

Hello everyone! Today's test is the London Tests of English Level Five. The theme of this test is Career Changes. This test lasts two hours and forty-five minutes. There are five tasks. Tasks One and Two are listening. You must listen to the tape and write your answers in the booklet. Good luck!

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Task One: Downshifting (15 marks)

You are doing a research project on career changes. You hear part of a radio programme on downshifting (moving to a simpler, less responsible job). Listen to the interview and for questions 1-10 choose the best option, A, B, C or D.

You will hear the interview twice. Do as much as you can the first time and complete your work the second time.

You have one minute to study the questions.

Example: xxxxxxxx?

- A. xxxxxx
- B. xxxxxxx
- C. xxxxxxx
- D. xxxxxxx

1. The speaker asks us to think of having only one year to live in order to

- A. make the idea seem more dramatic
- B. warn us
- C. make us think more seriously
- D. put us off

2. People who downshift can be more creative because

- A. they can't spend a lot of money
- B. they have more time
- C. they can't be fired
- D. they feel more relaxed

3. Downshifting can cause problems because

- A. you are cut off by your colleagues
- B. you work harder for less money
- C. your income gets smaller and smaller
- D. your employment is not guaranteed

4. Barbara left her previous job because
- A. she was working too hard
 - B. she had done everything
 - C. she wanted a change
 - D. she was asked to leave
5. In her new life, Barbara
- A. made friends with her new colleagues
 - B. learned to relax
 - C. bought a holiday home
 - D. moved in with a friend
6. Nowadays, Barbara
- A. does mainly unpaid work
 - B. struggles financially
 - C. works for the local community
 - D. works mostly in London.
7. Chris couldn't get a job in the media because
- A. there weren't enough vacancies
 - B. he wasn't interested any more
 - C. he didn't have enough experience
 - D. he failed the interviews
8. He started doing temporary work because
- A. he'd stopped looking for managers' posts
 - B. he wanted to go back to being a PA
 - C. he didn't want a job with responsibilities
 - D. he needed the money
9. After six months temping, Chris realised that
- A. his quality of life needed to improve
 - B. he could do things he couldn't do before
 - C. he had to change his job
 - D. he needed more free time
10. Nowadays, Chris
- A. devotes most of his time to singing
 - B. is trying to build another career
 - C. misses the money he used to earn
 - D. works for a website manager

Task Two: Working from Home (15 marks)

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You will now hear a radio interview about opportunities for working from home. Listen to the interview and complete the notes below. Write **no more than four words**. The first one is an example.

This time you will hear the interview only ONCE.

You have one minute to look at the notes.

Working from home

Suitable jobs for home working

Jobs in IT/Internet sector e.g. design (Example)
programming
development

are ideal for working from home because possible to _____

Other suitable jobs: architecture

structural engineering
accountancy
journalism
consulting

Requirements and costs

Important for home to be _____

Set up can cost _____ for: PC with modem
fax machine
printer
mobile phone

Can be paid for by company or reduced _____

Drawbacks/Advice

*Leave
blank*

The experience can be _____ for some people

- Very important to _____
- If possible, don't _____ at home
- Set up catch-up meetings with the boss
- Attend company events to
 - _____
 - _____ remind people who you are

Which companies?

Companies advertising flexible working options

- encourage home working
- _____

That is the end of the listening tasks. The other tasks test your reading and writing of English. Now go on to Task Three.

Task Three: Gap Year

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During your research, you become interested in the growth in the number of people taking gap years abroad prior to or during their career.

Task Three (a): Reading (10 marks)

Read the four accounts of gap-year experiences on **Perforated Information Sheet 1 for Task Three (a)**.

Answer the questions below by putting the appropriate letter(s) (A, B, C or D) in the space provided. Each question will have one or two answers. The first one is an example.

Which person(s)

Example: worked with animals during the trip? _____ *B* _____

1. felt apprehensive about the trip? _____
2. didn't return to work after travelling? _____
3. funded the trip with money intended for something else? _____
4. had to work to get extra money? _____
5. knew which career to follow after the trip? _____
6. found the experience more rewarding than earlier trips? _____
7. noticed a relaxed attitude to life on their travels? _____
8. didn't want to be persuaded not to travel? _____

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PERFORATED INFORMATION SHEET 1 FOR TASK THREE (a)

A Book editor Fran Parnell, 28, went travelling a year ago for nine months around South America with a friend. 'It began with a vow to "escape to Peru" after an evening in the pub moaning about how depressed we were with the state of our jobs and lives. Neither of us had had gap years and we had really itchy feet. We didn't actually set off for another two years, but the allure of doing something different persisted and I began saving every penny to amass about £700 for my ticket and £5,000 spending money.'

