exploration.

Finn: Well let's hear from Tim Peake. What words does he use to describe his feelings?

Commander Tim Peake: I don't think I need to tell you I am absolutely delighted with this decision. It was an honour to be selected in 2009 as an astronaut into the European astronaut candidate as British citizen. But it really is a true privilege to be assigned to a long duration mission.

Rob: He feels good! He says he is delighted – so very happy – and he described being chosen for the mission as an honour, so something he is proud to do.

Finn: And finally, he said it was a true privilege. That means he is very lucky to have the opportunity to do it. I suppose, I would feel the same if I was the first astronaut to represent my home country, Scotland.

Rob: Scotland, Finn? Not the United Kingdom!

Finn: Good point, I am both. As you know, the United Kingdom is made up of smaller countries, one of which is Scotland where I am from. Rob, I know you're from England which is also part of the United Kingdom, or the UK. Do you take pride in being English or British?

Rob: Both. I am proud of our English history and countryside and I take pride in seeing England winning at football, sometimes! But I am also proud that England is part of the United Kingdom and how we have such a diverse population – so many different types of people.

Finn: That's true and in the 2012 Olympics we were proud to see British athletes win lots of medals.

Rob: Well, the British are not as proud as some countries are. A BBC survey discovered people from developing and middle-income countries said the way their team performed at the Olympics was very important to their national pride. We asked people on Facebook what made them proud about their country and this is what some of them said:

Finn: Gilberto said: "In Brazil we are proud of Ayrton Senna who won Formula 1, and I am proud because Brazil is a wonderful Country to live in: we have nice places like beaches, waterfall, cities like São Paulo and good people."

Rob: Sambath said: "Angkor Wat is the 7th wonder of the world that makes me proud to be Cambodian."

Finn: Nachiya from India said she is proud of the country's rich culture and that it has one of the great wonders, the Taj Mahal, a wonderful place.

Rob: So people and places can make give you pride. One thing I am proud of is the BBC – the British Broadcasting Corporation. It is something that is respected around the world, something in the United Kingdom we can be proud of.

Finn: Yes, I think it's when you're abroad, in another country, that you realise what makes you proud of your home country.

Rob: Yes, when I am abroad and I see something made in Britain or if I hear music by a British band, it makes me patriotic. That means showing love for your country and being proud of it. Earlier I asked you if you knew the nationality of the first astronauts to live in the International Space Station back in the year 2000?

Finn: I said a) Russian.

Rob: You were sort of right. It was a bit of a trick question. The nationalities of the first people to go to the International Space Station were Russian and American. Well back here on planet earth we just have time for a reminder of some of the words we have heard today.

Finn: Yes. We heard:

national pride

to fly the flag

to represent

delighted

an honour

privilege

respected

patriotic

Rob: Thanks Finn. That's all we have time for today. Please join us again soon for another 6 Minute English.

Vocabulary and definitions

national pride- the things that make us feel good about the country we come from;

to fly the flag- to show support for your country;

to represent- to do/to go on behalf of;

delighted- very happy;

an honour- something you are proud to do;

privilege- opportunity to do something special;

respected- liked by people because of its qualities;
patriotic- show love for your country and to be proud of it;

6. Estate agents' language

Yvonne: Hello, I'm Yvonne Archer and this is 6 Minute English. Today, I've been joined by Alice. Hi Alice!

Alice: Hi Yvonne!

Yvonne: Now Alice, everyone seems to have something to say about estate agents or as they're known in the United States, real-estate agents - the people who help others to buy or sell houses or flats. But what would you say about the language they use?

Alice: Oh, it can be very descriptive and often, they make things sound better than they really are.

Yvonne: Hmm – I have to agree with you on that one. Well, estate agents do seem to have a language all of their own. For example, if they describe a house as 'characterful' – what would you think they meant by that, Alice?

Alice: Well, 'characterful' – so full of character, perhaps old, unusual and maybe that there are quite a few things that need fixing.

Yvonne: Mm-hmm, definitely! But before we go any further, let's have today's question. There are lots of old houses in London Alice, but do you know anything about the smallest house?

Alice: The smallest house? I don't.

Yvonne: Well, the smallest house was built 1805 in central London and it's said that it was used by people who were watching out for body snatchers – people who stole bodies from the nearby cemetery for medical examinations. Anyway, can you guess how wide that house is, Alice?

a) 2.4 metres b) 5.6 metres or c) 1 metre

Alice: Oh, I think I'll go for 2.4 metres. I can't imagine anything smaller.

