Transcripts for Listening Section
ENGLISH Practice LPE 2021

TASK 1 - TRANSCRIPT:

Three years ago I gave up my apartment, sold most of my belongings, stored some in the boot of a friend's car and started calling the road home. Everyone thought I was crazy. A 25- year-old girl from a regular middle-class family in the small town of Dehradun what do you mean she was going to live like a gypsy? Well, this is what I mean like every good student I work pretty hard while growing up. I studied science in the 12th grade even though I didn't really like it. I did a bachelor's degree in economics even though I didn't really care for it. After I graduated I scored a good job and worked for two years even though I hated the nine-to-five lifestyle.

Can you raise your hands if any of this sounds familiar? Exactly. So by the time I was 23 I felt like even though I was on the right path, I was leading such an average life - a life that didn't excite or inspire me. And the sad truth is so many of us are going to spend our entire lives feeling that way.

So I started asking myself, "What is it that inspires me? What can I change?" I decided to take some time off work and look for answers. and I landed up here - in the cold mountain desert of Spiti in the high trans-Himalayas of India. For the first time in my life, I slept under the Milky Way and a million stars. I hitchhiked alone through some of the remotest villages of India, something I could have never imagined. I slept in monasteries and I met nuns who had been meditating in mountain caves for decades. On an exceptionally dark night, I traced the entire journey of a lunar eclipse as shooting stars fell through. I think it was the first time in my life that I really felt alive. It was like I had been climbing this ladder my entire life, the one that society expects us to, the one that our parents want us to focus on, the one that's considered normal. But suddenly I saw all these other parts and branches and I realized it would be really stupid to not jump off the ladder and experiment with these parts.

So in 2011, at age 23, I decided to quit my job as a social media strategist in Singapore and create my own definition of what normal is. Everyone thought I was crazy. I was giving up a steady high-paying job and a good standard of living for a rather uncertain future. But I had some savings and I started freelancing and everything I earned, I spent it on traveling- because it was being on the road that seemed to inspire and excite me.

Was I the only crazy one? Turns out no. While traveling solo in Mauritius, I met a fisherman called Ravi. The evening I met Ravi, he was wearing a torn sweater, he had no slippers on his feet, he lived in a run-down shack down the road from a fancy beach resort. Ravi told me he had been offered a job in a factory where many of his friends worked long hours and earned big money, but Ravi didn't take the job. Everyone thought he was crazy. They seemed deeply unhappy. Ravi told me about his friends. Sure they have nice houses, nice clothes - some of them can even afford an international holiday and Ravi can't. But he loves the sea, and as a fisherman he gets to be at sea every single day. He is out rowing his boat on the waves, he's out snorkeling to marvel at the underwater life, his days are marked with unforgettable sunrises like this one and sunsets. Sometimes he rows out so far at sea that it is just him and the horizon. Ravi chooses to live a simple life, yet one that inspires and excites him every single day.

As for me, I've been living without a home for three years now. I stay in a place for a few weeks and then

move on to another place. One day I am waking up in the shadow of an active volcano in Guatemala. Another day I'm cycling along the Caucasus Mountains of Georgia, all the way to the border of Russia. When people ask my mom what I do for a living, she tells them (EN translation: "She is fond of roaming around"), which is kind of true. But I make my living through a career or through a profession that didn't exist while I was studying science in school or studying economics in college. That profession is travel blogging. I can't always be sure how much money I'm going to make in a month or a year, but I like to think of it as a financial adventure. And I have met so many people on my travels who make their living through their passions. So these are people who make their living from translating languages, studying yoga, running marathons- even studying snakes.

TASK 2 - TRANSCRIPT:

GWIN: I've always thought of tornadoes as scary monsters. The kind of thing you see in The Wizard of Oz, a black hole that reaches down from the sky and snatches innocent people out of their beds. But that's not how Anton Seimon sees them. Anton says it all starts with a type of thunderstorm called a supercell.

SEIMON: Where you get a supercell thunderstorm, you have the potential for a significant tornado. Supercell thunderstorms are breathtaking to behold. They're giant sky sculptures. They're extraordinary beasts.

GWIN: And Anton has chased those beasts for almost 30 years. He's a National Geographic Explorer. And every year, he logs thousands of miles driving around the Great Plains, from Texas to Canada, and from the Rockies all the way to Indiana.

Tell me about the life of a storm chaser. What is that life like?

SEIMON: Yeah, so a storm chasing lifestyle is not a very healthy thing. Typically involves very bad food and sometimes uncomfortable accommodations, ridiculous numbers of hours just sitting in the driver's seat of a car or the passenger seat waiting for something to happen. It's certainly not glamorous.

GWIN: But seeing a storm unfold is worth the wait. Anton says he's not looking for adrenaline or thrills, just the most promising thunderclouds. And when he finds them, the chase is on.

