

FCE Test A

Answers

1 B 2 C 3 C 4 B 5 A 6 B 7 A 8 C

9 Ireland 10 apples 11 a local man 12 chicken curry 13 (little) plaques 14 deer
15 aggressive 16 threatened 17 ceiling 18 two-seater bike

19 H 20 F 21 D 22 B 23 C

24 A 25 C 26 A 27 C 28 C 29 B 30 B

Transcript

Question 1

Rob: I thought there was something strange about the delivery address but as it turned out, there really is a place called Ha Ha Road.

Steve: I've never heard of it. Difficult to find, was it?

Rob: Not really. It's a bit out of the way, I suppose, but nothing too challenging. The thing was, when the customer opened the door, I could tell we were going to have problems just by the way her face changed. I don't think she realised just how big the sofa was when she ordered it.

Steve: They never check these things. I suppose she sent it back, did she?

Rob: Well, we did our best but she wasn't wrong. Not only was it far too large for us to get up the stairs, there was no way it would even fit in her flat.

Steve: We really should charge people for these wasted trips. It might persuade them to order more carefully in future.

Question 2

I'm not really sure what caused it. All I can say is that I saw an obstruction about a hundred metres up ahead and I slowed down. The visibility wasn't very good, so I couldn't see what it was. But a few moments after that, I lost control of it, you see. And then the engine just died as if I had run out of fuel. I found myself just moving along with no power. And then, as if that wasn't enough, the steering must have failed or something because suddenly it veered to the side and I hit the grass by the side of the road. There wasn't any damage because by the time I hit the bank I wasn't going too fast. I looked out up ahead but whatever it was that I had seen up ahead had gone. I started the engine again ok but when I tried to get going it wouldn't move. It turns out I'm going to need a tractor or something to pull me out. Can you help?

Question 3

May: When I got home, I knew something was wrong. She just wasn't her normal self.

Julie: Poor thing! What was wrong with her?

May: She clearly hadn't eaten all day because she had left her bowl untouched. Even when I offered her her favourite snack she wasn't interested. So I took her straight to the vet.

Julie: What did the vet say?

May: Initially, she didn't think there was anything physically wrong with her. If they're sick they normally have visual symptoms, their fur is matted or they have a runny nose, for example. But when the vet took her temperature, it was sky high.

Julie: That's worrying.

May: I was initially very concerned but the vet said it was just a nasty case of the flu and we shouldn't worry. I think she's getting better but I'll relax once she gets her appetite back.

Question 4

Guide: Considering the age of this next exhibit, it is in the most amazing condition. Made in 1540, it is thought to have been the property of a samurai warrior named Ujiteru Zaika. Little is known about Zaika besides the story of his final days. After the Battle of Azukizaka, Zaika found himself in very difficult circumstances. Many of Zaika's personal bodyguard had died of illness and few remained to defend the city against their advancing enemies. Zaika could not bring himself to abandon his beloved birthplace, even if staying meant certain death. So he and his men remained, accepting what they thought would be an inevitable death at the hands of their enemy or, far worse, slavery as a prisoner of war. In the end and after desperate battle, Zaika agreed to surrender on condition that his men would be treated humanely. It was a decision that would haunt him forever. Once he and his men marched out of the city he would never see his homeland again.

Question 5

Mick: So what are you going to do?

Benny: I'm not sure I have many options to be honest. The general attitude seems to be that these things happen from time to time and I had better just get used to it.

Mick: That's terrible. Surely they have to take some responsibility.

Benny: Apparently not. It's in the small print apparently. They accept no responsibility for loss of damage.

Mick: That can't be right. I mean, someone's clearly tried to steal the contents. You wouldn't go to all that effort just for a bit of petty vandalism.

Benny: I know. What I find curious is why whoever it was didn't just walk off with it and try to get it open in the comfort of his own home. He would have had far less chance of getting caught.

Mick: Yes. It really doesn't make sense. And nothing is missing, you say?

Benny: Nothing of any value besides a few bits of clothing. Ironically, the biggest loss is the case itself. I mean it's ruined. It's completely unusable now.

Mick: I really wouldn't stand for this. You should make a complaint.