Yvonne: No - but I will tell you what the correct answer is later on. So, we've already heard some language used by real-estate agents, but what about some of the other

things they write in advertisements. In 1968 it became illegal – against the law – to advertise a house or a flat in a way that might discriminate against different groups of people or encourage discrimination. Listen to this example:

Insert 1:

Beautiful 3 bedroom house, close to temples.

Yvonne: Alice, why might that language be seen as discriminatory?

Alice: Well, it said ‘close to temples’. So maybe that might describe the perfect house for people of a certain religion. But it could also seem like the sellers and the estate agent won’t sell the house to people of any other religion.

Yvonne: Mmm... so using the words ‘close to temples’ could be used to exclude or discriminate against people of other religions, or encourage discrimination against them.

Alice: Hmmm, it's complicated. So estate agents have to be very careful about the language they use to stay within the law.

Yvonne: Now one of the most interesting uses of language in estate agent adverts are the synonyms; finding words which mean the same thing. So, for example, how many ways can you say the word ‘small’ without putting people off?

Here’s Paul Bonnett, an estate agent, who’s said that for the past 30 years, the vocabulary estate agents use hasn’t changed much.

Insert 2: Paul Bonnett

You’ve got the compact, you've got the bijou, you've got the delightful, you've got attractive (charming), you've got panoramic...

Yvonne: So there, we heard words that lots of estate agents use. Alice – can you explain them for us, please?

Alice: Yes – we heard ‘compact’, which means that it’s quite small, but everything that’s needed can still fit into it. We heard ‘bijou’ – that's more elegant. It means that the apartment, the flat, is small and elegant.

Yvonne: Mm... and what about ‘panoramic’?

Alice: Well, that means there's a good view of the area. So you can see all around you from the flat.

Yvonne: Now, Paul Bonnet wanted the adverts from his real-estate agency to stand out from all the others – to be more noticeable so that they'd attract more customers. They decided to make their descriptions more poetic – like poetry.

Alice: And of course, while factual descriptions appeal to or satisfy our heads – our intellect – poetry appeals to our hearts – how we feel.

Yvonne: It does, so here's a factual description for a flat:

Insert 3:

Two bedroom, first floor balcony flat with some superb sea views towards the Palace Pier.

Yvonne: Okay, we know there are two bedrooms, but did the description include anything that appeals to your emotions, Alice?

Alice: Well, not really. I mean 'superb sea views' sounds quite nice, but nothing too attractive.

Yvonne: No, so let's hear a more poetic description of the same flat by the poet, Paul Lyle. He's helping Paul Bonnet write his adverts:

Insert 4: Paul Lyle

The room fills your eyes with air and space. The first thing you see is the sea meeting the sky. The windows lead out onto the terrace, taking you above and beyond with room to breathe.

Yvonne: Would you be interested in viewing that flat, Alice?

Alice: It sounds lovely! Filling your eye with air and space.

Yvonne: So adverts that appeal to our emotions but are also accurate and fair seem to work quite well for us, don't they Alice?

Alice: They do.

Yvonne: Now earlier, I asked you how wide the smallest house in London is and what you said was...

Alice: I think I went for 2.4 metres.

Yvonne: Oh, it's actually 1.05 metres wide – really narrow.

Alice: So – compact and bijou!

Yvonne: Well, that's all for today's "6 Minute English". Join us again.

Vocabulary and definitions

estate agents-	people who sell properties including flats and houses;
characterful-	a word used by estate agents to suggest a building is full of character, perhaps old or unusual;
illegal-	not allowed by the law, against the law;
discriminatory-	unfair; treating some people worse than others;
synonyms-	words that mean the same thing or have a similar meaning;
compact-	small, with just enough space to fit what is needed;
bijou-	small and elegant (in French this means 'jewel');
panoramic-	a good view of the surrounding area;
poetic-	like poetry;
intellect-	idea of what is makes sense;

7. Global traffic jam

Rob: Hello, I'm Rob, welcome to 6 Minute English. I'm joined today by Jennifer.

Jennifer: Hi there, Rob.

Rob: Thanks for joining me. Now, this year the BBC is looking into the future, in key areas of science, politics, education and our personal life in a series called 'What If...'. One of the questions it's asking is 'What if everyone had a car?' and that's what we're discussing today and we'll be looking at some of the language associated with driving and traffic.

