



Perseid Meteor Shower (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Are you interested in astronomy?
2. What do you know about our solar system and our galaxy?
3. Have you ever seen a shooting star?
4. Do people in your country make a wish when they see a shooting star?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. The best nights to look for the Perseid meteor shower are those around the middle of August.
2. Its display of shooting stars will be visible for about a week.
3. Shooting stars are not really stars.
4. While they are in space, they are called meteorites.
5. The Comet 109P/Swift Tuttle takes 122 years to travel around the Sun.
6. It will be seen again in 2025.
7. Swift Tuttle is about the same size as the comet that is thought to have killed the dinosaurs.
8. The best way to see the Perseids is to lie on your back in a park or in the country.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why will it be best to look for meteors after midnight?
2. Where do meteors come from?
3. What happens when they enter the Earth's atmosphere?
4. What do astronomers think Comet 109P/Swift Tuttle will be like next time it passes?
5. How did Swift Tuttle get its name?
6. What information does the article give us about Perseus?
7. What does NASA (the National Aeronautics and Space Administration) say about the meteors?
8. How can your phone help you to see the Perseids?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense.)

1. We drove to the theatre an hour early in order to _____ the rush hour traffic.
2. The little boy's face _____ when his uncle arrived with a big tub of ice-cream.
3. After the demolition of the building, all that was left was a pile of _____ and other debris.
4. When skiing, you should wear sunglasses to protect your eyes from _____ sunlight.
5. The birds in my garden wake me up when they start singing just before _____ every day.
6. One of the best places to go _____ in Europe is the Kerry Dark Sky Reserve in Ireland.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 1)

Read the text and decide which word in brackets best fits each gap.

Our galaxy, the Milky Way, is a spiral galaxy that formed around 14 billion years ago. If we ¹_____ (will/would/could/can) look down on it, it would look like a gigantic wheel rotating in space and ²_____ (measured/measuring/measures/measurement) approximately 100,000 light-years in diameter.

The Milky Way is made ³_____ (up of/from/with/out of) stars, planets, asteroids and clouds of gas and dust ⁴_____ (referred/named/called/known) as nebulae. Everything in the galaxy, including our Solar System, revolves around its centre. Our Sun and its planets, one of ⁵_____ (whose/which/whom/them) is Earth, are 26,000 light years from the galactic centre and it takes 250 million years for them to complete one revolution around the centre.

To the ⁶_____ (nude/naked/sole/lone) eye, the galaxy looks like a white ⁷_____ (dot/spot/line/streak) across the sky. This is the why the Romans called it the Via Galactica, meaning "the road of milk". In 1610, with the ⁸_____ (aid/use/view/addition) of a telescope, Galileo Galilei saw that it consisted of billions of stars.

F – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

1. How many constellations of the Zodiac can you name?
2. Can you identify any of these constellations in the night sky?
3. Do you know your star sign?
4. If so, do you know what personality traits are associated with it? Are they true in your case?
5. Do you believe it's possible to obtain information about a person's future by studying the positions of the stars and planets?
6. Do you ever read your horoscope? If so, why?

G – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

1. What expressions are used in your language to express surprise and admiration?
2. Are they slang expressions?
3. Do you know how they originated?
4. What other foreign words and phrases are used frequently in your country?
5. Do you think there are too many? Why (not)?

Jonathan Yeo's King Charles III (B1 -Lower Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Have you ever had your portrait painted?
2. If so, who painted it? If not, would you like to?
3. Do you think portraits should be expressionistic or realistic? Why?
4. Should they make the subject look more attractive? Why (not)?
5. Can you name any of your country's famous portrait painters of the present or past?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Nobody liked Jonathan Yeo's portrait of King Charles III.
2. Yeo was worried about the response to his portrait.
3. He says he didn't know what King Charles really looked like till he began painting him.
4. Yeo became famous around 20 years ago.
5. He has already painted some members of the Royal Family.
6. It took Yeo over two years to complete the portrait.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What were some of the criticisms about the portrait of Charles III?
2. What was unusual about it?
3. What aspect of Charles's character did Yeo want to express?
4. How did Yeo create his unauthorised portrait of US president George W. Bush?
5. What happened during the time Yeo was working on Charles's portrait?
6. How many times did King Charles have to pose for the picture?
7. Why did Yeo paint a butterfly above the King's shoulder?
8. What surprised the King when he first saw the painting?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from plural to singular.)