Benny: Yes. Perhaps I should.

Question 6

Lisa: Hi Jackie! How was the wedding?

Jackie: It was lovely. They got married in one of those beautiful little village churches. It was incredibly picturesque. And there were lots of guests. But I'm not too sure about the reception.

Lisa: Why? What was the problem? Was the food bad?

Jackie: No. Nothing like that. You know Charlotte's husband is a musician? Well, all his bandmates were there so they decided to do a rendition of some of their most popular songs.

Lisa: Sounds fun!

Jackie: Not as much fun as you might think to be honest. Their music is really heavy rock. Really loud and aggressive with lots of screaming and shouting. I don't have a problem with it myself. I kind of like it in the right environment. I just thought it was a bit inappropriate with all the people that were there. You could see that some people were really uncomfortable. It kind of ruined things a bit, I think.

Lisa: That's a shame.

Question 7

Driver: We apologise for the delay. This is due to emergency maintenance work on the platform at the next station. Due to overcrowding, some safety barriers have been damaged and no passengers can disembark until they have been repaired. We should be on our way soon, once the police give us the go ahead to resume our journey. I'd like to take this opportunity to remind passengers to be especially careful when disembarking at the next station as heavy rain has made the platform surface very slippery. We should be moving along any minute now. Thank you very much for your patience.

Question 8

Harry: I have to say, seeing the Mona Lisa was quite a surprising experience.

Tina: Did it meet your expectations?

Harry: On reflection, it's difficult to say. It looks so grand and elegant in the photographs but when you see it, you're surprised at how small it is. Initially, I found myself wondering what all the fuss was about.

Tina: I had a similar experience, actually. I really expected to be far more impressed. Of course, I'm no art expert, but I always thought that it would be an unforgettable experience just to set eyes on such a famous painting.

Harry: I know exactly what you mean. The hype really is quite intense, isn't it? But I have to say though, once I stood there for a few moments and really studied it, I began to see the genius of it. It really is such a fascinating image, so full of contradictions and mystery. For the first time, I began to understand why it is such a famous painting. I'm not sure one can have the same experience without seeing the original.

Tina: How interesting. Perhaps I should go back and have another look.

Harry: Perhaps you should.

Part 2

When people think of Spain, I think most of us imagine sandy beaches and crystal blue seas. But it's an incredibly varied country in terms of its landscapes. The volcanic islands of the Canaries are said to resemble Iceland and the parched deserts of the southern peninsula are not so different to those of the southern United States. But drive north for a few hours to the

Galicia or Asturias regions in the North and you might be forgiven for thinking you were in Ireland.

In many ways, a trip to these parts is a journey back through time. Much of Asturias remains rural and largely unchanged for centuries, replete as it is with ancient buildings and villages that date back to before the Middle Ages. The first thing I noticed on my visit there was the prevalence of orchards. I suppose it seems silly now, but I always associated Spain with oranges, so I was quite surprised at the quantity of apple crops.

We had booked a room at a small hotel which turned out to be very difficult to find, even with the help of GPS. We had bought a paper map of the area just in case, which we were very relieved about when the satellite navigation started failing, but although the hotel was clearly marked on the map, we found it impossible to find the road itself. In the end, we were forced to ask a local man to guide us, who was thankfully very patient with my incredibly limited Spanish. It turned out that the road we had been looking for was little more than a dirt track, which explained our difficulty in locating it. But once we had found our way, we arrived at the hotel in a matter of minutes.

It was a lovely place, surrounded by lush greenery and overlooking a river. The owner was a very pleasant lady who knew the area well and was happy to advise us on where to visit and what to see. As it was getting quite late, we decided to have dinner and get an early night to take advantage of the following day. The food was fantastic. All locally sourced. I had a beautiful chicken curry that the owner recommended as the hotel's speciality and my friend had some salmon with a side of vegetables. On looking at the menu I was determined to try as much of it as I could before the time came for us to leave, particularly the bean stew for which Asturias is so famous.

