



π Day (A2 - Pre-Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Which school subjects do you like best?
2. Which do you like least?
3. Why, in your opinion, is mathematics considered such an important subject in today's world?
4. Are you good at mathematics?
5. What do you know about π (pi)?

B – Listen and answer

Read these incomplete statements. Then listen (without reading) and complete them.

1. π (pi) is the _____ letter of the Greek alphabet.
2. The first digits of pi are 3.14, but it has an _____ of digits after the decimal point.
3. The decimal representation of pi has been extended to many _____ of digits.
4. Pi Day was founded in _____ by Larry Shaw.
5. In 2019, _____ declared Pi Day the International Day of Mathematics.
6. A Japanese man memorised over _____ digits of pi.
7. Maths skills are used every day when _____ a budget, _____ money and paying bills.
8. Maths also plays a role in art, _____ and space exploration.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. What is the other name for pi?
2. What is pi used to calculate?
3. Who were the first people to make calculations using this number?
4. How did it get the name pi?
5. Why was 14th March chosen as the day on which to celebrate pi?
6. What was Larry Shaw's purpose in founding Pi Day?
7. How is it often celebrated? Why?
8. Why is mathematics important for chess players and athletes?

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. My father taught me to play _____, but I'm not very good at it.
2. It's Sean's birthday, so we've _____ him a cake and we're going to put candles on it.
3. Irene couldn't pay the restaurant _____ because she'd left her credit card at home.
4. Grandad loves to talk about football. If you _____ him, he'll go on about it all evening.
5. In the US and the UK, a _____ is one million, million.
6. A strong password should contain uppercase letters, _____ letters, numbers and symbols.

E – Ready for the A2 KEY English Test? (Paper 1, Part 4)

Choose the best word for each space.

Archimedes was born in about 287 BC in Syracuse, Sicily, which was ¹_____ (after/ever/then) part of Greece. He was one of the greatest mathematicians in history. His obsession with mathematics ²_____ (gave/led/took) him to derive and prove several geometrical theorems, ³_____ (inclusive/included/including) the area of a circle and the volume of a sphere.

Archimedes was ⁴_____ (too/also/as well) an astronomer, physicist and inventor. He invented devices to defend Syracuse from the Romans, like machines that ⁵_____ (dropped/fell/placed) rocks on the enemy and, it is said, a system of mirrors ⁶_____ (to/for/by) focus sunlight on their ships and set fire to them. However, the Romans successfully captured the city in 212 BC, and Archimedes was killed by a Roman soldier.

F – Check your pronunciation

One of the four words in each group has a different vowel sound. Which one?

1. encourage founded circumference countries

2. theory circle earliest version

3. many special meaning measure

4. same ancient celebration irrational

5. moves improve discover computer

G – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

1. Is Pi Day celebrated in your country? If so, how?
2. Do schools in your country devote a lot of time to teaching STEM subjects?
3. If so, do you think this is right? Why (not)?
4. Are STEM subjects less popular with girls in your country?
5. Do you think more girls should be encouraged to study them? Why (not)?

The London Eye (B2 - Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you know of any towns or cities near you that have a Ferris wheel?
2. Have you ever been on one?
3. If so, where? Was it very high? What was the view like? Did you enjoy it?

B – Listen and answer

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

1. The London Eye is located next to the Houses of Parliament.
2. It was not intended to last for 25 years.
3. One of the sponsors of the design competition was a Sunday newspaper.
4. The London Eye is the largest Ferris wheel in the world.
5. The wheel was open to the paying public the day after its inauguration.
6. Guests ride in capsules shaped like eggs.
7. The ride lasts a quarter of an hour.
8. Every year the London Eye is the centre point of London's New Year celebrations.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why was the London Eye built?
2. Who was it designed by?
3. What information does the article give about the size, weight and capacity of the London Eye?

- How was it built?
- Why are there 32 capsules?
- How far can you see from them?
- What other tourist attraction has it been compared to?
- Why is it considered to be a romantic place?

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 from singular to plural.)

