

**SÈRIE 2****TOXIC FRIENDS****Part 1: Reading Comprehension**

1. According to the text a 'toxic friend' is ...
  - a) a friend who improves your self-esteem.
  - b) an invention of psychologists.
  - c) a friend who can make your life difficult.**
  - d) a friend who is a drug addict.
  
2. 'Toxic friend' is an expression thought up by...
  - a) the self-help industry.
  - b) therapists.
  - c) no one in particular but it's becoming widely accepted.**
  - d) the American Psychological Association.
  
3. Which of these definitions best describes a naysayer?
  - a) A tactful friend, always trying to be polite to his/her friends.
  - b) A friend who will never be supportive of things we want to do**
  - c) A violent person who denies his/her real mean intentions.
  - d) A busy person having no time to say anything to his/her friends.
  
4. Christine Northman affirms that we should...
  - a) visit friends more often to keep up our emotional health.
  - b) visit friends to keep reciprocity in friendship.
  - c) analyse our relationships with our friends very often.**
  - d) not care too much about friendship.
  
5. When treating the 'toxic friend' problem, counsellors advise us to...
  - a) see them within the boundaries of the city.
  - b) avoid them forever.
  - c) give those friends a chance.
  - d) avoid them from time to time.**
  
6. Most therapists agree that the 'toxic friend' problem...
  - a) mostly affects stressed women.
  - b) does not affect happy people.
  - c) is more frequent among weak people.
  - d) is easier to solve for men.**
  
7. A 'crying sister' could be defined as a person who...
  - a) ditches you on the last minute.
  - b) is always crying on the phone.
  - c) tires you telling you about her problems.**
  - d) takes away all your energy.

8. Mike Albo thinks that...
- a) therapy can solve all your problems with undesirable toxic friends.
  - b) self-help books are the only solution for our psychological problems.
  - c) the toxic friends's problem cannot always be solved by therapy.**
  - d) toxic friends not therapists always tell you the truth.

### Listening comprehension.

#### Michael Palin: the "travelling comedian"

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

***scholar***: acadèmic / académico

***engage***: atraure / atraer

***abuse***: maltractar / maltratar

Ready?

Now read the questions on the next page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme.

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Welcome to "Celebrities" our weekly interview programme. In today's programme Mary Smith interviews Michael Palin, a famous actor well-known for his comedy roles as part of the Monty Python team, but also for his being an explorer. He is one of Britain's most loved comedians and travellers.

*Adapted from an interview in "Outlook" (BBC Radio)*

[now listen to the rest of the interview]

Mary: Good afternoon, Michael, and welcome to our programme.

Michael: Thank you. It's a pleasure being here today.

Mary: Michael, many British children have been inspired by your taste for adventure, but when you were a child, did you experience travelling and adventure yourself?

Michael: No, not really. I was living in Sheffield then, in the north of England, and unlike now when you can probably get onto a plane for ten pounds and go across Europe, travelling was very expensive and there was very little chance for me to go anywhere, so I was really 'travelling' through other people's experiences and through geographic magazines and programmes on television and things like that.

Mary: Where does your passion for travel come from? Is this a family thing?

Michael: No, not really. They are not great travellers... But I found a notebook belonging to my Irish great-grandfather. He was a **scholar** at Oxford University and he once went walking on his own in the Alps and he left behind his diaries when he was about 38... And he very much liked... what I like really... what he saw and what he enjoyed, you know... well there's a fellow spirit you know, he loved getting away, and he loved the mountains and all that. I think with travel... I do love landscapes, you know, and I can find places that are beautiful, spectacular, but it is usually people that **engage** me most of all.

Mary: Your first career was in acting. Did you have your travel passion at the same time as your drama and comedy?

Michael: Yes I did. I mean I remember the excitement of feeling that we were doing something like Monty Python and this would take us abroad to do some filming... We went to Tunisia I remember to film "The Life of Brian", one of our films, and then we went to America to do publicity for it, and ended up in New York, Los Angeles... but I didn't really feel I was seeing much of the world, I was seeing the inside of television studios, hotels, conference centres... and then suddenly you'd be at home again. So in a way I had the opportunity to travel but it wasn't the right kind of travel.

Mary: Back in the sixties you did Monty Python and now you are doing travel. Which of these jobs do you enjoy most, do you prefer seeing yourself as a travelling actor or as an actor travelling

Michael: Well... I think I somehow managed to put the acting to one side and the travelling to another side. So generally speaking travel is myself talking about things through my own eyes rather than through the eyes of an actor.

Mary: How has being a professional comedian helped you later on and what has it taught you?