The next morning, we got up very early, had some coffee and then ventured out to the nearby ruins of the Roman fort at Taramundi. We had been warned that the tiny village attracts a lot of tourists but when we arrived, we were the only visitors there. It was a very interesting site and a beautiful place to be in the early morning sunshine. Information about the site was provided on little plaques, strategically placed at various points, so you could follow a route around the place and really get a feel for how the fort might have looked during the Roman era. We spent well over an hour there before moving on to a hiking trail that we had found on the internet and that looked very pretty.

Initially I had been worried about the hike as some parts looked very steep and perhaps not suitable for beginners such as us, but the climb wasn't as challenging as I had feared and much of it was without steep gradients or uneven ground. We took the opportunity to photograph the as the wide variety of birds that we saw. I was hoping to see a deer as I had been told that they proliferated in the region but had no luck. Asturias does have small populations of bears and wolves but we knew we were unlikely to come across such animals where we were. On the other hand, I was relieved that we did not come across a wild boar, which are famous for being very aggressive. The hike took us a couple of hours and, although it hadn't been particularly tiring, we were ready for our lunch by the time we got back to the car.

That afternoon, we drove to the church of Santa María del Naranco, which is situated on the southern slope of a mountain just outside the region's capital of Oviedo. It is thought that this building was originally a mausoleum and was not intended originally to be a church at all, and you certainly see how that may be the case once you set eyes on the building. It has a very austere appearance, and as well as being quite militaristic in terms of its design, I felt above all that it was rather threatening. I was glad we visited on a sunny day as I think I wouldn't have liked to have been there under a grey sky or an ominous evening. Visitors are allowed to

explore the interior of the church, which includes a lower floor with an arched ceiling and a series of side chapels, dedicated to local saints.

That evening we took a walk along part of the Via Verde, a popular hiking route. Most of this is a well-paved path which allows for cycling and skateboarding. On our way we were even greeted by a couple on a two-seater bicycle who seemed to be really enjoying themselves. The route is over 10 kilometres long but we weren't so ambitious and were keen to find somewhere for dinner after a fun packed day. We only had one more day in Asturias before moving onto Galicia where...

Part 3

Speaker 1

It came as something of a shock to be nominated. I've frankly been grateful that I've been able to make a living out of what I love and I've never really paid much attention to official recognition. But when the call came, I was over the moon and wouldn't have missed the event for the world. It was a fair way to go, but the committee had already offered to pay for my flight so there really was no reason not to go. I was in Prague for six days in total and I was able to really take advantage of the experience. I would never have thought to visit the city for leisure, so I was really grateful for the opportunity. Anyway, on the day, I was really nervous but I had a little speech prepared and everyone was really nice about it. It was a terrific memory.

Speaker 2

I'm not really sure how he managed it. I got this call out of the blue from Danny, who had got himself into a bit of a situation. He and his wife had gone out for the day by train to some far-off place in the middle of nowhere but when they got back to the station they realised they had missed the last train. Between you and me, I was a bit irritated. Danny and I go back a long way and it's not the first time he has depended on me in difficult circumstances. Most people would have done their research before going off into the middle of nowhere. But anyway, what was I going to do? I couldn't just leave the two of them stranded out there and I know he would have done the same for me. As it happens, it was a quite a nice drive through the summer evening and they were both very grateful as I'm sure you can imagine. All in all, it was quite fun really.

Speaker 3

I hadn't been home for some years and the thought of doing so didn't really appeal. I've been living abroad for so long now that there's very little left in my native land for me to go back for besides a couple of family members and maybe one friend who I don't often speak to anyway. But when my sister called to tell me she was finally making her relationship with Gavin official, I couldn't really say no, even though I really didn't like the idea of flying over and I've never been a big fan of Gavin. As it happens, I worked with Gavin a long time ago and we had to travel together for business a couple of times. He wasn't so bad back then but in recent years, he's become very boring and oversensitive. I haven't got a clue what my sister sees in him, to be honest.