- The Statue of Liberty is one of New York City's most famous _____.
- Robbie wanted to relax on his afternoon off, so he went for a _____ walk along the river.
- The late take-off of our return flight was _____ bad weather in Paris.
- Camden is a _____ in North West London.
- Mr Green is a widower. His _____ wife was a well-know concert pianist.
- Crowds had gathered on both _____ of the river to watch the boat race.

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.

The capsules on the London Eye are sealed and air-conditioned. ¹_____ (Every/All/Each/Everyone) can hold up to 25 passengers, who can walk around or sit down. ²_____ (Though/If/Because/Since) there are thirty-two capsules, they are numbered from one to thirty-three. The number thirteen has been left ³_____ (off/out/away/over) because in the United Kingdom it's considered ⁴_____ an (untimely/unlikely/unlucky/odd) number. The wheel turns continuously at 26 cm per second: slow ⁵_____ (almost/quite/enough/even) for passengers to walk on and ⁶_____ (off/out/down/across) at ground level. Only when there are disabled or elderly passengers ⁷_____ (it will/it can/it does/does it) stop moving for a few seconds to ⁸_____ (let/enable/make/get) these to embark and disembark safely.

F – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

- Why do you think Ferris wheels are such popular tourist attractions?
- Have you ever felt afraid or dizzy when looking down from a great height?
- If so, where did it happen? When?
- Why do you think this happens to some people?

The Scottish Broch (B2 -Upper Intermediate)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

- Do you know of any Iron Age sites in your country?
- If so, where are they? Who were the people that inhabited them?
- What has been found at these sites?

B – Listen and answer

Listen to the main article (without reading) and choose the correct answer.

- Brochs are found

a) all over Great Britain.	b) only in Scotland.	c) in many parts of Europe.
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- They were built

a) before 400 BCE.	b) after 100 CE.	c) after 400 BCE.
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- They probably had

a) roofs made of wood or thatch.	b) no roofs.	c) roofs made of tiles.
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4. The word 'broch'

a) is found in many place names. b) is from the Scots language. c) means a farm.

5. Archaeologists now think brochs were

a) forts. b) houses. c) religious structures.

6. Butser Ancient Farm in England is an open-air museum with reconstructions of buildings from

a) the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages. b) Roman and Anglo-Saxon times.

c) all of these periods.

C – Read and answer

Read the main article and answer the questions.

1. Who were the brochs built by?

2. What's striking about them?

3. What do they consist of?

4. Why were they initially thought to be defensive structures?

5. What makes archaeologists now think they were houses?

6. What suggests the people living in them were wealthy?

7. What is experimental archaeology?

8. What is there at Butser Ancient Farm besides reconstructions of ancient buildings?

D – Listen to the interview (Optional)

N.B. This interview is graded as C1, so don't be discouraged if you find it difficult. Try to understand the main points.

Read these statements. Then listen to the interview with Dawn Mackay, without reading, and write T (true) or F (false).

1. Butser Ancient Farm in Hampshire was founded at the beginning of this century.

2. The Caithness Broch Project aims to attempt to build a broch.

3. Dawn Mackay is an archaeologist working on the project.

4. The project started a couple of years ago.

5. Many of the sites proposed for the broch were rejected.

6. The site has now been chosen.

7. Mackay says they will have to experiment to try to build a broch without any mechanical help.

8. Scotland's landscape hasn't changed since the Iron Age.

9. Mackay says there is evidence that a lot of wood was used in the building of brochs.

10. She hopes the project will encourage tourists to come and discover other Caithness attractions.

E – Listen, read and check your answers

Listen to the interview while reading the text. (If you did Exercise D, check your answers while reading.)

F – 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. The primary school in our village is closing down next year because of a _____ of pupils.

2. The Pit Bull Terrier is considered to be the most dangerous _____ of dog.

3. Rob contacted his local _____ to complain about a large hole in the road outside his house.

4. On our last visit to the city, we got a travel card that _____ us to use all public transport.

5. Amelia went for a swim in the sea yesterday _____ _____ the cold wind.

6. A lot of people enjoy doing _____ like sudoku or crosswords in their spare time.

G – Ready for the FIRST Certificate in English? (Reading and Use of English, Part 3)

Use the word in brackets to form a word that fits in the space given.