Jennifer: Well, living in London, I know all about traffic, especially traffic jams – that's where too many cars, lorries and buses get stuck in long queues on the road.

Rob: Yes, they are stuck together, just like jam! And it's a big problem in cities around the world. It could be the situation that one day, all the traffic becomes one long queue and we have a global traffic jam! Today, we will be hearing about some possible solutions that may prevent this problem from happening. But first, I think it's only fair that we begin today's journey with a question.

Jennifer: And this question is for me I suppose?!

Rob: It is. On the subject of traffic jams, your question today is this. In 2010, one of the world's longest jams occurred in Beijing in China. Do you know how long it was? Was it:

- a) 50 kilometres
- b) 100 kilometres
- c) 200 kilometres

Jennifer: They're all very long but I think I will go for a) 50 kilometres.

Rob: OK, well let's find out if you are right at the end of the programme. So we're discussing the question, what if everyone had a car? It's quite a worrying thought 6 Minute English © bbclearningenglish.com 2013 Page 2 of 5 because already there are a billion cars in the world. And it is estimated – or predicted – that by 2050 there will be 4 billion cars.

Jennifer: That really would cause some serious gridlock – that means roads in towns and cities are so blocked that traffic is unable to move.

Rob: It's like that now in some developing countries where there has been a huge increase in car ownership; as people become wealthier, they want to own a car. But in one Indian city for example, that's a big problem, as we can hear now from the BBC's Theo Leggett. What word does he use to describe the chaotic mix of different types of vehicles?

Theo Leggett, BBC correspondent: This is Mumbai, the commercial capital of India, a fast growing city and a potent symbol of India's recent economic success. But it has a problem or to be more precise it has 1.8 million problems. That's how many motor vehicles there are here, a maelstrom of cars, lorries, auto rickshaws and motorbikes, all crammed into roads that can't cope with this much traffic.

Rob: That's Theo Leggett in Mumbai – a city which he describes as a potent symbol – a powerful symbol – of India's economic success. But that success has come at a price – in other words, there is a negative side to the story.

Jennifer: Yes – the traffic, which he describes as a maelstrom – so a confusing, chaotic mix of vehicles which are crammed – bumper to bumper, so squeezed closely together in the city's streets.

Rob: So when the commuters start their journeys - or get behind the wheel - in the morning rush-hour – the busiest time of day – they could spend hours just trying to make a relatively short journey to work.

Jennifer: Well I think it would be quicker to walk! That's certainly a good option in London, where research has found that traffic is slower now than it was 100 years ago.

Rob: So is this the end of the road for cars?

Jennifer: You mean will we stop using them? I think not. And Bjorn Lomborg, Director of Copenhagen Consensus Centre, agrees. Even with good public transport – that's bus and train services – he says we love our cars. What does he think the solution is?

Bjorn Lomborg, Director of Copenhagen Consensus Centre: The solution is not, as many would like it to be, to cut back on cars because people want cars, the solution will have to be technological to find smart ways of getting less polluting cars and cars that can pack much tighter and get much more efficiently around town.

Rob: Right – so the solution is technological. Better technology to make cars less gas-guzzling, so using less fuel, which causes less pollution and they need to be smaller too.

Jennifer: Yes, one company is already designing an M.I.T. City car which actually folds. Another is designing a thinner car with two wheels – like a motorbike but more stable.

Rob: And I've heard about self-driving robot cars that can save space on the road by driving closer to the car in front. All very clever ideas. But there is one thing you can't change – and that's the driver! And come on, Jen, who's the worst – men or women drivers?

Jennifer: It's definitely men! Women drivers are very safe at all time in my experience.

Rob: I thought you'd say that! There's one thing you can't change – your answer to today's question. Earlier, I asked you, in 2010, one of the World's longest jams occurred in Beijing in China. Do you know how long it was?

- a) 50 kilometres
- b) 100 kilometres

c) 200 kilometres

Jennifer: And I guessed a) 50 kilometres.

Rob: And, I'm afraid you were wrong – a bit too short. This traffic jam was 100 km long. It happened on the Beijing to Tibet Expressway and lasted 12 days! I wouldn't like to have been stuck in that. OK Jennifer, before we go, could you remind us of some of the words we learned today?

Rob: Thanks Jennifer. Well, that's it for today.

