



## Reading Part 6: gapped text

**Overview:** An introductory class for the gapped text task, starting with a fun oral activity and moving on to a detailed examination of exam techniques.

**Part of Exam:** Paper 1 Part 6 (gapped text)

**Language/Skill Practised:** understanding the structure and development of a text; interpreting linking devices and referencing in context.

**Materials:** 1 cut-up story 'Around the world on two wheels' from the worksheet per group of students, and 1 photocopy of the story in the correct order per student (see worksheet – the story is in the correct order on the worksheet). Also a photocopy of a Reading Part 6 exam task for each student, taken from a past/sample paper, or from an exam practice book.

**Time:** 30 to 50 minutes

## Preparation

Photocopy the story 'Around the world on two wheels' on the worksheet. You will need one copy for each group of students. Then cut each photocopy into strips a)–k). There are 11 strips in the story, so in each group each student will have 3 or 4 strips. If you would prefer to use another story, you can easily adapt other stories or short newspaper articles by rewriting them. Reduce the story to approximately 10 sentences, making sure there are lots of referencing and linking expressions in it. Also make sure there is something in the story for students to work out, e.g. the last line, or whether the story is true or not.

## Procedure

## Part One: Warmer/Lead In – 'Mixed-up Story' Oral Task

- Write the first and last lines of the story on the board, including the unfinished sentence at the end.
- Put students in pairs and ask them to discuss what the whole story could be, and therefore to work out how the last sentence ends. It will

be virtually impossible for them to predict the ending at this stage, so be prepared to keep this part short.

- Now tell them to work in groups of 3 or 4. Give each group the 11 strips that make up the complete story (this means each student will have 3 or 4 strips). Pre-teach and explain any difficult vocabulary (e.g. 'accomplished', 'have good reason to', 'sheer', 'take its toll'). Tell them they need to put the strips into the correct order to complete the story.
- Let the students start and monitor, encouraging them to identify referencing language (pronouns) in the sentences, e.g. 'What does "which" refer to?' or 'Who is "he"?'
- Stop the activity when the students think they have completed the story, or if they get stuck at any stage.
- Give out the photocopies of the complete story. Give them one last guess of the ending of the story, and then give them the answer: 'study engineering at Loughborough University'.
- As a class, discuss how they put the story in order. Mention any discussion of language you noticed earlier (see above) and elicit ideas such as: linking words (despite, and, in addition), determiners (this, these) and articles (a for a first mention and the from then on).

Key

## Part Two – Exam Skills

- Give each student a Reading Part 6 exam task taken from a past/sample paper or an exam practice book. Explain that students are going to analyse the kind of language mentioned above to complete the exam task.
- Ask students to look at the first page of the exam task (the text with gaps) and underline all the language which they think will link to the missing information, such as definite articles and pronouns. They can work alone or in pairs. Go through this as a class.
- Now ask the students to do the same for the sentences which have been removed. There will usually be more linking and referencing expressions in these parts than in the text with gaps.



## Reading Part 6: gapped text

- Finally, ask students to find what each of the words and expressions links/refers to in the text, and therefore complete the task by placing the missing parts in the correct place.
- Go through the answers, mentioning the underlined words or expressions at every stage. If students have followed the instructions, they should be able to get most of the questions correct.



## Reading Part 6: gapped text

### Tips

**Tip 1** Firstly, students should cross off the missing sentence that has been used as an example. It's amazing how often students waste time trying to fit this in elsewhere.

**Tip 2** Students should read the whole text first to get an overview of the topic. They should pay attention to any changes in tense as this will help them identify which sentences cannot complete the relevant gap. Also, they should always highlight the time expressions and reference words, e.g. personal pronouns, possessives, in both the main body of the text and the missing sentences.

**Tip 3** Students should look at how the topics change over the course of the text and whether the text follows a chronological order.

**Tip 4** Students should get into the habit of underlining both the language that helps complete the task (e.g. expressions like 'after that'), and the language it refers/links to (e.g. 'the birthday party'). Be strict on this in class and for homework as this will improve students' exam technique.

**Tip 5** A useful exercise is to print out a dialogue selected from a TV programme, radio play or film clip. Underline the pronouns and give students a copy of the script. Get students to watch/listen for what is being referred to. For example, if a character says 'You can take it or leave it', students should listen for what 'it' refers to. Make sure the sentences are not too densely packed in the text, maybe only one per minute of film/recording. Choose sentences with difficult vocabulary which you can pre-teach before they watch/listen. The combination of this pre-teaching and a fairly straightforward task can really help the students understand the text, so it provides great motivation as well as perfect exam practice.

**Tip 6** If students don't know an answer, they should guess. A blank space always gets zero points and there are no deductions for incorrect guesses.

**Tip 7** There is nothing to be gained from filling in the missing sentences in the same order as the text. It is always best to start with the one students feel most sure about, and leave sentences they can't fit in until the end.

**Tip 8** Remind students that there is an extra sentence that does not fit anywhere. If there is time, they should check the leftover sentence doesn't fit in any of the gaps.



## Reading Part 6: gapped text

### Around the world on two wheels

In August 2015, Tom Davies, 19, returned to his home in Battersea, London, after finishing a bike ride.

- f) However, this wasn't any ordinary bike ride. Tom had just become the youngest person to cycle around the world,
- c) covering 100 miles (160 kilometres) a day, and 18,000 miles (29,000 kilometres) in total.
- j) Tom must have been tired each day after covering such huge distances, but he still managed to regularly update his blog during his trip so that friends, family and supporters knew he was safe and could follow his progress.
- b) Despite these regular updates, his parents Alison and Huw couldn't help worrying about their son, but also say they are proud of what he's accomplished.
- g) And Tom's parents had good reason to worry, as he had several scary moments on his trip,
- k) the worst of which was probably when he was chased by dogs in Albania.
- a) Another downside was the sheer physical effort required to keep going in all kinds of weather, which has taken its toll on the teenager. 'My legs are tired,' says Tom. 'It's hard. Snow, rain, wind, hills, other drivers.'
- i) However, the positive experiences outweighed the bad, with Tom being 'overwhelmed by the hospitality of people all around the world, which is something I didn't necessarily expect but has made it much more rewarding.'
- d) Rewarding on a personal level, but also for the charities Tom has helped through his challenge by raising £60,000.
- h) With the money raised and the bike ride completed, what is the next challenge for Tom?
- e) He'll give his legs a couple of days to recover, and then he'll get back on his bike.

And in the autumn, he will go on to ...

[www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/33842738/londoner-tom-davies-19-becomes-youngest-person-to-cycle-the-world](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/33842738/londoner-tom-davies-19-becomes-youngest-person-to-cycle-the-world)

[www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/aug/09/teenager-completes-round-the-world-cycle-trip](http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2015/aug/09/teenager-completes-round-the-world-cycle-trip)