



Unit 15, task 4

The strange story of Candy Jackson

“When I was small, the radio was always on in the house, because it would have been too quiet without it, I suppose,” Candy Jackson said thoughtfully, tucking a full strand of grey-blond hair behind her right ear. Through a thick pair of sunglasses she looked at her companion, Chippi Thurlington, at the other end of the table. It was Candy’s 51st birthday today. Slowly, she stuck her little silver fork into a slice of hot chocolate cake, which had started to melt away in the sun. “I suppose we listened to a lot of modern pop music and in between, to millions of jingles and adverts ... (*singing*) ladiladila ... they are probably the reason why I can sing so well. I used to learn all the jingles by heart.” She turned very thoughtful. “The good old days ... ”

“Things have changed since then,” she continued. “I really don’t turn on the radio anymore these days. It seems I have listened to so many adverts in my life that my head has sort of grown in size. It is so big now that I have not been able to put on hats anymore. I first noticed it last winter. Then my brother, Wally, took me to Free Range River Mountain the following summer. As we were driving there we passed lots of billboards. ‘Careful,’ I screamed, ‘there’s a billboard on the left!’ Or ‘Look out, Wally, there’s another one here on the right.’ There were just so many we couldn’t help reading them. The problem only became apparent later. When we finally arrived in Free Range River Mountain, I could not get out of the car anymore, my head was too big.” Candy Jackson slammed her fists so hard on the table that the little silver fork nearly left the plate.

Chippi Thurlington looked very thoughtful. Later, she helped Candy Jackson find a good doctor who specialised in the effects of words and songs on the human body. Ever since then, Candy Jackson has been on an ads-free diet. Adverts make her head so heavy and big, I am not sure if she will ever be allowed to go back on them. Anyway, her head is a good bit smaller than the day she met Chippi. That is all I am allowed to say at the moment.