Speaker 4

It sounds very selfish of me, but it really couldn't have happened at a worse time. I was just about to leave for Greece. We'd booked a two-week trip there that I'd been looking forward to for months. My brother phoned me first thing that morning to tell me that the hospital had called out of the blue and my mother's operation had been brought forward. I knew it was a relatively straightforward procedure and neither of us were worried, but at her age, she would need support while she recovered, and my brother was needed at his work. So there was nothing for it but for me to get in the car and drive up there. She'd been suffering from the same ailment for months, and while I was glad she was finally getting the attention she needed, I really wish the doctors could have given us more notice. Obviously, I wasn't going to complain about it to my brother. Unlike me, he lives very nearby to mum and has always taken the lion's share of her care, but if I'd known a bit earlier we could have moved things around and we might not have lost so much money.

Speaker 5

It was a chance of a lifetime and I wasn't going to miss it for anything, but coming as it did as something of a surprise, I had very little time to get things organised. Apart from anything else, I suddenly found myself in need of money, as I would have to support myself out there and nothing was paid for. With family help, I was able to scrape together what I needed and forty-eight hours later I was on my way to the site. It wasn't the easiest of journeys but it was certainly worth the effort. You can read about these places in books, and my professor did her best to bring the stories to life in our seminars, but there really is no substitute for working in the environment itself and seeing the evidence up close and in the flesh. I credit that experience above all else for the terrific result I received upon graduating.

Part 4

Presenter: We're here today with Kate Morgan, who works as a street performer in Central London. Hi, Kate. So, what exactly is a street performer?

Kate: Hi, Steve. Well, traditionally the word that was used to describe us was "buskers". But buskers is a word that is normally associated with musicians. Think of the classic image of someone playing the guitar with people dropping coins into his hat. A street performer may be a musician but they might also be an actor, a clown or even a street artist.

Presenter: So, painters can be street performers too?

Kate: Sometimes. When it comes to visual artists, street performers tend to work with more temporary media. The process rather than the end product is what brings in the audience. For example, there is a very popular artist who works on the South Bank in London, who draws amazing copies of famous paintings on the pavement, using chalk. People stand for hours and watch him create, and when he's finished, he just packs up and leaves his work there, for people to walk over or for the rain to wash it all away. It may seem a shame to some people, but it's exactly the temporary, fragile nature of the work that makes it so fascinating.

Presenter: So, what do you yourself do? Are you a painter?

Kate: No. I do something that most people might consider is a more traditional form of street performance. My friend Anna and I work together performing what we call "Reduced Shakespeare". It's part improvisation and part scripted. The idea is that we perform the one of Shakespeare's plays in no more than five minutes. We ask the audience to shout out their

favourite and we give a quick rendition of it using only each other and our box of props and costumes. Of course, it's all a bit of fun and if you're interested in learning about Shakespeare, I would recommend going to see the real thing, rather than depending on us for your theatre education.

Presenter: That sounds very challenging!

Kate: It can be. Especially when it comes to his more obscure works. We tend to be asked for the famous ones, most of the time, like Macbeth or Hamlet. I could do those two in my sleep. But sometimes an audience member who really knows his stuff will shout out a strange one like King John or Henry the Eighth and when that happens I certainly need a few seconds to look at our notes.

Presenter: What attracted you to this form of performance? Did you start out as an actor in more mainstream theatre?

Kate: Well, Anna and I both trained as actors, yes. In fact, we met at drama school seven years ago. After training we got the odd role in fringe productions but we found that we were struggling to get access to the work that really inspired us. So, we started our own company.

Presenter: That was Reduced Shakespeare, was it?

Kate: Actually, no. In the early days, we were putting on productions in pub theatres. We even went to the Edinburgh festival. The street theatre came out of our attempt to publicize what we were doing. To my surprise, it turned out to be a great way to make some extra cash and we were able to pull in large audiences – far larger than anything we managed in the pub theatres.

Presenter: And what does the future hold for Reduced Shakespeare?

Kate: The sky's the limit, I hope. We've grown the company to consist of 4 troupes – or groups of two – who perform in their own area of the city. They're very much autonomous but pay us to provide props and costumes and rehearsal space. There seems to be a great demand for what we do. Looking ahead, I've got plans to set up an annual street theatre festival, which would attract talent from all over the world and hopefully promote street theatre as an important element of the arts.

Presenter: Thank you very much for coming to see us today, Kate.

Kate: You're welcome.