

KEY

- 0 current topics and developments
- Q1 conduct theoretical research
- Q2 without noticing it/without realising it
- Q3 run tests/conduct experiments/carry out experiments
- Q4 form bigger blocks/larger blocks
- Q5 The environment
- Q6 adapts easily/can adapt easily

TAPESCRIPT

Host: Welcome to this month's feature of our radio show "Amazing News", which, as all of you dedicated listeners know, tries to stay up to date with current topics and developments. This time we are discussing our amazing ability to learn. With me is Dr Thomas Scott, who conducts theoretical research at Coleman's Institute, where he has been making astonishing discoveries about learning and memory. May I welcome you to this show, Dr Scott?

Dr Scott: Why, thank you for inviting me to join you today. It's always a pleasure to present our latest findings to a broader public.

Host: We are happy to have you here. Now, would you like to start us off by giving us an idea of what exactly you are doing at Coleman's Institute and what you have discovered as a result?

Dr Scott: Of course. Well, I would really see our research as ground-breaking, because what we are doing might soon change everything we thought we knew about the way we acquire knowledge. We see a very real possibility to restructure society's ideas about learning due to the fact that right now we are working on techniques to impart knowledge on a brain without it being aware of this process. The realisation of this project lies far ahead in the future, but is becoming more realistic with every day that passes. Right now the employees at Coleman's Institute carry out a series of experiments during which we run tests focusing on our participants' learning capabilities and whether they differ in various parts of their brains.

Learning is a, um, very complex process, which is influenced by many specific factors, and during which our brains can be entirely rebuilt. What and how we learn determines which areas in our brains are activated and where as well as for how long information is stored. This, in turn, has an impact on how easily we can connect individual pieces of information to form larger blocks. Those blocks form patterns in our

minds and can be used to develop and change our knowledge of the world in general.


The more knowledge we acquire, the more likely it is that our brain increases its learning ability. Of course, there are factors influencing the efficiency with which we are learning. In contrary to what we thought all along, our environment might pose the biggest harm to our learning capabilities. Not only do we see increasing proof for the fact that certain kinds of pollution impact our learning skills in a negative way, we have also seen evidence that the abundance of noise and light in our world lead to a decrease in the brain's functions. As a logical conclusion, our surroundings might actually decrease our IQ as well.

Now this, of course, does not imply that all of us should now react by moving out of the cities to camp out in the desert in order to avoid the dangers of a modern environment. It does, however, point towards the possibility of very real dangers, such as radiation from all types of technical devices. We have absolutely no conclusive knowledge about what the increase in electro-magnetic radiation might do to our bodies and minds. While they might be entirely harmless, we won't be certain of this fact for at least another two decades, when we'll finally be able to observe long-term effects.

While up to now generations of scientists have seen the solution to any learning problem in technical developments, we now believe that the answer lies in nature itself. Our brain seems to be the organ that adapts most easily to changing conditions, so there is reason to believe that we could coax it to learning by causing it to adapt to new knowledge. The next few years promise to be an exciting time for any researcher and scientist working in this area.

Host: This has been absolutely fascinating. Now, would you ... *(fade out)*

2. Listening: Dealing with money

 You are going to listen to a discussion between mother and daughter about plastic money. First you will have 45 seconds to study the task below, then you will hear the recording twice. While listening, answer the questions (1–5) using a maximum of four words. Write your answers in the spaces provided. The first one (0) has been done for you. After the second listening you will have 45 seconds to check your answers.

Dealing with money

0	What is the mother complaining about?	<i>daughter spending money</i>
Q1	What is meant by “living in medieval times”?	
Q2	Which option do credit cards offer?	
Q3	What happens when the entire credit card bill isn't paid off?	
Q4	What is the biggest danger in others obtaining your bank account information?	
Q5	How do reliable companies protect their customers?	

KEY

- 0** daughter spending money
- Q1** having no credit card
- Q2** making minimum payment(s)
- Q3** debt accumulates/products become more expensive
- Q4** identity theft
- Q5** encrypt their information/offer secure payment methods

customers will not be greatly impacted if something like that did happen.

Mother:

All I know is that if you look at the state of most societies today, there is an enormous rise in the number of people who will never be able to pay off their debts. Much of this is caused by the careless usage of plastic money. Young people in particular seem to live by the rule “Purchase today, pay tomorrow”. I just hope you won’t get yourself in a situation like that ... *(fade out)*

3. Reading: Why scientists could easily be ruling the world

Read the text below, then choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for questions 1–5. Put a in the correct box. The first one (0) has been done for you.

Why scientists could easily be ruling the world

Abortion is an extremely controversial topic in the United States with both sides of the debate duelling it out over what is right or wrong. The law presently controlling abortion in America was introduced in 1973 by the Supreme Court. According to this law, women have the right to choose how they want to handle a pregnancy, whether through termination or continuation. Since this court ruling, abortion has been in the national spotlight and the centre of the debate still remains whether it should actually still be legal or overturned.

