

9.2 Who cares? An experiment

A group of student priests were asked to prepare a talk on the story of *The Good Samaritan*. They were then told to go to another building to give their talk.

As they left, half of the students were told they were late and had to hurry. The others were told they had plenty of time. On the way, there was a man lying on the pavement, clearly in pain (it was an actor).

63% of the students who thought they had plenty of time stopped to help, but only 10% of those who thought they were in a hurry stopped. Some of them said that they hadn't noticed the man as they hurried past, but many of them stepped over him ... in order to go and give a talk on ... *The Good Samaritan*.

9.5 I just want to say thank you

- Well, I was in Iran, crossing the Persian Desert. It was so very, very cold. I hadn't expected this, and I was worried that I couldn't feel my fingers any more. I was driving on this scooter and I had no gloves, and I was going on, on this long road. Suddenly I saw, there was a car, and as he got closer, he pulled his car in front of me and stopped and got out. Then he just simply took the lovely sheepskin gloves from his own hands and gave them to me. He couldn't speak English, I couldn't speak Farsi, his language, but he was away in a flash and I never said thank you to the person who probably stopped me losing my fingers. Wonderful!
- In 2003, I was coming back from South Africa, from a holiday, and, I hate early morning in Heathrow, and I had to go on The Tube, so by the time I got to my least favourite Tube station, which is Earl's Court, it was packed rush hour. And, I just could not see with so many people, I couldn't see when the train came in. And there were two young girls who said, 'Can we help you?', and they stood on top of a thing, 'cos they weren't terribly tall themselves, and so they could see the train. They helped me on when it arrived, they'd insist on lifting my luggage, and found a place and made somebody stand up for me to sit down, and erm, it was just lovely! I would love to thank them, but they weren't... they'd probably never remember, but they just, just were so ... just helped me at the time I most needed it.
- Back in the 80s, about 30 years ago, my wife and I thought we would do some shopping on a Saturday morning in Oxford Street, and we were with our young children who were then two, four, and six years old. And, we were on the first floor of a clothes shop, just browsing around, and I suddenly realized that my four-year-old son was missing, and I had a quick look round on the first floor, dashed down to the ground floor, and there was no sign of him. So I had to go out into the street, by which time I was really starting to panic. And I just found myself running up and down the street calling out his name and going into shops, and it was just about the worst moment of my life. But, fortunately my wife was much calmer and phoned the local police station, and to our amazement, they said that our son was there. Apparently what had happened is that a woman, this amazing woman, had seen my boy standing on the pavement, crying and clearly frightened, and made the decision to get a taxi and take him to the police station. But she never left any contact details, name and address, nothing. So, this has been the

only opportunity for me to ever say thank you to this amazing woman whose actions saved the day. I sometimes dread to think what might have happened to him. So, if you're listening, thank you so much!

- My daughter lost a purse, which we'd bought her years ago. I too had recently lost a purse. I left it on a bus, two young girls claimed it, so we thought the same thing would have happened to Tamsin's purse. The exceptionally kind person who picked it up, found the address on the driving licence, and put the purse with all its contents in an envelope and sent it to her. We were both really struck that someone could be so kind and go to so much trouble, and it was such a contrast with the experience that I had recently had, and I would love to be able to say thank you to that person.

9.7 Words with different meanings

- A Oh no! Boring Barry keeps asking me out. He's just invited me to the cinema tonight.

B Well, make it obvious you're not interested. Tell him you're washing your hair tonight!
- A Sssh! Did you hear that noise? It sounded like someone in the garden.

B It's probably just a fox. They often come round here at night.
- A That China plate on the wall is gorgeous!

B Yes. My grandmother left that to me. It's probably worth quite a bit.
- A I didn't like any of my school teachers.

B Shame. If you'd liked them, you might've stayed on at school.
- A I lent James £20 two weeks ago, and he's never mentioned it since.

B He's obviously forgotten about it. If he'd remembered, he'd have paid you back by now.
- A What's on the agenda for today's meeting?

B Oh, the usual discussion points, new plans, strategies, targets, and a review of why none of the last ones have worked!
- A You can't keep taking on so much work! You've got to be sensible about what's possible.

B I know. I need to think more before I say 'yes' to work offers.
- A Could you bring that chair over here?

B Which one? This red one?

9.8 Money matters

- A What about this silk designer dress?

B Mmm, it's lovely, but it's out of my price range.
- A Here's your bill.

B Thank you. Is service included?
- A Hello, what's your exchange rate for euros to pound sterling?

B It's 0.79 at the moment.
- A Could I have a strawberry ice cream, please?

B Sure. That's £1.80. You'd better be quick – the film's about to start.

Unit 10

10.1 What do you see?

- A These are great fun! Let's see if we can work them out.
- B OK... I can see ... two rabbits.
- A Two?! No, that one isn't a rabbit ...
- B It looks like a rabbit to me. It's got big ears.
- A No, no, those are a horse's ears! That picture's a horse or a seal.

- B Mmmmm, it might be a horse but I can't see a seal... but there's definitely a rabbit in this picture ... a rabbit and a duck!
- A Yeah, they're easy to see. Now, what about this one? I can see the word 'good'.
- B 'Good'? I can't see 'good' ... but I can see 'evil'.
- A That's interesting! I can't see 'evil' ... Oh, yes now I can... I can see both words now. That's really clever!
- B This drawing's clever too – it looks like four shelves but there can't be four.
- A Yeah, four or three – it depends how you look at it. And this is another clever drawing.
- B Which one?
- A The one with the parallel bar.
- B Parallel? It doesn't look parallel at all. It looks like a see saw.
- A It is parallel. I've checked it with a ruler.
- B Wow! Amazing! The diagonal lines must be creating the illusion.
- A Yeah, I think you're right.
- B Now, what about the guy with the earring! He could be looking straight at me ... on the other hand he ...
- A ... he might be looking at me! ... And that guy, the soldier, doesn't he look miserable ...
- B That's not a soldier! It's someone touching their toes.
- A It must be a soldier – he's wearing a helmet ... and he's got his eyes closed.
- B Really? I can't see that at all. But ... look at the eyes in this one... the skeleton! It looks like something from a horror movie and it's wearing an earring too.
- A Yeah, this one's really weird, but look more closely ... it's not a skeleton and it's not an earring. It just looks like a skeleton.
- B Huh?
- A It's an old-fashioned lady looking at herself in a mirror.
- B No! A lady? It can't be a lady. And what's the earring?
- A I'm not so sure about that. It may be a candlestick.
- B Well, whatever it is, it's scary. OK good fun! Is that the lot?

10.2 Fact or fiction?

- Sunflowers turn to follow the sun.**

FICTION: It is true that there are flowers that follow the sun, but, despite what many people believe, the sunflower is not one of them. Certainly, when you see a field of sunflowers, the flower heads are facing more-or-less in the same direction, but always in the same direction, from sunrise to sunset.
- The milk of a hippopotamus is pink.**

FACT: It is true that the colour of a hippo's milk is bright pink. This is because the milk contains two unique acids, and one of these is red, which when mixed with the white milk turns it pink. Hippos nurse their babies for about a year and are the only mammals to produce pink milk.
- Salt water boils quicker than fresh water.**

FACT: Salt water boils faster than pure water because salt water has a lower heat capacity. In other words, it takes less energy to raise the temperature of salt water than pure water. This means that the salt water heats up faster and gets to its boiling point quicker.
- Ducks' quacks don't echo.**

FICTION: This is a much-quoted scientific myth, but it is not true. Scientists have done experiments to prove this. But, where did this