1. Brochs are _____ (MYSTERY) conical structures found only in Scotland.

2. Archaeologists are still unsure of their origins, use and _____ (SIGNIFY).

3. An incredibly sophisticated level of _____ (ENGINE) was required to build the brochs.

4. The Caithness Broch Project is a charity, so it requires careful _____ (MANAGE) of funds.
5. The project aims to discover how such _____ (MASS) towers were built in drystone.
6. In experimental archaeology, the attempts are part of the _____ (LEARN) process.
7. The people who built the brochs didn't have any lifting _____ (EQUIP).
8. They built using the tools that were _____ (AVAIL) to them at the time.

H – Write about it

Write about an important ancient structure or archaeological site in your country. Mention:

- its location;
 - what it consists of;
 - what is known about it (e.g. when it was built, by whom, what it was used for);
 - whether it is open to visitors.
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Slippery (C1 Advanced)

A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. The protagonist of the story is described as a "slippery character". What do you think this says about his/her behaviour?
2. Can you think of any characters in books or films that you would describe as "slippery"?
3. If so, who? Why?

B – Listen and answer

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

1. Slippery risked dying soon after being born.
2. He/She often got into fights at school.
3. He/She was good at inventing excuses for his/her behaviour.
4. He/She avoided paying taxes but was otherwise an honest person.
5. He/She first met Bernard when they worked together in a restaurant.
6. Slippery followed Bernard because he/she intended to rob him.
7. Bernard had been hired to trace Slippery.
8. He tied Slippery up and locked him/her in a cellar.
9. Slippery managed to escape.
10. After that, Slippery decided never to see Bernard again.

C – Read and answer

Read the article and answer the questions.

1. Why did the midwife drop Slippery soon after he/she was born?
2. How did Slippery's parents feel about their relationship with him/her?
3. How did Slippery avoid being traced by former employers?
4. What made Slippery notice Bernard?
5. How did Bernard trap Slippery?
6. Who had hired Bernard?
7. Why was Slippery able to escape?
8. What did Slippery do before running away from the scene?

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. Dan hated going to school because there was a _____ in his class who kept tormenting him.
2. Our car's great for camping holidays. It's got a big _____ that can hold lots of luggage.
3. If you water a plant too often, its _____ will die because they won't have enough oxygen.

4. The cat's in the bedroom again. He must have _____ in when we weren't looking.
5. I don't like walking home alone because I have to go down a dark _____ to get to my flat.
6. The jeweller _____ over his glasses at the emerald ring.

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test? (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 3 and 6 words including the word given.

Example: The thick carpet in my parents' bedroom saved my life.

OWE I owe my life to the thick carpet in my parents' bedroom.

1. I've been a slippery character all my life.

DAY I've been a slippery character _____ born.

2. It was impossible to throw me into the air and catch me.

WAS Throwing me into the air and catching me _____ question.

3. I was slippery and my tongue was slippery too.

AS My tongue _____ rest of me.

4. Bernard didn't look awkward or isolated.

NOR Bernard _____ isolated.

5. He put his hands round my neck and lifted me off my feet.

GRABBED He _____ the neck and lifted me off my feet.

6. He said there were some people who wished to speak to me.

WORD "There are some people who'd _____ you," he said.

F – Talk about it

In pairs or groups.

1. Do you think Slippery is a man or a woman? Why?
2. Have you come across many people like Slippery?
3. Which do you think is more important in the development of a person's character? Their genes? Their upbringing? Their life experiences?
4. Why do you think so?

Answers: π Day (A2)

B – Listen and answer

1. sixteenth/16th
2. infinite number
3. trillions
4. 1988
5. UNESCO
6. a/one hundred thousand
7. planning – saving
8. music – medicine

C – Read and answer

1. Its other name is the Archimedes constant.
2. It's used to calculate the size/circumference/area of a circle.
3. The Egyptians and the Babylonians.
4. The Welsh mathematician William Jones first gave it the name pi in 1706.
5. Because in some countries like the US, 14th March is written as 3/14, and these numbers are the first three digits of pi.
6. His purpose was to encourage children to take more interest in mathematics.
7. People often bake pies to celebrate it, because the word pi is pronounced the same as 'pie'.
8. Chess players use mathematics to plan their moves. Athletes use it to analyse their speed, timing and strategies.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. chess
2. baked
3. bill
4. encourage
5. trillion
6. lowercase

E – Ready for the A2 KEY English Test?