Before this ruling there had been abortion laws in the US as early as the 1820s. However, by 1900 most abortions had been outlawed because of the extreme pressure from the American Medical Association, physicians and legislators. Nevertheless, this did not prevent illegal abortions, which at the time were a dangerous practice, from taking place. The main difference was that women did not only risk their lives due to the bad hygienic conditions under which such procedures took place, but also because few abortions were carried out by medical professionals any more. By 1965, all states had banned abortions altogether, with few exceptions being allowed. Finally, abortion was once again legalised in 1973 in all fifty states, using a trimester framework that freed doctors to perform abortions for any reason in the first trimester and giving the individual states the power to regulate the second and third trimester. In the years since this decision many pro-life groups, such as the Human Life Foundation or the Life Coalition, have been formed which have taken up the fight against this ruling and presented alternatives such as adoption. They have been the driving forces behind new restrictions and regulations that have been introduced, such as required parental consent for teenagers. These pro-life organisations arrange many protests and lobby to bring forth legislation to end the age-old debate of how to handle an unexpected pregnancy. Often, these groups see the practice of abortion as an unlawful procedure that takes a defenseless human life and advocate adoption as the only legal alternative. Furthermore, they argue that life begins at conception, whereas the other side of the debate believes that no rights other than those stated in the Constitution should be judicially recognised and protected.

There are many different reasons why a woman might decide to have an abortion. If there are irreparable defects concerning the fetus, such as major development failures or problems with the heart, nervous system, brain, kidneys or breathing system, a woman

might choose to end the pregnancy. There are other common reasons that a woman might choose to have an abortion such as birth control failure, unwanted or unplanned pregnancy, not being able to support or provide for the child or medical conditions that could seriously endanger the woman's health. Most women concerned choose to abort based on their current needs, feelings and economic position. Especially women aged between 15 and 20 often do not feel prepared to take responsibility for another human being. They might lack sufficient means to provide for themselves and a child. Unfinished education and lack of mental maturity are factors that particularly cause young females to abort. However, younger women are not the only ones making such drastic decisions, which may have a strong impact on their future lives. Research shows that abortions are no longer limited to a certain age group of women.

On average, one million women in the US decide to abort their unborn children every year. This decision, which is often made in a moment of desperation or panic, may cause inner turmoil and stress. No matter whether having an abortion is legal or not, in the end it is always the woman who has to deal with the choice she has made.

- 0** The 1973 law
- A banned abortion.
 - B legalised abortion.
 - C led to a protest.
 - D was overturned.
- Q1** Banning abortion around 1900 caused
- A a lot of pressure from doctors and lawyers.
 - B an increase in death following abortion.
 - C a rise in the practice of illegal abortion.
 - D a decrease of medical professionals.
- Q2** Regulations on abortion after 1973
- A allowed abortion up to the second trimester.
 - B allowed abortion throughout the US.
 - C banned abortion after the second trimester.
 - D banned abortion in individual states.
- Q3** The formation of pro-life groups resulted in
- A stronger support for single mothers.
 - B the creation of educational programmes.
 - C stricter regulations on abortion.
 - D a ban on teenage abortion.
- Q4** The main reason for teenage girls to abort is their
- A psychological stability.
 - B physical maturity.
 - C financial situation.
 - D educational background.
- Q5** What is the purpose of the text?
- A to criticise women who abort
 - B to illustrate the dangers of abortion
 - C to argue a ban on abortion
 - D to explain the background of abortion

KEY

- 0–B** legalised abortion.
- Q1–C** a rise in the practice of illegal abortion.
- Q2–B** allowed abortion throughout the US.
- Q3–C** stricter regulations on abortion.
- Q4–D** educational background.
- Q5–D** to explain the background of abortion

4. Reading: The newspaper of the future

Read the text below. Parts of the text have been removed. Choose the correct part (A–I) for the gaps (1–6). There are two extra parts you should not use. Write your answers in the boxes provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

The newspaper of the future

Ever since the invention of printing methods effective enough to (0) ... , a printed version of the latest news has been a consistent and reliable part of our lives. We even got used to (Q1) ... and to be aware as well as warned of right to our front door, ever since a system for subscription and delivery was introduced.

For a few years now, however, it seemed as if this precious part of our society was on a fast decrease, due to its own reinvention on the internet. People aged between 15 and 30 in particular admit to (Q2) ... to all kinds of news online and even point out the benefit of being able to compare and contrast different sources before making up their mind about certain events. Furthermore, appealing features such as live feeds and supporting video material add to the belief that online newspapers present the reader with a much more wholesome picture of what is happening around the globe than traditional papers ever could.

So why should we even mourn the slow death of the traditional newspaper? In terms of immediate accessibility, faster spreading of current events and availability of further information it seems at a clear disadvantage when (Q3) It is also more costly, more prone to being impacted by catastrophic events due to possible difficulties in production, and much less extensive in terms of the information it provides. There are, however, quite a few points (Q4)

While online versions claim their vast amount of information as a benefit, readers can easily be overwhelmed by the sheer number of articles available to them on certain topics. They might become side-tracked and actually restrict their own view because they rarely take the time to sort through all the topics of the day. Thus, online readers tend to focus on specific areas of interest but neglect even skimming over anything else. This is made possible because every online version contains a search link (Q5) ... where they want to go.