Vocabulary and definitions

traffic jams-	a queue of vehicles on a road that are not moving, or moving very slowly;
gridlock-	a situation where there are so many vehicles on the road that none of them can move;
a maelstrom-	a situation that is confusing and chaotic;
bumper to bumper-	cars travelling close together and almost touching;
to get behind the wheel-	to start driving a car;
the end of the road-	a point where you cannot continue any further;
gas-guzzling-	using a lot of fuel;

8. The extinction of men

Neil: Hello and welcome to Six-Minute English from BBC Learning English, I'm Neil and with me today is Rosie.

Rosie: Hi there.

Neil: Well, today we're talking about men.

Rosie: That sounds interesting.

Neil: It is very interesting especially if you're a man because it seems we've had our existence extended.

Rosie: I'm sorry?

Neil: Well, some previous scientific research had suggested that the Y chromosome, which is responsible for men's sex organs and hormones, is rotting away!

Rosie: Oh dear. Are you going to make it till the end of the programme, Neil?

Neil: Ah yes – even the most pessimistic findings suggested that men had 100 thousand years left, so I think 6 minutes is ok! Before we get into this story though, I have a quiz question for you, Rosie. Are you ready?

Rosie: Yes, I am.

Neil: It's a simple question. What is the ratio of men to women in the world? Is it

a) Equal – so 100 males to every 100 females.

b) 101 males to every 100 females.

c) 100 males to every 105 females.

Rosie: Well, I have absolutely no idea. So, I am going to guess and I am going to say c) 100 males to every 105 females.

Neil: OK, we'll find out at the end of the programme.

Rosie: So, tell me more about this new research into the possible extinction of men.

Neil: Well it now seems that men can breathe a sigh of relief. Scientists compared the decline in the male human's Y chromosome – remember that's the thing that's responsible for deciding the sex of a child – with that of the rhesus monkey.

Rosie: OK. That's the monkey that we separated from 25 million years ago.

Neil: That's right. And their conclusion was that the Y chromosome is depleted but it's still got all of the vital bits.

Rosie: Lucky you! Here's Jennifer Hughes from the Whitehead Institute in Cambridge Massachusetts. She was in charge of the research:

Jennifer Hughes, Whitehead Institute in Cambridge Massachusetts

I think that the odds of the Y losing any more genes are pretty slim. It appears that it's been stable for 25 million years and that is a good indication that's it going to be stable for many many millions of years to come and the genes that remain on the Y probably have very important functions and therefore natural selection is doing a very good job of preserving those genes.

Rosie: She said the odds of the Y chromosome losing any more genes are pretty slim – meaning it's unlikely. Genes are the parts of cells which have the information which passes characteristics from a parent to a child.

Neil: So it sounds like us males are safe for many millions of years to come.

Rosie: She also added that natural selection is doing a very good job of preserving the genes.

Neil: Natural selection is the way animals die when they are weak or living in unsuitable surroundings. Meanwhile the stronger ones continue to live. Let's have another listen to that interview with Jennifer Hughes, who's in charge of the research:

Jennifer Hughes, Whitehead Institute in Cambridge Massachusetts

I think that the odds of the Y losing any more genes are pretty slim. It appears that it's been stable for 25 million years and that is a good indication that's it going to be stable for many many millions of years to come and the genes that remain on the Y probably have very important functions and therefore natural selection is doing a very good job of preserving those genes.

Neil: Now here's an interesting fact, Rosie. Did you know that men's sex chromosomes are not as sophisticated as female ones?

Rosie: No I didn't know that, but it doesn't come as a surprise to me!

Neil: I thought you might say that. But you know what – I'm happy having less sophisticated chromosomes if it means men continue to live for a little longer. Now there's only one way to end this programme, Rosie, and that is to imagine a world without men.

Rosie: OK, well for a start more would get done.

Neil: Are you suggesting that men are lazy?

Rosie: Well, they can be. My boyfriend, for example, had never used a washing machine until he was 30 years old.

Neil: Right, well we're getting into stereotypes here! So how about this one – if there were only women in the world, you'd never get into the bathroom.

Rosie: OK, I'll give you that one. I agree that women do spend longer in the bathroom than men.

Neil: And who's going to catch spiders and mice for you?

Rosie: Ah, now that is absolutely not true! My boyfriend is terrified of mice. In fact he ran away from one in the kitchen just last night.

Neil: Well, to be honest, I don't really like mice either, I must say. But what about lifting heavy things? I am always expected to do heavy lifting, which I hate by the way.

