

On the rails

Five celebrities tell Andrew Morgan their favourite memories of railway journeys.

A Andrea Thompson – Newsreader

I fell in love with the south of France a long time ago and try to get back there as often as I can. There's a local train from Cannes along the coast which crosses the border with Italy. It takes you past some of the most amazing seascapes. It never matters what the weather is like, or what time of the year it is, it is always enchanting. Out of the other window are some of the best back gardens and residences in the whole of France. You feel like someone peeping into the property of the rich and famous. The travellers themselves are always lively because there is an interesting mix of tourists and locals, all with different itineraries but all admirers of the breathtaking journey.

B Raj Patel – Explorer

I have enjoyed so many rail journeys through the years, but if I had to pick a favourite it would be the Nile Valley Express, which runs across the desert of northern Sudan. The one misfortune in my youth, growing up in South Africa, was missing out on a family train journey from Cape Town to the Kruger National Park. I was regarded as being too young and troublesome and was sent off to an aunt. When I came to live in England as a teenager, I still hadn't travelled by train. London Waterloo was the first real station I ever saw and its great glass dome filled me with wonder.

C Betty Cooper – Novelist

I am indebted to one train in particular: the Blue Train, which took my husband and me on our honeymoon across France to catch a boat to Egypt. It was on the train that my husband gave me a pink dress, which I thought was absolutely wonderful. Someone happened to mention that pink was good for the brain, and I've never stopped wearing the colour since. What I

remember about the journey itself, however, is how lovely it was to travel through France and then by boat up the Nile to Luxor. It was, without a doubt, the perfect way to wind down after all the wedding preparations.

D Martin Brown – Journalist

We were working on a series of articles based on a round-the-world trip and had to cross a desert in an African country. There wasn't a road, so the only way we could continue our journey was to take what was affectionately known as the Desert Express. The timetable was unreliable – we were just given a day. We also heard that, in any case, the driver would often wait for days to depart if he knew there were people still on their way. When it appeared, there was a sudden charge of what seemed like hundreds of people climbing into and onto the carriages – people were even allowed to travel on the roof free. During the night, the train crossed some of the most beautiful landscapes I have ever seen. It was like a dream, like travelling across the moon.

E Arisu Mezuki – Actress

I imagine most people's favourite impressions of trains and railways are formed when they are young children, but that's not my case. I was brought up in Singapore and Cyprus, where I saw very few trains, let alone travelled on them. It wasn't until I was a teenager that trains began to dominate my life. I made a film which featured a railway in Yorkshire. Most of the filming took place on an old, disused stretch of the line which had been lovingly maintained by volunteers. That's where my passion for steam trains began. When we weren't filming, we took every opportunity to have a ride on the train, and, when I went back last year, it was as if time had stood still. Everything was still in place, even the gas lights on the station platform!

PAPER 2 WRITING (1 hour 20 minutes)

Part 1

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **120–150** words in an appropriate style.

- 1 Your English friend Bill is a travel writer. He has written a chapter for a guidebook about a town you know well and you have just read it. Read Bill's letter and your notes. Then write a letter to Bill using **all** your notes.

Thanks for agreeing to check the chapter that I've written. Could you let me know what you liked about it? Also, if any of the information is inaccurate, please give me the correct information! And do you think there's anything else I should include?

Once again, thanks a lot for reading the chapter.

Bill

Notes for letter to Bill

- Tell Bill what I liked about his chapter – places to visit, ...
- Give Bill correct information about
 - parking in city centre
 - museum opening times
- Suggest Bill includes information about nightlife – give him details

Write your **letter**. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.

Do not write any postal addresses.

Part 2

Write an answer to **one** of the questions 2–5 in this part. Write your answer in **120–180** words in an appropriate style.

- 2 You recently saw this notice in an English language computer magazine.

Reviews needed!

Do you play computer games? Write us a review of a computer game that you enjoy. Describe the game's good and bad points and say how easy or difficult it is to play. Also say what age group it is suitable for.

A free game for the best review!

Write your **review**.

- 3 Your teacher has asked you to write a story for the college English language magazine. The story must **begin** with the following words:

It was only a small mistake but it changed my life for ever.

Write your **story**.

- 4 You have seen the following notice in an international magazine.

COMPETITION

Is it better to live in a flat, a modern house or an old house?

Write us an article giving your opinions.

The best article will be published and the writer will receive £500.

Write your **article**.

- 5 Answer **one** of the following two questions based on **one** of the titles below.

- (a) *Officially Dead* by Richard Prescott

This is part of a letter from your friend Matthew.

In the book 'Officially Dead', Colin Fenton doesn't behave very well, does he? Do you have any sympathy for him or not?

Write and tell me what you think. Matthew

Write your **letter** to Matthew. Do not write any postal addresses.

- (b) *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

Your English teacher has given you this essay for homework.

Compare the characters of Mr and Mrs Bennett and say whether you think they have a good marriage or not.

Write your **essay**.

PAPER 3 USE OF ENGLISH (45 minutes)

Part 1

For questions 1–12, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Mark your answers **on the separate answer sheet**.

Example:

0 A joined B held C were D took

0	A	B	C	D
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Thomas Edison

On the night of 21 October 1931, millions of Americans (0) part in a coast-to-coast ceremony to commemorate the passing of a great man. Lights (1) in homes and offices from New York to California. The ceremony (2) the death of arguably the most important inventor of (3) time: Thomas Alva Edison.

Few inventors have (4) such an impact on everyday life, and many of his inventions played a crucial (5) in the development of modern technology. One should never (6) how revolutionary some of Edison's inventions were.

In many ways, Edison is the perfect example of an inventor – that is, not just someone who (7) up clever gadgets, but someone whose products transform the lives of millions. He possessed the key characteristics that an inventor needs to (8) a success of inventions, notably sheer determination. Edison famously tried thousands of materials while working on a new type of battery, reacting to failure by cheerfully (9) to his colleagues: 'Well, (10) we know 8,000 things that don't work.' Knowing when to take no (11) of experts is also important. Edison's proposal for electric lighting circuitry was (12) with total disbelief by eminent scientists, until he lit up whole streets with his lights.

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|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1 A turned out | B came off | C went out | D put off |
| 2 A marked | B distinguished | C noted | D indicated |
| 3 A whole | B full | C entire | D all |
| 4 A put | B had | C served | D set |
| 5 A effect | B place | C role | D share |
| 6 A underestimate | B lower | C decrease | D mislead |
| 7 A creates | B shapes | C dreams | D forms |
| 8 A gain | B make | C achieve | D get |
| 9 A announcing | B informing | C instructing | D notifying |
| 10 A by far | B at least | C even though | D for all |
| 11 A notice | B regard | C attention | D view |
| 12 A gathered | B caught | C drawn | D received |