Michael: I think being a comedian probably gives you a certain freedom to look at the world. As a comedian, you know, your job is to comment on things or see the human things going wrong that other people might take terribly seriously in a rather different way. And I feel sometimes as a comedian that I am on the outside looking in, and it's quite useful, I found it especially useful during travels.

Mary: Really? Are you suggesting that humour is somehow related to travelling?

Michael: Yes, indeed. Humour is something that is shared all over the world and you know you can make as big an idiot of yourself as we all do, you know, not learn the language, not learn the customs, and do all sorts of wrong things according to another culture and yet, if you can do it with humour, it somehow brings you closer to the people and everyone says "Well... never mind... we all do things like that".

Mary: Your first trip round the world became a successful TV programme, but I believe it was originally all planned by the BBC. What was the experience like?

Michael: Well... In fact I was very uncertain of what we were going to do. When I was offered the journey, they said: "we are going to actually see if you can get round the world in 80

days, there will be a camera following you all the way..." and ... and all I heard was... "we will be travelling around the world" and I thought "Well... Yes!", "I'll do that! Fantastic! The BBC can organize it for me". What I wasn't really hearing was there was going to be a camera there all the time, you're gonna have to interview people... but there was no script! It is all gonna be based on me improvising! "I'm just going to meet people and talk to them" and I thought... "Would anyone be interested? How are we gonna do this?" So until we got going I was really very worried.

Mary: You must have seen places in your travels where the environment has been **abused**. Do you think our society should do something?

Michael: Well... I don't believe in interference without consultation. You know what I mean... I don't think we can say... well we know the answers... and this is what you should do. I don't think we can impose our way of life on anyone else. So you have to understand why people are the way they are, why they live the way they do, and also learn lessons from poor people.

Mary: What kind of lessons?

Michael: For instance, we have a lot more than we need and we produce a lot of waste, so I suppose at the end of the week I send about twenty plastic bottles of water off to recycling, but if you throw one plastic bottle somewhere in Africa people will pick it up and use it, and I think this is exactly what should happen, so I think we can learn lessons about how to look after the planet from people who have less rather than from people who have more.

Mary: I'm afraid we've run out of time. Thank you, Michael, for being with us today.

Michael: My pleasure. Thank you.

## QUESTIONS

1. When Michael was a child he...
  - a. often travelled across Europe by plane.
  - b. often had the chance to visit his family in the north of England.
  - c. watched TV programmes about travels because magazines were very expensive.
  - d. he had no opportunities to travel.**
2. Michael's great-grandfather...
  - a. enjoyed travelling as a means of getting away.**
  - b. wrote a book published by Oxford University about his trips to the Alps.
  - c. preferred landscapes and mountains to people.
  - d. was a great traveller of Irish origin.
3. While working as an actor with the Monty Python, Michael travelled a lot but...
  - a. he only went to boring places like New York.
  - b. didn't have the feeling that he was really travelling.**
  - c. he wasn't interested in the places he went to.
  - d. the only places he liked were the television studios they went to.

4. According to Michael, being a comedian allows you to ...
- a. be free and do whatever you want.
  - b. understand why people need to be free.
  - c. **look at the world as an outsider.**
  - d. understand why people do terrible things.
5. According to Michael, humour is very important when travelling because ...
- a. **it can bring you closer to the people.**
  - b. people will help you if they see you act like an idiot.
  - c. it can help you learn a foreign language.
  - d. it will help you understand other cultures.
6. At first Michael was very worried about the round-the-world trip proposed by the BBC because ...
- a. the BBC was responsible for the organization and he didn't trust them.
  - b. he thought it was impossible for a camera to follow him everywhere.
  - c. he thought it was not possible to get round the world in 80 days.
  - d. **he had to improvise the interviews with the people he met during the trip.**
7. Michael thinks that our society should...
- a. interfere to stop other countries from abusing the environment.
  - b. not learn lessons from the way people live in other countries.
  - c. **not impose our way of life on other countries.**
  - d. understand why other countries abuse the environment.
8. According to Michael a lesson to be learnt from the poorest people is that ...
- a. **we produce too much waste because we have much more than we need.**
  - b. we recycle too many plastic bottles because we drink too much water.
  - c. it is a waste of time to recycle plastic bottles.
  - d. plastic bottles should not be thrown away in Africa.

**SÈRIE 5****Modern Slavery**

Choose the best answer according to the text. Only ONE answer is possible.

[0.5 points each correct answer. Wrong answers will be penalized by deducting 0.16 points.

There is no penalty for unanswered questions.]