'I was initially a bit paranoid about it being a wilderness full of hideous creatures, but was really surprised at how amazingly beautiful everything was. The Inca ruins in Peru were absolutely stunning. It helped that I stayed in touch with my employers who were very happy to keep my job open for me on my return. But the trip wasn't all plain sailing. We were once caught in a landslide on the way to a rainforest and were trapped in a bus for 40 hours with just half a bottle of water and some biscuits. We also ended up running short of funds and having to teach English in Quito for a while. I surprised myself by spending more time trekking and getting into archaeology rather than going out drinking as I would've probably done if I'd gone when I was younger. I've also become more patient and tolerant. South America's laid-back attitude rubbed off on me and made me reassess my priorities.'

B Adam Hodges, a 31-year-old charity worker, spent three months living and working at an elephant sanctuary in Sri Lanka last year. He then travelled around South East Asia before returning home. 'It was a hell of a culture shock at first. The people were very friendly, but we were in a remote area and everything was so different, from the food, and the way it was all eaten, to the more laid-back attitude to life. It was hard working in the heat and humidity. I really missed having running water. I was put straight to work, mainly on public relations, fundraising, teaching and also assisting the mobile vet unit on visits to sick elephants around the country. I was a bit distressed by the contradictory attitudes to the elephants, which are religiously revered, but also kept as status symbols by rich people. But, I was so pleased to get a company to support the launch of the sanctuary's website. There was a real sense of having made a difference. There's no comparison with just going travelling, which I'd done after university. You're completely absorbed in the culture and living it for real. Most 18- or 19-year-olds haven't got the life experience to appreciate that, and just see it as an

adventure. It was really difficult getting work at first when I got back, but the experience confirmed for me that my future lay in the charity sector.'

C Television researcher Linsey Wynton, 26, from Southampton, travelled for three weeks around South East Asia with her boyfriend last November, and then continued alone through New Zealand, Australia and Japan until January. 'It was too good an opportunity to miss: I had three months free between contracts, and £2,000 saved in the bank, which was meant to go towards a mortgage, but I thought I might never again get such a chance to go travelling knowing that I had a job to come back to. I did have a few sleepless nights. I had never been travelling alone before, but I was so surprised how easy it was. We visited ancient temples in Cambodia, drank snake blood in Vietnam, and I overcame a lifetime fear in Australia and learned to dive. I packed a lot in, and was much more focused about seeing particular places than I would have been when I was younger. I met quite a lot of older travellers like me. It wasn't difficult getting into my job when I got back. I felt so lucky to have seen so many beautiful things, and going to places like Cambodia really made me appreciate what I had.'

D Alison Cowley, a 41-year-old divorcee, gave up her job as a sales and marketing manager to travel around South East Asia, Australia and New Zealand for a year.

'My birthday was looming and I thought, "If I don't do it now I never will." So I bought the tickets two days before I turned 40. I delayed handing in my resignation until afterwards so I couldn't be talked out of it. It was a good job but it wasn't doing anything for me. I was a bit worried about leaving my parents who are in their seventies, but I was determined to go. 'It was a good thing I had prepared well because my luggage got lost at my very first stop in Kathmandu. It was a nightmare, but it helped me bond with other travellers in the same situation. Luckily, I was reunited with my backpack three days later just in time to go trekking in the Himalayas. From then on, I had a wonderful trip. Having worked so hard for years, I loved the pure escapism of it all in a way that I couldn't possibly have appreciated as an 18-year-old. I came face to face with kangaroos, flew in a doorless helicopter over the Kimberleys and did volunteer work on farms in return for accommodation and food. Coming back has been hard - it's very difficult trying to get a job. But I have no regrets. I just wish I'd gone for two years.'

It's never too late to escape from the rat race Deepa Shah

They're young, successful professionals for whom escape from the rat race is merely an around-the-world plane ticket away. Soaring numbers of twenty and thirtysomethings are joining pre-university teenagers on the backpack trail, according to recent research.

