

U2 Listening SB p. 18 Listen to the track with the full transcript in front of you and pay attention to the notes and why the other options are wrong. The questions appear in order of appearance in the script. The right answers appear in bold letters.

1.07

(I = Interviewer; M = Mark Grant)

I: With me today is local man, Mark Grant, who spent the last eight months travelling round the world. Nothing particularly unusual about that, you may say, except that Mark successfully completed the **18,000** miles ... on his bike. Mark, why did you do that? Were you hoping to break a record?

M: If I was, I failed miserably. **The record stands at 175 days and it took me quite a lot longer than that.** No, my aim was to raise funds through sponsorship for the Alzheimer Care Trust. My grandfather received a lot of support from them, and as he was the one who encouraged me to take up cycling when I was a teenager, I thought this would be a good way to repay them for all their help. I hope to give the charity a cheque very soon for four hundred thousand pounds.

I: Very impressive. And how do you feel now that you've achieved your goal?

M: Exhausted! No, naturally I'm delighted to have completed the journey and to be in a position to make such a large donation to the Trust. And I have to say **I got very emotional** last Sunday when I saw all the people who turned out to meet me at the finishing line. **I had to get my handkerchief out to dry the tears.** **It was actually quite funny, though, to see the look of shock on a lot of people's faces when they saw my beard.** Shaving wasn't part of my daily routine while I was cycling, so **I wasn't quite as handsome as when I started out.**

- 1 What motivated Mark to cycle round the world?
- A His grandfather encouraged him to do it.
 - B He was trying to break the world record.
 - C He wanted to collect money for an organisation.
- A. Nothing is said about that. He only mentions the support his grandfather, not his father, got from that charity.
- B. If I was (hoping to break a record), I failed miserably. → 'If I was', 2nd conditional (things that are not real at the moment of speaking, therefore, he wasn't hoping to break the world record. That is a distractor.
- C. **His aim, his goal, was to raise funds (to collect money) for that charity. He ended up collecting, raising four hundred thousand pounds.**

Language:

- Notice the comma to signal thousands. We don't use a period <.>, unlike Spanish/Catalan
- Break a record: collocation meaning "batre el rècord"
- Quite a lot longer than → modification of a comparison "bastant més temps que..."

- 2 What does Mark say about the people who came to welcome him home?
- A Some of them were crying.
 - B Many were surprised by his appearance.
 - C There were not as many as he had expected.
- A. He was crying, not the people: 'I got emotional... I had to get my hanky out to dry the tears' → distractor. The question is about the people, not about him.
- B. **The look of shock on a lot of people's faces when they saw my beard. (l'aparença de sorpresa/shock a la cara de molta gent quan em van veure la barba).**
- C. Nothing is said about that, he just mentions 'all the people'.

Language: 'I wasn't quite as handsome as when I started out' → *no estava ni de bon tros tan guapo com quan vaig començar* -- (not) quite as + adj + as

I: You mention daily routine. Tell us about that Mark.
What was a typical day like for you?

M: Well, I tried to spend about twelve hours a day in the saddle so I'd usually get up fairly early, somewhere between five and half past, maybe a bit later, do a few stretching exercises and listen to some relaxing music on my phone, just to ease myself into the day. Then it was breakfast. I don't normally eat very much in the morning but that had to change for this trip. I always made sure every night that I had plenty of food for when I got up. And then, after I'd eaten, I'd clear away and start cycling.

I: And didn't you ever get bored of it all? I mean twelve hours a day is a lot, isn't it, especially on your own.

M: I went through 23 different countries, most of which I'd never been to before, so I couldn't very well get bored. And I met so many friendly people on the way that I was hardly ever conscious of the fact I was doing it alone. I also had my music to entertain me of course – and keep me awake. It was often a struggle at the end of the day to keep my eyes open and concentrate on the road.

3 It was important for Mark each morning to

- A get up at exactly the same time.
- B have a large breakfast.
- C phone home.