SEIMON: The analogy I draw is you're playing chess with the atmosphere. And sometimes the clouds never develop. You know, the difference in atmospheric conditions that can produce just a sunny afternoon or a maximum-intensity tornado can be—the difference can be infinitesimally small and impossible to discern beforehand.

GWIN: Even for experts like Anton, it's a mystery why some supercells create massive tornadoes and others just fizzle out. Tornadoes have killed more than 900 people in the United States since 2010, and understanding them is the first step to saving lives.

Why is it necessary for a person, even a scientist, to get anywhere near a tornado? Isn't that like what radar sort of—isn't technology sort of taking the human element out of this?

SEIMON: What the radar beam does, you know, a radar sends a signal out. It bounces back off particles, objects, cloud droplets, dust, whatever is out there, and bounces back to the radar and gives information.

GWIN: That works great at cloud level. But Anton says there's one place where things get tricky. At ground level, trees and buildings get in the way of radar beams.

SEIMON: That's where all the structures are, and that's where all human mortality occurs, is right at the surface. So the very place that you would want a radar beam to be giving you the maximum information is that one place that a radar beam can't actually see.

GWIN: So to understand what's happening at ground level, you have to figure out another way to see inside a tornado. And that's not easy.

TASK 3A - TRANSCRIPT:
In 1934 only 11% of rural Americans had electricity. President Franklin Roosevelt created the rural electrification administration. New lines going up almost everywhere at the rate of 500 miles a day. And within 20 years, 90% of those homes had cheap reliable electricity. Now, over the years the government has come up with a basket of programs designed to help with Internet affordability and accessibility. Unfortunately, SOAN says they haven't always worked as designed. The FCC has now for well over a decade paid out tens of billions of dollars to rural Broadband companies to build Internet access in places where there isn't any. And the fact of the matter is, is that the government has gotten a very very poor return on its investment. This FCC and I'll even say you know the FCC that I work for, has not done a very good job of demanding that these companies tell us what they've actually built with the money they've gotten.

TASK 3B - TRANSCRIPT:
What do you think of when you hear the word "reforestation"? For some it is about rebuilding lost or at-risk ecosystems and reclaiming a space for biodiversity to thrive. For others, it is about clean air and expanding the so-called 'lungs of the earth,' allowing our trees to absorb carbon dioxide into the soil and reduce the potential for climate change. And yet for others, it is about jobs and livelihoods, whether through mass tree planting or through sustainable forestry or related industries. The truth is that deforestation is all these things and more. Through projects such as the African-led Great Green Wall which aims to bridge the expanse of Africa's Sahel with trees, we are absorbing carbon, providing livelihoods, and protecting biodiversity all at once.

TASK 3C - TRANSCRIPT:
We are living through an artificial intelligence revolution. These machine robots are just a handful of examples. From a medical diagnosis in hospitals, to recipes in our kitchen, AI will play an even greater role in our lives. And as such, it needs clear legal guidelines. AI is a transformative technology and it's a global race in order to protect democracies, so what we have to do and the European Parliament is very good at it, is to protect privacy, personal data, and make sure citizens are aware of people trying to manipulate their data.

TASK 3D - TRANSCRIPT:
In a world where clocks abound, we constantly ask "what time is it?" But rarely do we stop to consider,

"what is time?" In the July 25th Science News, our staff writers tackle this question. They take a look at time from three completely different perspectives: body, brain, and universe. When it comes to the body's clock, biologists ponder time from the perspective of evolutionary history. They want to know how and why life forms acquired internal clocks that guide everyday life. Molecular biology writer, Tina Hesman Saey explores the circadian clocks built into nearly every one of our cells and how they relate to the most primitive clocks found in archaea, bacteria and algae. Our brain's take on time is a separate story. Neuroscience writer Laura Sanders explores how the clocks in our heads help us make sense of the world and what makes our perception of time appear to change as a consequence of our experiences. There are even some hints about how faulty timekeeping in the brain can factor into disorders such as schizophrenia. Perhaps the most brain-boggling exploration of time comes from physics writer Andrew Grant. He grapples with time in terms of gravity and the grandeur of the universe. Why does time always run forward, even though the laws of physics should permit it to tick backward? A new simulation points to gravity and suggests that the force may allow the universe to have one past, the Big Bang, and two futures.

TASK 3E - TRANSCRIPT:
It's a simple, effective and environmentally friendly way of powering cars. Onsite renewable electricity is used to split water into its constituents hydrogen and oxygen producing power.

The car is running right now so it's completely silent. There's nothing really to hear in here. It's basically- as we speak, it's using hydrogen to make electricity and the electricity goes through and powers the car like an electric car except in this case we've got long range and very quick refueling.

Unlike a battery electric vehicle, refueling is as quick as filling your car up with petrol. And the range before refueling is over 600 kilometers.

I hope and I have a vision that as you turn up at a fuel station one day, you'll be seeing petrol, diesel and hydrogen at that pump.