Agents specialising in independent travel such as STA, Trailfinders and Bridge the World are all reporting a boom in bookings from restless professionals. 'Ten years ago, 90 per cent of people taking a gap year and buying around-the-world tickets were students. Today, 60 per cent are either young professionals who want a career break or people going on a retirement or even wedding anniversary trip,' says James Bell of Bridge the World.

Those between 25 and 35 represent the fastest-growing market, with some prepared to spend up to £8,000 on their dream trip, according to Tom Griffiths, founder and director of The Gapyear Company. 'They've worked hard for a few years, have begun progressing up the career ladder, have more money and may even have bought a house. But they're aware they're fast heading for 30 or 40, and if they haven't already been travelling like their peers, know it may be their last chance to do so before settling down,' he says.

Time out abroad can also be a hugely marketable experience, with many businesses keeping jobs open for their employees when they return. 'Taking a gap year shows motivation, a desire to learn and versatility - all skills which are transferable to the workplace,' said Fran Wilson, an adviser at the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development.

'But employers generally like trips which have some relevance to your career.' Consequently, a new type of venture is emerging to cater for those who want to combine work and play. The number of volunteers placed by Leeds-based i-to-i, which offers English-teaching and other community work in 14 countries, rocketed from 650 last year to 1,214 so far this year. 'There won't be enough placements to sustain the demand in a few years,' said founder Deirdre Bounds. 'We see a lot of burnt-out, disillusioned professionals who have backpacked before but who want to give something back this time. With employers becoming increasingly sympathetic to these breaks, I wouldn't be surprised if they become a standard part of working life.'

Don't leave home without a gap year plan David Williams

Now is the time for travelling. But what are the risks to graduates who set off for their season in the sun without a clear idea of what they could be doing when they return?

"I made the classic mistake," says Luke Dent. "I knew I was going to do a few ski seasons after I graduated, mixed in with summer camp work in France, so I didn't pay too much attention to the opportunities in my final year. This made it much more difficult to find a good job when I came back."

Another problem is timing. If you are looking for a graduate traineeship, selection is timed to the academic year: applications in by January, interviews in February and March, offers in May-June, start in September. If you arrive back at the wrong time, it could be 18 months before you start work.

And, of course, when you get back prospective employers are going to question your commitment to themselves, the industry, and to a more settled lifestyle - the latter being one of the most important problems, as many employers will worry that you have itchy feet.

"When employers ask you if you have got the wanderlust out of your system, it is vital that you have a convincing answer," says Dent. "After I came back I went for a number of interviews in media sales and though they liked me, they reported back that their concern was that I would be off again as soon as the ski season started."

When it came to the interview for his present job, he had his answer ready. "I told them quite truthfully that I had run out of challenges. I could do the ski job in my sleep, I was bored of living in hotels and found the fact that I was only forming temporary friendships dispiriting. I was ready for home, and new opportunities."

Big graduate recruiters are wary of writing anyone off, and his present company were pleased to offer Dent the job. "Everyone demonstrates their vitality and energy in different ways," says his recruitment marketing manager. "For some it is academic work, for others it is extra-curricular activities, while for others it may be the challenge of an alien environment. As to worrying whether people will wander off, our attitude is that the best people do need challenges, so it is up to us as an organisation to convince them that their next year with us will be just as invigorating."

But big name recruiters of course require far more than to be convinced that you are not about to disappear again. What they are looking for is transferable skills.. "In a way it does not really matter what you have done," says Jane Brundle, a graduate recruitment manager. "It is what you have learned that matters. But I'd be very doubtful of someone with no kind of work experience these days."

It is, of course, far easier to demonstrate transferable skills if you have already thought about this aspect and built it into your itinerary. Sophie Matthews spent six months in Chile helping to build a community centre and a bridge. "It was superb for a number of reasons," she says. "But chiefly, it provided an organisational and logistical challenge which naturally gave me the sort of team-building and leadership skills that employers are looking for."

Matthews, however, already had a job on hold when she left for Chile, and her case highlights the great quandary of traveling: It's much easier to focus on what you can get out of an experience if you know what you will be doing at the end of it. But for many, much of the attraction of foreign travel is its open-ended nature.