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Due to the speed news are spreading with, online papers can easily become a perfect platform for exaggeration as well as hysteria and consequently the source of panic among the masses. Even smaller events which might not have been **(Q6)** ... a few decades back now lead to lengthy discussions and unnecessary fear among citizens. While there are quite a few beneficial aspects to the reduction in time news need to spread, such as quicker responses of rescue teams and charity organisations to disasters or catastrophes, there are obviously also drawbacks to this development.

Nevertheless, latest trends point towards new and improved combinations of both, printed as well as online newspapers, which might enable future readers to enjoy the best of both worlds.

A	relying entirely on having access
B	introduced to the audience
C	compared to online versions
D	explaining the disadvantage of newspapers
E	produce books and newspaper for the masses
F	taken all that seriously
G	defending the importance of the traditional newspaper
H	having all we ever needed to know
I	enabling the audience to get directly to

0	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
E						

KEY

0	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
E	H	A	C	G	I	F

5. Language in use: Should more fathers be spending time with their children?

You are going to read a text about men staying at home with their children. Some words are missing from the text. Choose from the list (A–N) the correct part for each gap (1–11) in the text. There are two extra words you should not use. Write your answers in the boxes provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

Should more fathers be spending time with their children?

The current discussion **(0)** ... around why fathers are often still very reluctant to be a stay-at-home dad has shown that most of them feel that their profession does not **(Q1)** ... for such a decision. Even though over 50 per cent of men claimed that they would like to have the possibility of **(Q2)** ... their children for some time, very few fathers take the actual step. In many cases they feel intimidated due to the doubts being **(Q3)** ... by their work environment if they will be able to juggle their career while **(Q4)** ... up their children at the same time. Although mothers have been **(Q5)** ... with the very same problem for decades, the world does not seem to be entirely ready for fathers to take on this new role. Apart from the fact that many companies are not yet **(Q6)** ... with child care facilities and much less offer proper part-time employment opportunities, there are still strong tendencies in society towards **(Q7)** ... the mother as the proper caretaker of a small child. Nevertheless, laws have been **(Q8)** ... by many governments which **(Q9)** ... both partners to equally share the time they spend with their children. Therefore, the main problem seems to lie in the fact that men often **(Q10)** ... ridicule by their peers should they decide to **(Q11)** ... their children over their careers.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| A allow | E equipped | I passed | M struggling |
| B bringing | F expressed | J raising | N viewing |
| C choose | G face | K revolving | |
| D enable | H invented | L rising | |

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0	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11
K											

KEY

0	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11
K	A	J	F	B	M	E	N	I	D	G	C

6. Language in use: Going virtual

You are going to read a text about virtual life. Some words are missing from the text. Choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for each gap (1–7) in the text. Write your answers in the boxes provided. The first one (0) has been done for you.

Going virtual

(0) ... studies have shown that there might be numerous benefits to spending time in a virtual world, provided that the person (Q1) ... does not lose touch with reality. Experts in brain development (Q2) ... have discovered that people deal better with many real-life scenarios if they have gone over them in their minds repeatedly. Thus, spending some time in a virtual reality could result in an increase in a person's actual (Q3) ... , such as better sportsmanship or improved social skills.

Thus, psychiatrists as well as therapists have started to reap the (Q4) ... of the multitude of available scenarios the virtual world offers. Their patients can face fears and phobias, while knowing that they are perfectly safe and therefore practice taking different (Q5) ... to problematic situations. The more frequently they are introduced to such forms of therapy, the more comfortable they become with similar situations in real life.

Furthermore, this technology has been adopted by universities and other educational institutions in order to prepare their students for worldly scenarios they will (Q6) ... in their professional lives. This includes business meetings, giving speeches in front of crowds, conflict management, and negotiations. By (Q7) ... their students with in-depth training, schools believe that they can ensure a more capable and efficient generation of future employees or employers.

Prime Time 8

- 0** ~~A~~ Recent **B** Latest **C** Modern **D** Contemporary
Q1 **A** involved **B** convoluted **C** affected **D** concerned
Q2 **A** study **B** research **C** investigation **D** exploration
Q3 **A** abilities **B** facilities **C** aptitudes **D** capacities
Q4 **A** aids **B** paybacks **C** benefits **D** assistances
Q5 **A** tactics **B** approaches **C** attitudes **D** methods
Q6 **A** come upon **B** bump into **C** struggle **D** encounter
Q7 **A** offering **B** showing **C** providing **D** obtaining

0	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
A							

KEY

0	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7
A	D	B	A	C	B	D	C

7. Writing: Online Shopping

“Online shopping”

Over the last few English lessons you have heard a lot about the increase in online stores and online shopping. Your English teacher has asked you to write a **report**, in which you describe several aspects of shopping over the internet. In your report, you should:

- outline the importance of online shopping for people today
- describe advantages and dangers of shopping over the internet
- recommend safe ways to shop online

Write a **report** of about **250 words**. Divide your report into **sections** and give them **headings**.