

Audioscript **Listening comprehension**

*For items 1–10 listen to a radio talk for young people about animals communicating with each other, and decide whether the statements 1–10 are TRUE according to the text you hear (A), or FALSE (B), or the information on the statement is NOT STATED in the text (C). You will hear the text **twice**. You have **20 seconds** to look through the statements.*

(pause 20 seconds)

Now we begin.

Presenter: If I asked you what the difference is between animals and human beings, you might think for a bit and then suggest something about the fact that humans can speak to each other using a language - or in some cases more than one language - and in a way you would be right. But that is not the whole story by any means. Many animals can communicate in surprisingly complicated ways, but they never quite achieve the range and depth of human languages. At the simplest level, several kinds of insect, including bees, have been observed performing a special dance to tell each other where they can find nectar and pollen, which is their food. This, of course, does not mean that they are using a 'language' but they are, all the same, communicating something. Many people think that certain birds like parrots can speak, but this is in fact not true. Such animals are only capable of copying the sounds of human speech but have no understanding of these sounds and generally use them at the wrong time. There is also no apparent logic in the way they select what to copy either. On the other hand, monkeys, apes and other primates are capable of communicating a small number of basic ideas using a range of simple sounds that are recognised by other members of their social group. Unfortunately though, none of the groups of monkeys observed so far have developed any form of grammar and so we cannot call this a language. However, some apes, chimpanzees in particular, can be trained to understand and respond to certain spoken commands by humans, but so far none have attempted to copy our speech. Now there is one kind of animal that does just this, although not many people can understand what they are saying. Dolphins have different shaped mouths to humans and as a result they are unable to make all the sounds that we can make. They can manage the vowel sounds 'a', 'e', 'i', 'o', 'u', ... and so on, but lack the necessary voice equipment to reproduce our consonants. Thus, a simple phrase like 'Hello, how are you?' becomes 'e - o - ah - u'. But what makes these noises more amazing is that dolphins do show an awareness of when to use such phrases and in this sense, are actually trying to communicate with humans.

But by far, the most remarkable form of animal communication are the 'songs' of whales. These are fast clicking and squeaking noises that whales make underwater

and the sounds themselves actually contain more information than human speech. Scientists have noticed that some whales repeat certain long phrases of sounds, and this is in fact why they are called songs. Of particular interest is a species called the 'bottle-nosed' whale whose songs have many of the characteristics of human speech. But at the end of the day, we are the only species that have developed proper grammatical languages and most experts now agree that this is because of the large communities that we live in - where a child growing up can hear hundreds of different examples of his or her language being spoken every day. If, for any reason, a young child does not get enough contact with other people between the ages of one and four, he or she may never fully develop the power of speech. One can imagine that if whales or dolphins did start living in large communities then well ... FADE

You have 20 seconds to check your answers. (*pause 20 seconds*)

Now listen to the text again. (*text repeated*)

This is the end of the listening comprehension task.