1. There are reporters outside the police station. The chief of police is about to make a _____.
2. This report's awful. We can't send it to the manager. It's so _____ written!
3. A helicopter was _____ over the town centre last night. I wonder what it was doing.
4. Fingerprints were first used to identify criminals in the _____ 20th century.
5. The finance minister finally _____ her plans for the economy yesterday afternoon.
6. The committee will discuss this matter at its next _____ in September.

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 6)

Write one word only in each space.

Jonathan Yeo was born in London in 1970. As a child, he had ¹_____ idea he would one day become a famous artist. In fact, he wanted to become a film director. Yeo's parents ²_____ him to an exclusive private school, at ³_____ he felt out of place because he was not very academic. However, at the ⁴_____ of ten he won a school pottery prize and realised he could be creative. He didn't start painting ⁵_____ he was in his early twenties and suffered from cancer. While he was recovering from it, he taught ⁶_____ to paint.

F – Write about it

Write about one of your country's best-known contemporary painters. Mention:

- where he/she is from;
- when he/she was born;
- what kind of pictures he/she paints;
- what his/her best-known works are.

Sir David Attenborough (B2 -Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Are you interested in wildlife?
2. If so, do you ever watch wildlife documentaries on TV?
3. Have you ever heard of David Attenborough?

B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and fill in the blanks.

1. David Attenborough has made over _____ documentaries.
2. He studied _____ at Cambridge University.
3. He started working at the BBC as a trainee in _____.

4. He and reptile curator Jack Lester created a popular TV series called _____ Quest.
5. In the 1960s, he became _____ and director of programmes of the new channel BBC Two.
6. His 1979 series Life on Earth was watched by about _____ people worldwide.
7. Attenborough is deeply worried about the menaces of _____.
8. In 2022, the _____ Programme named him as a "Champion of the Earth".

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. When did David Attenborough start to become passionately interested in the natural world?
2. Why did his boss at the BBC think he wasn't suitable to be a TV presenter?
3. How did Attenborough end up presenting the new BBC programme?
4. What kinds of programmes did he introduce to BBC Two, besides scientific programmes?
5. What made Life on Earth different from other nature programmes?
6. Which scene from the series demonstrated Attenborough's feelings for animals?
7. How have his programmes contributed to our knowledge and understanding of life on this planet?
8. What have his most recent programmes mainly been concerned with?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense or change from singular to plural.)

1. The final scene of the film was very _____. Most of the audience had tears in their eyes.
2. Two boys were fighting in the school playground, so a teacher _____ to stop them.
3. The landscape was _____ and uninviting. There were no trees or bushes, just rocks.
4. The tour guide _____ us that it wasn't safe to drink tap water in that country.
5. Jack and Louis haven't worked for the company very long. They're still _____.
6. John Stuart Mill was a 19th-century philosopher and _____ of free speech.

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 4)

Complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence, using the word given. Do not change the word given. Use between 2 and 5 words including the word given.

- Example: No broadcaster in the world is as famous as David Attenborough.
 MOST David Attenborough is the world's most famous broadcaster.
1. Attenborough is still educating us about life on Earth after more than 70 years.
BEEN Attenborough _____ about life on Earth since the 1950s.
 2. For decades he has also warned about damage to the environment.
SPENT He _____ about damage to the environment.
 3. Jack Lester should have presented the programme.
TO Jack Lester _____ the programme.
 4. Attenborough's life went in a new direction in the 1960s
TURN Attenborough's life _____ in the 1960s.
 5. Life on Earth had an audience of hundreds of millions of people worldwide.
WATCHED Life on Earth _____ hundreds of millions of people worldwide.
 6. He became an iconic figure in British cultural life as a result of the series.
HIM The series _____ in British cultural life.

F – Write about it

Write about an impressive documentary that you've seen recently. Mention:

- when/where you saw it;
- what it was about;
- who made it;
- why it impressed you.

