

ВСЕРОССИЙСКАЯ ОЛИМПИАДА ШКОЛЬНИКОВ
ПО АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ 2024 г.
МУНИЦИПАЛЬНЫЙ ЭТАП. 9-10 КЛАСС

Listening (script)

Task 1. Part 1. You will hear an anthropologist talking about the way language developed in children. For questions 1-7, complete each sentence with a word. You will hear the recording for the first time in Part 1 of the task and for the second time in Part 2 of the task.

Now you have 30 seconds to look through the items.

[pause 30 seconds]

Now we begin.

We still don't fully understand how or why human language came about, although there are certainly a good number of theories. One main theory suggests that when men became hunters, they needed to develop a language in order to share hunting tactics with one another during the chase, despite the fact that most carnivorous animals – even those that hunt in packs – find silence to be a distinct advantage. And yet historians are agreed that the first spoken languages must have been very crude. How then could they have been of any practical use? There is, however, one theory that proposes that it wasn't men who first used language. It wasn't even women. It was in fact children who invented it, and taught it to their parents. The truth is that fully grown adults actually lack the ability to learn to speak. Only children can do it. People that have never been exposed to any kind of spoken language before the age of five (and there are a handful of documented cases) have never been able to learn to speak at all, despite concerted efforts to teach them. Similarly, children that are born deaf may have difficulty learning to make verbal sounds because they've never heard them. Children's natural propensity for learning languages is taken as read. They don't have to be taught their first language – they only have to hear it spoken around them. During the first four or five years of life a child can learn several languages simultaneously, without being taught, without any apparent effort.

Newborn babies all over the world have their own repertoire of involuntary sounds which are useful for communicating to the mother their most basic needs – hunger, pain or the need for attention. This is true of the young of most mammals. However, between three and four months of age the human baby begins to emit new sounds and before long, will start to “babble”. This baby talk varies from country to country, suggesting that the baby is responding to, and trying to imitate, the sounds around him. Before long, he learns to control the sounds. He gets a response. He says “ma” and mother responds. This could be the reason why the word for mother is so similar in almost every language. It's one of the first syllables a human child can voluntarily produce. Can we be so sure that baby is really imitating mum or could it be the other way round? Next, he is inventing his own words for objects and his mother is using them too. Language is born. Perhaps this is why girls often learn to speak sooner and more fluently than boys, because at one time the ability to develop language was essential to the mother-infant relationship.

Now you have 20 seconds to check your answers.

[pause 20 seconds]

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Task 1. Part 2. Now you will hear the text again. For questions 8-13, decide whether the statements are True (T) or False (F).

Now you have 30 seconds to look through the items.

[pause 30 seconds]

Now we begin.

[Text repeated.]

Now you have 20 seconds to complete the task and transfer your answers into the answer sheet.

Task 2. You will hear a lecture about the solar eclipse in history. For questions 1-10, choose the best answer (a, b or c). You will hear the recording twice.

Now you have 30 seconds to look through the items.

[pause 30 seconds]

Now we begin.

Man: Good evening and welcome to this month's Observatory Club lecture. I'm Donald Mackie and I'm here to talk to you about the solar eclipse in history.

A thousand years ago, a total eclipse of the sun was a terrifying religious experience – but these days an eclipse is more likely to be viewed as a tourist attraction than as a scientific or spiritual event. People will travel literally miles to be in the right place at the right time — to get the best view of their eclipse.

Well. What exactly causes a solar eclipse — when the world goes dark for a few minutes in the middle of the day? Scientifically speaking, the dark spot itself is easy to explain: it is the shadow of the moon streaking across the earth. This happens every year or two, each time along a different and, to all intents and purposes, a seemingly random piece of the globe.

In the past people often interpreted an eclipse as a danger signal heralding disaster and in fact, the Chinese were so disturbed by these events that they included among their gods one whose job it was to prevent eclipses. But whether or not you are superstitious or take a purely scientific view, our earthly eclipses are special in three ways.

Firstly, there can be no doubt that they are very beautiful. It's as if a deep blue curtain had fallen over the daytime sky as the sun becomes a black void surrounded by the glow of its outer atmosphere.

But beyond this, total eclipses possess a second more compelling beauty in the eyes of us scientists, for they offer a unique opportunity for research. Only during an eclipse can we study the corona and other dim things that are normally lost in the sun's glare.

And thirdly, they are rare. Even though an eclipse of the sun occurs somewhere on earth every year or two, if you sit in your garden and wait, it will take 375 years on average for one to come to you. If the moon were any larger, eclipses would become a monthly bore: if it were smaller, they simply would not be possible.

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The ancient Babylonian priests, who spent a fair bit of time staring at the sky, had already noted that there was an 18-year pattern in their recurrence but they didn't have the mathematics to predict an eclipse accurately. It was Edmund Halley, the English astronomer, who knew his maths well enough to predict the return of the comet which, incidentally bears his name, and in 1715 he became the first person to make an accurate eclipse prediction.

This brought eclipses firmly into the scientific domain and they have since allowed a number of important scientific discoveries to be made. For instance, in the eclipse of 1868 two scientists, Janssen and Lockyer, were observing the sun's atmosphere and it was these observations that ultimately led to the discovery of a new element. They named the element helium after the Greek god of the sun. This was a major find, because helium turned out to be the most common element in the universe after hydrogen. Another great triumph involved Mercury. I'll just put that up on the board for you now. See — there's Mercury — the planet closest to the Sun — then Venus, Earth, etc. For centuries, scientists had been unable to understand why Mercury appeared to rotate faster than it should. Some astronomers suggested that there might be an undiscovered planet causing this unusual orbit and even gave it the name 'Vulcan'. During the eclipse of 1878, an American astronomer, James Watson, thought he had spotted this so-called 'lost' planet. But, alas for him, he was later obliged to admit that he had been wrong about Vulcan and withdrew his claim.

Then Albert Einstein came on the scene. Einstein suggested that rather than being wrong about the number of planets, astronomers were actually wrong about gravity. Einstein's theory of relativity — for which he is so famous — disagreed with Newton's law of gravity in just the right way to explain Mercury's odd orbit. He also realised that a definitive test would be possible during the total eclipse of 1919 and this is indeed when his theory was finally proved correct.

Now you have 20 seconds to check your answers.

[pause 20 seconds]

Now listen to the text again.

[Text repeated.]

Now you have 20 seconds to complete the task and transfer your answers into the answer sheet.