- A. He mentions the time, but there's a range of 30 minutes' difference ('fairly early, somewhere between five and half past, maybe a bit later')
- B. **He doesn't usually eat much for breakfast but 'that had to change...'. He 'always made sure... I had plenty of food when I got up'. (plenty of = *una pila/molt de*)**
- C. Nothing is mentioned about it.

Language:

- saddle → sillín / selló
- relaxING music makes you feel relaxED
- to clear away: to remove something that you have finished using or no longer want in order to make a place tidy

4 While he was cycling, Mark frequently felt

- A fed up.
- B lonely.
- C tired.

- A. fed up (*fart, hartó, enfadat*). Nothing is said about this.
- B. lonely → on the contrary, he met many friendly people on the way and so he was hardly ever (*gairebé mai*) conscious that he was alone. (distractor)
- C. **He used music to keep himself awake, as it was often difficult (a struggle, *una lluita metafòrica*) to keep his eyes open and concentrate.**

Language:

- "on your own" → alone
- Notice as well how emphasis is marked using italics (*cursiva*).

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I: Hm, dangerous. Did you ever have any accidents?

M: I didn't, fortunately. I nearly got blown off my bike, once or twice though. In fact the wind was by far the most difficult thing had to deal with during the whole trip – particularly in south-east Asia where strong headwinds tore at my face and were really quite painful. It seemed as if the harder I pedalled, the stronger the wind decided to blow, which wasn't the case of course. But I did lose a bit of time and I got to Australia a little later than I'd intended.

I: Right, now, a lot of listeners were able to follow your progress via your blog. Did you have to take a lot of technological gadgets with you for this kind of thing?

M: Well, I wrote the blog on my phone, which I also used to send texts and listen to music. And phone people as well, of course. Then, on the handlebars I had a GPS, to show my position. And to power them I had a solar panel fixed to the top of the pannier rack at the back. But none of it weighed very much and it didn't take up too much space, so apart from worrying about getting it stolen, it wasn't really a problem.

I: And did anyone ever steal anything?

M: On the contrary. Everyone kept trying to give me things! I was amazed. In some places, people would

5 Mark says that high winds caused him to

- A progress more slowly than planned.
- B lose confidence in his cycling ability.
- C fall off his bicycle and injure himself.

A. He got to Australia 'a little later' than he had planned / intended.

- B. Nothing is mentioned about that.
- C. Winds were painful (*dolorosos*), but they didn't get him hurt.

Language:

- Blow off: *caure a causa del vent*
- 'the wind was by far the most difficult thing I had to deal with' → by far + superlative (*de lluny el més...*)
- The harder I pedalled, the stronger the wind decided to blow → *com més pedalava, més fort decidia bufar el vent.*

6 What does Mark say about the technological equipment he took?

- A It wasn't very heavy.
- B There was too much.
- C Some of it was stolen.

A. 'to weigh' = pesar (verb); weight (noun).

- B. Even though he took quite a lot of equipment with him, it wasn't too heavy and it didn't take up too much space, therefore, it wasn't too much equipment for him to handle. (distractor)
- C. He did worry about getting it stolen, but the opposite happened ('on the contrary. Everyone kept trying to give me things')

Language:

- Notice that 'equipment' is uncountable (much equipment)

- M: **On the contrary.** Everyone kept trying to give me things! I was amazed. In some places, people would come up to me and offer me small gifts. Or they'd invite me into their homes, and refuse to accept any money for the food they gave me. It was very heartwarming.
- I: Mark, we're going to take a break for news. Don't go away just yet, though. After the news summary, we'll be opening up the phone lines for listeners' questions. So if you want to ask Mark ...

- 7 In some countries he visited, Mark was impressed with
- A the quality of the food.
 - B the generosity of the people.
 - C the size of the houses.
- A. People gave him food, but nothing is said about the quality of the food.
- B. They insisted on giving him small gifts (presents), they invited him and didn't accept his money in exchange for the food they had given him.**
- C. Nothing is said about the size of the houses.

Language:

on the contrary → al contrari, on vas a parar, res a veure amb el que s'ha dit anteriorment. It does **NOT** mean "on the other hand" or "in contrast".

- heartwarming → *reconfortante, grato, agradable*