Luke Dent comes into contact with students when attending recruitment fairs on behalf of his company. "I tell them it really is best to use the careers service resources available in university," he says, "and to think about what sort of job they want now rather than later. However, if they do head off without a job, it is important to think about the experience they do have in terms of key competencies."

Task Four: Becoming Self-employed

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You find an article on becoming self employed. Read the article on **Perforated Information Sheet 2** for **Task Four** and complete the questions that follow.

Task Four (a): (10 marks)

Decide whether each of the following statements is **TRUE** or **FALSE**. If **FALSE**, explain why in the space provided, using your own words as much as possible. The first one has been done as an example.

Example: A year after starting his own company, Tim Knox started working from home.

False

He asked his boss if he could return to his old job.

a. Most of those designated as self-employed by the Census Department have no employees.

b. Many people are under-prepared for starting a business.

c. Most people Dorothy Cantor sees are unaware that they have a problem.

d. Being self-employed provides most of the advantages associated with having a normal job.

e. Brian McCain has got to know more young people.

f. When starting your business, you have to believe you are going to succeed.

Task Four (b): (4 marks)

Describe in your own words the two ways in which relationships with a partner can be affected by working from home.

i)

ii)

Leave blank

Task Four (c): (6 marks)

*Leave
blank*

Explain the meaning of these words and expressions as they are used in the text in your own words.

Example: ditched the 9 to 5 rat race

gave up/rejected conventional employment

1. with his tail between his legs

2. I had very rosy glasses on

3. even more of a grind

4. maintain your equilibrium

5. take a hard look at yourself

6. I kind of got burned out

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PERFORATED INFORMATION SHEET 2 FOR TASK FOUR

Quitting the 9-to-5: You May Not Wind Up Where You Think *By Dean Schabner*

Tim Knox thought he'd made his dream come true when he ditched the 9-to-5 rat race to start his own company. Within a year he was back at his old tech design job at Boeing ... with his tail between his legs. Like many of the growing millions of others who attempt to go into business for themselves, Knox says he made a key mistake — he knew what he was doing as an employee, but he didn't have a clue about what it took to be a boss. He hadn't looked carefully at the market for his skill nor thought clearly about how to sell himself.

"I had very rosy glasses on," he said. "I started and then realized I had no customers. I was working myself to death. I had a wife and baby. I remember sitting in my office and calling my old boss and basically saying, 'Can I come home?'" The answer was yes. But he didn't stay for long. Having learned from his initial failure, he used his spare time during the next year and a half to get his own business off the ground. This time, he didn't have to go "home" again.

Knox now counts himself as one of the more than 16 million Americans who the Census Department designates as self-employed. Of those, roughly 5 million offer professional, scientific, technical or other services, just over 2 million are involved in construction, 1.8 million are in real estate and 1.7 million have their own stores. The overall number does not include people who have started their own companies that employ a workforce.

But for the self-employed, the change may not be the liberating experience they had hoped for. Some find the arrangement even more of a grind — and more depressing — than their old job. Being your own boss can certainly be the path to a better life. But experts warn too many people forget about the potential problems, and don't ask themselves the right questions to see if they are really ready.

Money is at the top of the list of concerns, and

not just at early stages when potential entrepreneurs try to get the businesses off the ground. The stress of being responsible for keeping a business afloat, even when it seems to be going well, can be much worse than the pressures of a normal job.

Dorothy Cantor, who has been a psychotherapist for 25 years, said she saw so many people who were stressed from being self-employed and did not recognize the cause, that she wrote a book about it, *What Do You Want to Do When You Grow Up?*

"It's not what people generally present as their problem, but it's very often the issue," she said. "What I started focusing on was how unprepared people are. From the psychological standpoint, the more aware you are, the more likely you are to maintain your equilibrium."

People tend to think of their job only as a source of income, so when they think of leaving it they generally focus on whether they have enough money, whether they have a sound business plan and a good product or service, she said. All those are important questions, but once you've answered all those questions to your satisfaction, you need to take a look at other sides of the matter, she advises.

Jobs provide benefits that are not always available for someone who is self-employed, such as socialisation, status and the discipline of a routine, Cantor said. On the other hand, there are satisfactions that a normal job usually can't provide. "The limits are only you," she said. "There is the satisfaction of 'I did it myself.'"