1. then
2. led
3. including
4. also
5. dropped
6. to

F – Check your pronunciation

1. founded
2. theory
3. meaning
4. irrational
5. discover

Answers: The London Eye (B2)

B – Listen and answer

1. F – It's located next to County Hall, opposite the Houses of Parliament. 2. T 3. T 4. F
– It was the largest when it was built. 5. F – It did not open to the paying public until March 2000. 6. T 7. F – It lasts half an hour./thirty minutes. 8. T

C – Read and answer

1. It was built to celebrate the new millennium./the inauguration of a new era. 2. It was designed by Julia Barfield and her husband David Marks. 3. It's 135 metres tall and 120 metres in diameter and it can carry 800 people per revolution. 4. It was assembled horizontally over the Thames and then pulled into its vertical position. 5. Because there are 32 London boroughs. 6. You can see as far as forty kilometres on a clear day. 7. It has been compared to the Eiffel Tower.

8. Because more than 5,000 marriage proposals have been made on it.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. landmarks 2. leisurely 3. due to 4. borough 5. late 6. banks

E – Ready for the B2 FIRST Certificate in English?

1. each 2. though 3. out 4. unlucky 5. enough 6. off 7. does it 8. enable

Answers: The Scottish Broch (B2)

B – Listen and answer

1. b 2. c 3. a 4. b 5. b 6. c

C – Read and answer

1. They were built by the Caledonian tribes. 2. Their size is striking. The broch on the island of Mousa is 13.3 metres tall. 3. They consist of conical towers constructed with two concentric walls. 4. Because 'broch' means fort and because they had very thick walls without windows. 5. Very few weapons were found. Instead there were agricultural instruments and cooking ware. 6. The pottery found at the site showed that, long before the Roman invasion, the inhabitants of the brochs consumed imported goods like olives and wine from the Mediterranean. 7. It is a way to discover more about an ancient construction by trying to replicate it using tools and materials of the time. 8. There are crops from pre-history and rare breeds of sheep and goats.

E – Listen, read and check your answers

1. F – It was founded in the last century./fifty years ago. 2. T 3. F – She's an architectural technician. 4. It has been running for at least a decade. 5. T 6. F – There are now two possible sites to choose from. 7. T 8. F – It has changed. During the Iron Age, Scotland was covered in forests. Now Mackay describes it as a wet desert. 9. F – She says there's not much evidence that a lot of wood was used. 10. T

F – Learn it! Use it!

1. lack 2. breed 3. council 4. enabled 5. in spite of 6. puzzles

G – Ready for the FIRST Certificate in English?

1. mysterious 2. significance 3. engineering 4. management 5. massive 6. learning
7. equipment 8. available

Answers: Slippery (C1)

B – Listen and answer

1. T 2. F – Slippery was never involved in any physical altercations at school. 3. T 4. F – Besides avoiding taxes, he/she was a part-time thief. 5. F – They didn't work together. Bernard was a customer. 6. F – Slippery wanted to get to know Bernard. 7. T 8. F – Bernard

locked Slippery up in the boot of his car in a garage. 9. T 10. F – Slippery wants to slip back into Bernard's life.

C – Read and answer

1. Because Slippery wriggled and slipped out of her hands. 2. They were worried because they couldn't show their affection in any tangible way, like hugging. 3. By giving a false name and address to all of them. 4. Bernard was alone but, unlike most of the single diners, he was not looking at his smartphone. 5. He attracted Slippery's attention on three or four occasions. Then he waited for Slippery to follow him into an alley and grabbed him/her. 6. People that Slippery had robbed or swindled. 7. Because he/she had been a circus escapologist. 8. He/She watched from the roof of a neighbouring garage while Bernard opened the boot of the car.

D – Learn it! Use it!

1. bully 2. boot 3. roots 4. slipped back 5. alley 6. peered

E – Ready for the C1 ADVANCED English Test?

1. since the day I was 2. was out of the 3. was as slippery as the 4. looked neither awkward nor 5. grabbed me by 6. like to have a word with