Rosie: Yes I confess that men are useful for that. And also for opening jars with the lids too tightly screwed on. And on a more serious note, I think there would probably be far fewer wars if there were only women. I think women would be more likely to talk problems over than resort to violence.

Neil: Well you might be right there but it's difficult to say because most of the world's leaders are men of course. OK Rosie, this entertaining debate must come to an end. We need an answer to the question. I asked what the ratio is of men to women in the world. Is it

- a) Equal – so for every 100 males there are 100 females.
- b) 101 males to every 100 females.
- c) 100 males to every 105 females.

What did you say?

Rosie: I said c) 100 males to every 105 females

Neil: And you were completely wrong. It's 101 males to every 100 females. Do join us again for more 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. Bye for now!

Vocabulary and definitions

chromosome-	a very small structure in animal or plant cells;
hormones-	chemical substances in the body that influence cell function;
pessimistic-	expecting bad things to happen;
ratio-	numerical expression of the relative sizes between two or more values;
extinction-	a situation in which a life form stops existing;
breathe a sigh of relief-	feel happy that something unpleasant stops;
depleted-	reduced by a large amount;
genes-	units in cells that control qualities passed on through generations;
natural selection-	a process in nature that determines chances of survival;

stereotypes-

a fixed idea or image that people have about something;

9. London English: Cockney

Yvonne: Hello, I'm Yvonne Archer.

Alice: I'm Alice.

Yvonne: And this is 6 Minute English! Now, like me, you were born in London, weren't you Alice?

Alice: Yes I was.

Yvonne: Were you born within the sounds of Bow bells, in the East End of London?

Alice: No, I wasn't born close enough to hear the bells ringing from a certain church in Bow.

Yvonne: Ah, so that means officially, you're not a Cockney. But I imagine like me Alice, you're probably interested in "Evolving English – One Language, Many Voices". It's an exhibition at the British Library which includes a whole section about London English.

Alice: London English - how interesting!

Yvonne: Hmm, I thought so. Now before we continue, Alice - I've got a tricky little question for you! Are you ready?

Alice: I am.

Yvonne: OK - in August of 2009, a business decided to officially recognise the Cockney language by delivering its services using Cockney rhyming slang for three months. Now can you guess what type of business it was?

- a) a hotel
- b) a restaurant or
- c) a financial business

Alice: Oh, I'm going to guess 'a restaurant', you know, maybe something like a fish and chips restaurant?

Yvonne: Hmm, that's a nice answer. But as usual, you'll just have to wait until later on to find out the correct answer! Now the exhibition at the British Library tells us about the 1500 year history of the English language, as used by people around the world. And of course, there's information about the Cockney dialect in the section on London English too.

Alice: Oh that's really good.

Yvonne: Mm. Now if I say, "Hello me ole china" – am I being rude, Alice?

Alice: Oh, no - not at all, that's quite friendly. You're using Cockney rhyming slang to say: "Hello my old mate - my old friend". So in Cockney rhyming slang, a word is replaced by another word or phrase that rhymes with it. So here, "china" from "a china plate" is used instead of "mate". Hello me ole china!

Yvonne: OK, Cockney rhyming slang was, and is still sometimes used in the East End of London, mainly by working people. It's changed over the years. So let's hear from the exhibition's curator, Johnny Robinson:

Insert 1: BBC Radio London

In London today, we do still hear that traditional Cockney that's been around for a long time, but also we get British Asian English speakers, London Jamaican speakers. And so that's been going on for, you know, a thousand years – people coming into contact with each other and gradually changing the sounds and the words and the vocabulary that we hear.

Yvonne: So people of Asian and of Jamaican descent, for example, speak their own versions of London English, including Cockney. And as they've come into contact with people who speak traditional Cockney, it's changed.

Alice: That's right - as people immigrate to London, they influence the sounds, the words, the vocabulary that we hear. But of course, as people who speak traditional Cockney move out of London, they also take that language with them.

Yvonne: So, we can also hear it outside the East End of London too. You know what Alice, I think of Cockney rhyming slang as a sort of code. When I was a child, adults would speak it around me in Hackney because they didn't want me to know what they were saying.

Alice: What a good idea! And it's said that working-class people in the East End of London started speaking it because they didn't want the ruling-class to understand their conversations.

Yvonne: That's right. Now I'd also say that Cockney rhyming slang gives East Enders a strong sense of identity, just like any other language.