1. In ancient civilizations, slaves were...
  - a) usually captured in battles and then killed.
  - b) the foundation of nations.
  - c) **very often people who were captured from enemy armies**
  - d) special kinds of people that were good for war because of their muscles.
  
2. In ancient civilizations...
  - a) only people of different races and religions were enslaved.
  - b) slavery was considered a bad thing.
  - c) the basic human rights of slaves were more respected than today.
  - d) **justifications to enslave people were different from today.**
  
3. In earlier periods in history...
  - a) there were more forced laborers than slaves.
  - b) forced laborers received little money but they were treated better than slaves.
  - c) **the number of slaves was less than in present times.**
  - d) there were 27 million more slaves than today.
  
4. Today...
  - a) slaves work much harder than ever before.
  - b) slaves always have to belong to a different ethnic group from that of their masters.
  - c) **there are forms of exploitation that are equivalent to slavery.**
  - d) there are laws that protect slaves from mistreatment on the part of their masters.
  
5. Slavery exists today...
  - a) because it is still legal in some countries with corrupt governments.
  - b) because international legislation does not apply to people of all ages, sex and races.
  - c) only in Brazil, West Africa and Eastern Europe.
  - d) **in contradiction with existing laws against it.**
  
6. According to the text, women and children nowadays...
  - a) are no longer vulnerable to be exploited as slaves.
  - b) are only enslaved in Eastern Europe and West Africa.
  - c) **are affected by forms of slavery, as men and people of all ages are.**
  - d) cannot be legally enslaved in Brazilian agricultural estates, only men can.
  
7. According to the text, social, demographic and economic developments...
  - a) will allow corrupt government officials to become slaves some day.
  - b) have forced many people to leave the cities and work as forced laborers in the fields.
  - c) **are some of the most important factors for the return of slavery.**
  - d) are the cause of wars where victors enslave the losers rather than killing them.

8. One of the main differences between contemporary and ancient forms of slavery is that...
- slaves are now cheaper and easier to replace.**
  - over the last 50 years laws have been passed which make slavery legal.
  - women and children were better treated before.
  - slaves get paid much better today.

## LISTENING COMPREHENSION

### Ruth Manorama - Winner of the 'Alternative Nobel Prize'

In this radio programme you are going to hear some new words. Read and listen to them. Make sure you know what they mean.

*fund*: finançament / financiación

*on behalf of*: en favor de

*reluctant*: reticent / reacio

*burden*: càrrega, pes / carga, peso

*boldly*: amb atreviment / con atrevimiento

*courage*: coratge / coraje

Ready?

Now read the questions on the next page. Read them carefully before listening to the radio programme.

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Welcome to 'Celebrities' our weekly interview programme. In today's programme I will interview Ruth Manorama, one of the winners of the so-called 'Alternative Nobel Prize.' Ruth Manorama has spent most of her life campaigning on behalf of her Dalit community in India; the Dalits are also known as the *untouchables*. A few days ago Ruth and this year's other two winners received their awards at a ceremony in Sweden.

*Adapted from an interview in "Outlook" (BBC Radio - World Service)*

[now listen to the interview]

Presenter: Good afternoon, Ruth, and welcome to our weekly programme. And first of all, congratulations!

Ruth: Thank you, thank you very much.

Presenter: Now, these 'Right Livelihood Awards' obviously are a great honour, and they are prestigious, and all that, but on a practical level they come with more than 200.000 US dollars in prize money, which I would expect is a welcome addition to your campaign funds.

Ruth: Yes, yes, even though I would get about 90.000 dollars only. The prize is shared with the other winners.