The Internet's Final Frontier: Remote Amazon Tribes (C1 -Advanced)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you remember a time when there was no internet?
2. If you do, how did the internet transform your life for the better or for the worse?
3. If you have always had internet, what do you imagine people's lives were like without it?
4. What impact do you think the arrival of the internet would have on a remote Amazon tribe?

B – Listen and answer

Read these statements. Then listen (without reading) and choose the correct answer.

1. The Marubo people live
 - a) in small single-family huts.
 - b) along the Amazon River.
 - c) in isolated villages.
2. They have had high-speed internet
 - a) since last autumn.
 - b) since 2022.
 - c) for just over a year.
3. Tsainama Marubo thinks the internet
 - a) has only brought benefits.
 - b) is very costly.
 - c) has not improved their lives.
4. Starlink's internet service is very successful because
 - a) it's the fastest.
 - b) it can reach any place on earth.
 - c) it's very cheap.
5. Enoque Marubo
 - a) has never lived outside the rainforest.
 - b) was sceptical about the benefits of the internet.
 - c) thought the internet would give his people better opportunities.
6. The Marubo people had no contact with people of other cultures until
 - a) the early 1800s.
 - b) the late 1800s.
 - c) the late 1900s.
7. Allyson Reneau, an American business woman, received a video from Enoque asking for ...
 - a) Starlink equipment.
 - b) money to buy antennas.
 - c) skilled technicians.
8. Internet is available to villagers
 - a) all day, every day.
 - b) only on Sundays.
 - c) seven hours a day and all-day Sunday.
9. Alfred Marubo is worried about the effects of the internet
 - a) on family relations.
 - b) on the morality of young men.
 - c) Both of these.
10. According to Enoque Marubo, the tribe's leaders think the internet
 - a) was a big mistake.
 - b) is now a necessity for the Marubo.
 - c) will lead to war.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why have the Marubo people been so isolated until now?
2. What effect has Starlink had on other parts of the Brazilian rainforest?
3. What does the article tell you about the maloca?
4. Why is it difficult for the Marubo to deal with the problems and dangers of the internet?
5. What information does the article give us about Space X?
6. What changes had there already been in the Marubo's lives after the arrival of the rubber tappers?
7. Why did Marubo leaders turn to Enoque Marubo when they wanted internet connections?
8. Why did the internet endanger the livelihood of the Marubo?
9. What advantages did it bring?
10. What prediction was made about the internet, according to Enoque's father, Sebastiao?

D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural or vice versa.)

1. The recipe for this cake was _____ to me by my grandmother.
2. I missed my train home because the meeting at work _____ till 7 o'clock.
3. _____ are small children who have just learnt or are still learning to walk.
4. James was _____ to start tennis lessons because all his friends played tennis well.

5. If you get a message or email asking for your bank details, you can be sure it's a _____.
6. Every morning, our elderly neighbour _____ to the newsagent's to buy a newspaper.

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test? (Reading and Use of English, Part 2)

Complete the text. Use only one word in each space.

SpaceX stands ¹_____ Space Exploration Technologies Corporation. It is an American company that designs, manufactures and launches rockets and spacecraft. It was ²_____ by American businessman Elon Musk, in 2002, with the goal of revolutionising space travel and making it ³_____ expensive. Musk has stated that his ultimate intention is to set ⁴_____ a sustainable colony on Mars.

SpaceX has already produced the Falcon 9 and Heavy Falcon rockets and the Dragon spacecraft, as ⁵_____ as Starship, which is a cross between a super-heavy rocket and a spacecraft. On its website, SpaceX states its intention to create a future in ⁶_____ millions of people can live and work in space and on other planets. It also invites ⁷_____ who is interested in exploring space to ⁸_____ in a form and apply to go on a future mission.

F – Write about it

Write about the dangers of the internet. Mention:

- the dangers to young children;
- the dangers to teenagers;
- the dangers to elderly people;
- how these dangers could be avoided.