Alice: That's true. If we hear someone speaking Cockney or Cockney rhyming slang, we immediately know they've got roots in the East End.

Yvonne: That's true. OK, here's a treat! Let's hear Paul Ross from BBC Radio London's Breakfast Show reading out a message from a listener. But, it's all in Cockney rhyming slang. How much will we understand?

Insert 2: BBC Radio London

"Morning Gaby and Paul", says Ian on the Dartford Crossing, "Woke up this morning, had a jimmy, had a dig in the grave, cleaned me corned beef, put on me trousers, put me wallet in me sky, came down the apples and pears, got in mi jam jar and I'm now on me way to work - or in my case" says Ian, "shirk".

Yvonne: Ooh, so what have you got for us, Alice?

Alice: Well, Ian from Dartford Crossing said: "had a dig in the grave" – "grave" - shave. So he shaved when he woke up.

Yvonne: Ian also "cleaned his corned beef". Did you get that one, Alice?

Alice: Yeah – "he cleaned his corned beef" – so that's cleaning his teeth.

Yvonne: Excellent! Shall we hear the last part of that again? It's quite fast.

Alice: Yeah.

Insert 3: BBC Radio London

"... came down the apples and pears, got in me jam jar and I'm now on me way to work – or in my case" says Ian, "shirk".

Yvonne: He "came down the apple and pears" – meaning "stairs".

Alice: And then he got into his "jam jar" – his car - he got into his car.

Yvonne: Now before we go, it's time for the answer to today's question. Earlier, I told you that in August of 2009, a business decided to officially recognise the Cockney

language. And it did this by delivering its services using Cockney rhyming slang for three months. But, what type of business was it, Alice?

Alice: I thought it might be a restaurant selling something like fish and chips.

Yvonne: Good idea. But no, it was actually the financial institution.

Alice: Oh, how bizarre! Why?

Yvonne: Well, they did it via their cash machines and they thought it would be fun if it asked you: "please enter your Huckleberry Finn".

Alice: Ha, ha, "Huckleberry Finn" – pin!

Yvonne: Exactly. Anyway, we do hope you've had fun with us today on "6 Minute English" and that you'll join us again soon.

Vocabulary and definitions

evolving-	gradually changing, developing and adapting;
dialect-	version of a language spoken by a particular group of people or in a particular area;
curator-	person in charge of gathering objects for exhibitions in museums or galleries;
descent-	here, a person's family background, specifically the nationality of their family;
immigrate-	to come to live in a country after leaving your own;
code-	here, a secret language or system of replacing words with others so that only certain people can understand its meaning;
ruling class-	a group of the most powerful of people in charge of government;
sense of identity-	special things about a particular group of people which they share and can be recognised by;
roots-	here, the place where a person comes from;
delivering its services-	making its products and help available to customers;

10. The London Tube

Yvonne: This is 6 Minute English, I'm Yvonne Archer and Alice has kindly joined me for today's programme. Hello Alice.

Alice: Hi Yvonne.

Yvonne: Now Alice, how do you get around London?

Alice: Ooh – by bus, bicycle and usually the Tube.

Yvonne: Aha, and most people would agree that the London Underground – ‘the Tube’ - is the best way to get around this city. But many people have a love-hate relationship with the underground – we either love it or hate it.

Insert 1: Tube announcement

(Ladies and gentlemen)...because of earlier signal failure, the Metropolitan Line has severe delays and Hammersmith & City, Circle and Victoria Lines are all operating with minor delays. We have a good service and operation on all of our other London Underground lines (baby crying).

Alice: Oh dear, more delays – that's when the Tube is running late and doesn't come along when we expect it to. And that makes it unreliable.

Yvonne: And the thing I hate most is that on a crowded carriage – or compartment – I always have to stand under someone's armpit – and they don't always smell very nice!

Alice: Oh, Yvonne – you poor thing. It's probably because you're not that tall, right?

Yvonne: Anyway, there is a lot to love about the Tube as well. It's reasonably fast, it covers a wide area and it has a long history. Now, it's time for today's question,

Alice. During the last financial year, how many kilometres did Tube trains travel? Was it about equal to:

- a) 72 trips to the moon and back
- b) 85 trips to the moon and back or
- c) 90 trips to the moon and back

Alice: Oh, I've got no idea, so I'm going to guess and go for the big one. 90 trips to the moon and back.

Yvonne: Mmmm – a very brave guess! But we'll find out whether you've given us the right answer or not later on. Now, if you live or work in London, or even if you've only ever used the Tube once as a visitor to Britain, you'll probably have an opinion on it.