- Presenter Right, okay, but 90.000 dollars in India will still go a long way to help your campaign, won't it?
- Ruth: Yes, yes, definitely. I'm going to contribute that towards building a women's centre, a centre where women would be sheltered. ... It will be a women's resource centre.
- Presenter And when you say *women*, are you talking particularly about Dalit women?
- Ruth: Yes, mostly Dalit women. If other women want to come they would also be entertained, but mostly Dalit women from the urban and the rural areas, the centre would be for them.
- Presenter Now, you live in Bangalore. You were born in the 1950s in Madras, which is also a very large city. When you were a child and growing up as a Dalit in Madras, what was it like to be a young Dalit at that time?
- Ruth: Well, I was in Madras, and the area that I lived in was mostly a Dalit colony. So, in the Dalit colony we didn't have much problem with discrimination, but of course being brought up in a kind of semi-village in the city I had to go through some serious economic problems every day, and at that time basic facilities were not available. So it was really hard, both economically and socially.
- Presenter When you say basic facilities, do you also include education as one of the basic facilities your people did not have access to?
- Ruth: Well, in my house we didn't even have electricity, you know, so there were enormous economic problems one had to go through from a young age. And then one had to walk to school for a very long time, and a very long distance, and you know, I always thought: why can't I study in some school nearby, but my mother wanted me to go to a far away *good* school.
- Presenter I see, and when you were studying, was that the time when you became ..., that you started being a campaigner, or were you a natural-born social campaigner?
- Ruth: When I was at school, and then at college, I was always involved in social activities, so I usually participated in them and any type of discrimination that I saw I usually went and protested about it. But my campaign in defence of Dalit women actually started in 1987.
- Presenter: And I suppose that campaign did not have an easy start either.
- Ruth: You are right. No it wasn't easy at all. Although I knew very well the problems of being a Dalit woman in urban as well as in rural areas, as an organizer—a young woman organizer—I had serious problems. You know, everyone was very reluctant to accept the idea of Dalit women getting organized to fight for their rights.
- Presenter: So how did it all start?



Ruth: Well, from the 1970s onwards I was working with the poor in general, but then I realized that Dalit women were much poorer than others, suffered violence much more than others, and suffered caste discrimination, which is an additional burden on them. Being a Dalit woman I became aware of that: the *untouchable* women, specifically in villages in the rural areas of India, these women go through enormous social, economic and cultural discrimination.

Presenter: Ruth, you have two daughters I believe. Just briefly, looking ahead, do you think they are going to grow up in a very different, and in a better world perhaps than you did?

Ruth: Definitely. I am already, you know, getting on in life, able to talk about the issues very boldly, because there is a little more courage to talk. People do not like it when you talk about this issue, so I am able to talk boldly because only by talking the truth I feel that there will be liberation for our people. Look at my children, my children say things like "Who is to say what caste we belong to", "Who is to call us *untouchable*?" You know? They are much more direct; they are saying that given an opportunity any human being can grow intelligent, provided there are opportunities, they can always come up very well in life.

Presenter: Well Ruth, I'm afraid we've run out of time. Thank you very much for being with us, and the best of luck to you and your campaigns.

Ruth: Thank you.

### QUESTIONS

Choose the most appropriate answer according to the text. Only one answer is correct. Look at number 0 as an example.

[0.25 points each correct answer] [Wrong answers will be penalized (-0.08)]

1. According to the text, Ruth will...
  - a. be getting 200.000 US dollars in prize money.
  - b. be getting 90.000 US dollars in prize money.**
  - c. share the 90.000 US dollars with the other winners.
  - d. contribute 200.000 US dollars in building a new women's centre.
  
2. The women's centre Ruth wants to build will...
  - a. be mainly for Dalit women.**
  - b. only be for Dalit women from rural areas.
  - c. only be for Dalit women from urban areas
  - d. be mostly for young women.
  
3. When Ruth was a young woman living in the city of Madras,
  - a. she hated living in a Dalit colony.
  - b. she got away from the Dalit colony and went to live in the city centre.
  - c. she had economic difficulties.**
  - d. she suffered from social discrimination everyday.

4. As a child, Ruth had to walk to school a long distance because...
  - a. there were no schools near her house.
  - b. the schools nearby had no electricity.
  - c. her family was poor and could not afford to pay for transport.
  - d. her mother thought the schools near her house were not good enough.**
  
5. Ruth started campaigning on behalf of Dalit women in 1987,...
  - a. when she was at school.
  - b. before she got involved in social activities.
  - c. after she had finished college.
  - d. after she had been involved in activities against discrimination.**
  
6. Ruth did not have an easy start as a social campaigner because...
  - a. people would not understand why Dalit women should fight for their rights.**
  - b. she knew the problems of being a Dalit woman.
  - c. people thought she was too young and inexperienced.
  - d. Dalit women themselves did not want to be organized to fight for their rights.
  
7. What motivated Ruth's campaign in defence of Dalit women's rights?
  - a. She was very poor and that was the only way to earn money.
  - b. Dalit women in villages are much poorer than "untouchable" women in cities.
  - c. She felt the situation of Dalit women was worse than that of other poor women.**
  - d. She saw that "untouchable" women were privileged and did not suffer discrimination.
  
8. Ruth thinks that in order to improve the situation of Dalit women in the future...
  - a. people should stop being bold about this issue.
  - b. one needs to explain the truth and talk about it with courage.**
  - c. Dalit women should stop comparing themselves with the "untouchables."
  - d. one has to give an opportunity to bold and intelligent children