Many people look forward to being able to spend more time with their families, particularly if they plan to run a home-based business. Bryan McCain, who left a job as the director of the Independent Insurance Agents

of Alabama to become a consultant, said seeing more of his children has been one of the greatest benefits of his job change. "I get up, take my kids to school, drink a cup of coffee, read the newspaper and come home and get to work, just like everybody else," he said. But he has the flexibility to serve as baseball, basketball and soccer coach for his children's teams. "I know the children my kids are growing up with," he said. "I don't know many fathers who can say that."

Cantor warns of the potential downsides to working at home, and it's not just the financial stress. There can be a shift in the "balance of power" if the person who has been the principal breadwinner leaves a job to start a business. "It creates a shift in power, even if it's not said, of who feels that the authority for money decisions rests with him or her because of being the big bread winner," she said. "If it's the guy, he's got to say to himself, 'How am I going to feel about my wife making more money than me?'"

And if home-business work overlaps with housework, that can cause problems, too, she warns. "Are you going to expect different things from your partner?" she said. "If you're starting a business at home, are you going to expect members of your family to be part-time secretaries? Be realistic about what expectations you have of your partner and address them."

Once you've looked at the question from the business, economic and family side, don't forget to take a hard look at yourself. To be successful being self-employed or running your own company requires a certain kind of personality: aggressive, driven, self-disciplined and prepared for failure. "You have to be someone who is psychologically secure," Cantor said. "You can't go in absolutely assuming 'I'm going to make it,'" she said. "If you can say to yourself, 'My goal is to try this — if it fails that's OK,' then you'll be OK."

Keith Lowe learned that lesson firsthand when he and a friend started their own software developing company in Huntsville, Alabama. "It was four and a half years of 'I think we're going to go out of business next week, how are we going to meet payroll?'" he said.

Like a lot of people, Lowe had gotten the idea to start his own company after many years in a regular job. In his case he was an engineer and then the tech manager at a large company.

"I kind of got burned out and decided there's got to be a better life than this," he said. Lowe says he finally found that "better life," but it wasn't as easy a path as he thought it would be.

http://abnews.go.com/sections/Business/US/self_employed_040105-1.html

Task One

1. C	1.5
2. C	1.5
3. D	1.5
4. D	1.5
5. B	1.5
6. C	1.5
7. A	1.5
8. D	1.5
9. B	1.5
10. B	1.5

Total 15 marks

Task Two

Example design

1 do them remotely	1.5
2 design	1.5
3 technologically well-equipped	1.5
4 (less than) £1000	1.5
5 commuting costs	1.5
6 [a] very isolating [experience]	1.5
7 keep in touch	1.5
8 spend long periods	1.5
9 keep up to date	1.5
10 supply the equipment	1.5

Total 15 marks

Task Three (a)

Example: B

1. A, C	2
2. D	1
3. C	1
4. A	1
5. B	1
6. B	1
7. A, B	2
8. D	1

Total 10 marks

Task Three (b)

Mark using the standard writing criteria

Total 20 marks

Task Four (a)

1 mark for each True answer. 2 marks for False with explanation. If no explanation, 0 mark.

Example False. He asked his boss if he could return to his old job.

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) False. It doesn't include <u>any</u> self-employed workforce. | 2 |
| b) True | 1 |
| c) False. They are not aware of the <u>cause</u> of their problem | 2 |
| d) False. The benefits provided by normal jobs aren't always available. | 2 |
| e) True | 1 |
| f) False. You can't assume you are going to make it/be successful. | 2 |

Total 10 marks

Task Four (b)

- | | |
|---|---|
| i) A husband might feel awkward about his wife now
earning more than him/taking on financial responsibilities. | 2 |
| ii) A person might expect a partner to work for him/her,
despite having other things (e.g. housework) to do. | 2 |

Total 4 marks

Task Four (c)

Example gave up/rejected conventional employment.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | feeling embarrassed/humble | 1 |
| 2 | [I was] very/too optimistic | 1 |
| 3 | much harder work | 1 |
| 4 | keep well-balanced [psychologically/emotionally]. | 1 |
| 5 | analyse yourself honestly | 1 |
| 6 | [I/He] became physically/mentally exhausted/over-stressed. | 1 |

Total 6 marks

Task Five

Mark using the standard writing criteria

Total 20 marks

Paper Total 100 marks