Alice: Yes, tourists and visitors to London who I've spoken to say they find it quite simple to use and that the map is very good. It's difficult to get lost underground.

Yvonne: Hmm, it is. When our colleague Natalie first arrived in London from Northern Ireland, one thing about the Tube really surprised her.

Insert 2: Natalie

Nobody speaks to each other on the Tube; nobody looks at each other either most of the time. And at first, it was strange being that close to strangers, but you just have to get on with it or you'll not get on the Tube.

Yvonne: So Natalie found it strange to be standing so close to people she didn't know – strangers – because the Tube was so crowded.

Alice: She soon realised that if she didn't 'get on with it', squeeze into a carriage and travel in cramped conditions at rush hour, she might never go anywhere.

Yvonne: Mm, Natalie was most surprised that people don't really speak to each other on the Tube. And do you know, it's true. We do avoid eye contact with other people, but I'm not sure why? But I'm a Londoner, and of course, I think lots of us are quite friendly.

Alice: I think it happens in all big cities. When there are lots of people in small, public places, people avoid eye contact or talking to each other.

Yvonne: Now let's hear from Wang Fei, another of our colleagues. He's from China, but has a much more romantic view of the Tube. Let's listen to part of this rather poetic piece he created about the sounds we hear underground:

Insert 3: Wang Fei

I hear a rumbling noise begin quietly, then grow louder and louder, building up to a noise explosion as the train comes into the station. (This is South Kensington...). I hear the beeping sound and the doors open and close. I hear the clacking sound of the track, a constant soundtrack to people silently reading newspapers and books on the train.

Yvonne: Aw, Alice, that might certainly make us feel a little differently about the Tube, don't you think?

Alice: Yes, it often takes fresh eyes to look at something we take for granted.

Yvonne: That's true. So Wang Fei used quite a few adjectives to describe some of the sounds we heard there as we travel on the Tube. Alice, remind us of a few please.

Alice: Sure. Wang Fei describes the sudden, loud sound that we hear as the train arrives at a station as 'a noise explosion'. But first, the train makes a quiet, rumbling noise that grows louder and louder.

Yvonne: Mmm, that was lovely, because it's the same word we use to describe the sound our stomachs make when we're hungry. Our stomachs rumble. They make a rumbling sound.

Alice: Then there was 'beeping' - that's the sound we hear as the doors open and close on the carriages. And this beeping's really important for blind or visually impaired people to know when the doors are open or shut.

Yvonne: Yes, because the beeping sound lets them know when it's safe to get on and off the train.

Alice: We also heard about the 'clacking' sound – which Wang Fei says is a continuous sound that we hear in the background. So it's like the music in a film; he calls it 'a constant soundtrack'.

Yvonne: 'A constant soundtrack'. Well, I hope we'll both think about all those things next time we're stuck on a Tube train, Alice.

Alice: I hope so.

Yvonne: And before we go, our question! I asked you Alice: during the last financial year, how many kilometres did Tube trains travel, in terms of trips to the moon and back? And your answer was?

Alice: I think I said 90.

Yvonne: Yes, 90 trips to the moon and back.

Alice: Amazing!

Yvonne: Thanks Alice, that was fun! Do join us again soon for more "6 Minute English".

Both: Bye!

Vocabulary and definitions

get around-	travel around;
the Tube-	the London Underground train system;
a love-hate relationship-	relationship (often not romantic) where feelings towards someone or something vary from love to hate;
delays-	when things are later than expected or planned;
unreliable-	cannot be depended on;
get on with it-	hurry up or do something you might find difficult;
eye contact-	to look at someone while they are looking at you;
take for granted-	don't understand the value of;
visually impaired-	not able to see properly;
soundtrack-	music used in or made for a film;

12 Scottish Independence

Rob: Welcome to 6 Minute English with me Rob...

Neil: ...and me Neil.

Rob: Today we're talking about national independence - that's when one nation is free from control by another country. Neil, can you think of any countries that have become independent?

Neil: Well, Scotland is talking a lot about this at the moment.

Rob: Yes, it is. It's a big political issue which we'll talk more about soon. And of course we'll be looking at some words related to independence. But let's start with a question. How well do you know your history? The Declaration of Independence was made by thirteen American colonies that were fighting for freedom from the British Empire. But do you know what year that declaration – or announcement – was made? Was it:

a) 1776

b) 1786

c) 1796

Neil: I am pretty sure it's a) 1776.