Answers: Perseid Meteor Shower

B – Listen and answer

1. T 2. F – It will be visible for several weeks. 3. T 4. F – They are called meteoroids. 5. T 6. F – It will be seen again in 2125. 7. F – It is twice the size of that comet. 8. T

C – Read and answer

1. Because the moon sets around midnight and so the sky will be darker. 2. They come from the rubble trailing behind a comet. 3. They burn up and display streaks of light. 4. They think it will be as bright as Comet Halle-Bob in 1997. 5. It was named after the two scientists who discovered it separately in 1862. 6. Perseus is a constellation named after a hero from Greek mythology. It lies in the northern sky and is shaped like a sideways Y. Every year it provides the backdrop of the Perseid shower. 7. It says they will travel at 59 kilometres per second and will reach temperatures of 1,650 degrees Celsius. 8. You can use a stargazing app to locate the right place to look.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. avoid 2. lit up 3. rubble 4. dazzling 5. dawn 6. stargazing

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. could 2. measuring 3. up of 4. known 5. which 6. naked 7. streak 8. aid

Answers: Jonathan Yeo's King Charles III

B – Listen and answer

1. F – Some liked it and said it was mysterious and powerful. 2. F – He was unperturbed. 3. F – He says he'd known all his life what King Charles looked like. 4. T 5. T 6. T

C – Read and answer

1. Some of the criticisms were that the portrait was disturbing, satanic or poorly painted. 2. The King is surrounded by vivid red. 3. He wanted to express Charles's deep humanity. 4. He used pornographic images cut out of magazines. 5. Queen Elizabeth died and Charles became king. 6. Four times. 7. Because it was a symbol of Charles's metamorphosis from

prince to king and his interest in the environment. 8. The strong colour surprised him at first.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. statement 2. poorly 3. hovering 4. early 5. unveiled 6. session

E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. no 2. sent 3. which 4. age 5. until/till 6. himself

Answers: Sir David Attenborough

B – Listen and answer

1. a/one hundred 2. natural sciences 3. 1952 4. Zoo 5. controller 6. five hundred million 7. climate change 8. United Nations' Environment

C – Read and answer

1. When he was a child./In his childhood. 2. Because he had big teeth. 3. His colleague Jack Lester fell ill before the first programme. 4. He introduced programmes containing music, arts, drama and comedy. 5. Its camerawork was highly innovative. 6. The scene in which he encountered gorillas in Rwanda. 7. They have given us incredible insights into the lives of animals. 8. They have mainly been concerned with man's destruction of the planet and the bleak future that awaits us.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. moving 2. stepped in 3. bleak 4. warned 5. trainees 6. champion

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. has been educating us 2. has spent decades warning 3. was (supposed) to 4. took a new turn 5. was watched by 6. made him an iconic figure

Answers: The Internet's Final Frontier: Remote Amazon Tribes

B – Listen and answer

1. c 2. a 3. c 4. b 5. c 6. b 7. a 8. c 9. c 10. b

C – Read and answer

1. Because their villages are scattered hundreds of miles along the Itui River, deep in the Amazon rainforest, and some of them can take a week to reach. 2. It has brought high-speed internet to hundreds of tribes across the rainforest. 3. It's a communal hut in which the members of a village sleep, cook and eat together. It's fifty foot tall (about 15 metres) and it has a dirt floor. 4. Because they have not had the same amount of time as modern societies to discover and deal with these dangers. 5. It's a private space company that belongs to Elon Musk. It has launched 6,000 low-orbit satellites to provide the Starlink internet service. 6. They began wearing clothes and some learned to speak Portuguese. They started using firearms for hunting instead of bows and chainsaws instead of machetes for clearing plots. More recently, they have started using motors to drive their boats. 7. Because he had split his life between the forest and the city and he was eager to pull his tribe into the future. He saw the potential of the internet to make his people more autonomous. 8. Because people were spending too much time online and too little time working. If the villagers don't hunt, fish and plant, they don't eat. 9. Leaders of different villages can now coordinate among themselves and contact the authorities. Teachers can share lessons with students in different villages. People can keep in touch with faraway friends and family and they can get help quickly when there's an emergency. 10. A Marubo shaman predicted that a handheld device would be able to connect with the whole world and that first it would be for the good of the people, but later it would bring war.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. passed down 2. dragged on 3. Toddlers 4. eager 5. scam 6. trudges

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test?

1. for 2. founded/started/created 3. less 4. up 5. well 6. which 7. anyone/anybody
8. fill

SpeakUp