Rob: You sound quite confident, don't you, but I'll let you know the answer later on. Let's talk more about independence. We often hear about groups of people campaigning or fighting for independence from the country that rules them.

Neil: Yes, like the Basque people in Spain, or the Kurds in Iraq. This is when a certain group of people want their own homeland to preserve – that's keep alive – their culture or beliefs.

Rob: And sometimes, a whole nation wants to break away from the country that rules it because it feels it would be better for its people. That's what's happening in Scotland right now, isn't it Neil?

Neil: Well, not quite. Not everyone in Scotland wants to break away from the United Kingdom. This is a plan suggested by the ruling political party in Scotland – the Scottish National Party. But they are asking people to vote on the decision.

Rob: And this vote on a single issue – or referendum – is happening in September. Politicians who want Scotland to be separate from the UK are trying to persuade the public to vote in favour of independence. Other politicians are trying to persuade people to vote 'no'.

Neil: Independence would mean Scotland would be able to control things like its tax system, its immigration policy and people would have a Scottish passport.

Rob: Well, let's hear from Alex Salmond, the Leader of the Scottish National Party, talking when he first announced there would be a referendum. What words did he use to describe how he wanted the debate – or discussion – on independence to be? Alex Salmond, Leader of the Scottish National Party Divergent views are the very essence of democracy; robust debate is part of what makes us Scottish. The exchanges, the criticism and the debate must be passionate – how else could it be in Scotland? But let these contributions be based on fact, reason, logic, rather than smears, or allegations or misinformation.

Neil: Alex Salmond said divergent views are the very essence of democracy – so all different views are important and that is what makes a democracy. And he encouraged debate about independence.

Rob: Yes and he said the debate should be robust – so strong, firm and determined...

Neil: ...and it should be passionate – expressing powerful emotions.

Rob: But most importantly, the debate should be based on real information – facts – not misinformation or what he calls smears – in other words, lies.

Neil: Well, Scottish people will go to the ballot box in a few months' time to vote. And if they vote 'yes' for independence, we, Rob, might have to show our passports if we cross the border from England into Scotland.

Rob: Imagine that! And the Scottish people might lose the BBC – the British Broadcasting Corporation – and get their own smaller Scottish Broadcasting Corporation.

Neil: Of course, there's always been a – let's say – friendly rivalry between the two countries. And we are used to our nations competing independently in football and rugby tournaments.

Rob: Of course, being an Englishman I know who's best! But seriously, the idea of an independent Scotland isn't that strange. The Act of Union, which brought Scotland together with England and Wales, only came into being in 1707. Before that, Scotland was independent.

Neil: And only last century, Ireland fought for its independence from Britain.

Rob: And in 1947, India succeeded in becoming independent from British rule, a day that's now commemorated – or remembered – as a national holiday.

Neil: But, while some countries aim to have self-rule – another word for independent rule – others want to share things which are usually unique to a country. For example, the member states of the European Union work together in trade and some share the same currency – the Euro. Well, this brings us back to your question Rob, when some American states declared independence from British rule.

Rob: Yes, that was the Declaration of Independence – but what year was it?

Neil: I said a) 1776.

Rob: And of course, you were right. It was 1776. This was the beginning of a new nation that became the USA – and Independence Day is now celebrated every year on the 4th of July. I wonder if Scotland will be celebrating its own independence day in just a few years' time? OK Neil, please could you remind us of some of the independence-related words that we've heard today.

Neil: OK, here we go:

independence

declaration

campaigning

referendum

in favour of

debate

divergent views

robust

passionate

smears

rivalry

commemorated

self-rule

Rob: Thanks Neil. We hope you've enjoyed today's 6 Minute English. Please join us again soon for another programme.

Neil: Goodbye.

Rob: Bye.

Vocabulary and definitions

independence - (here) freedom from political control by another country

declaration - an official statement saying something is going to happen

campaigning - trying to persuade other people or the government to change something

referendum - a time when everyone in a country can vote on a particular issue

in favour of - supporting an idea

debate - a serious discussion of a subject in which many people take part

divergent views - different opinions

robust - (here) firm and determined

passionate - showing strong beliefs, enthusiasm or emotion

smears - lies that damage someone's reputation

rivalry - competing with each other

commemorated - remembered (a person or event)

self-rule - when people from a country or region choose their own government