Travelling

Reading

Read through this rather long text over the next day or so, noting some of the key words concerned with **trains**, **boats**, **cars**, **coaches** and **planes**. As you read, note down the details of each of the six journeys described.

Travel Broadens the Mind

June 29th ... June 30th ... July 1st. And **they're off**. **Suitcases packed**. Notes left for the milkman. **Arrangements made** for the budgerigar to be looked after. They're all off.

Uncle Bill and Auntie Jane are **on the quayside** at the **cross-channel port** of Dover – the first stage of their Mediterranean **cruise** – 'the **voyage** of a lifetime' their **travel agent** called it. They've been through **customs** (half an hour's delay while suitcases were emptied in search of missing **passports**) and they'll be **embarking** soon. When they **go aboard**, Bill will finally be allowed to take those **boarding cards** out of his mouth.

Granny's at **the coach station** armed with her special old-age pensioner's **season ticket** – a kind of **awayday**, **runabout**, **extended period**, **half-price ticket** rolled into one. Today she's off on a **one-day sightseeing excursion** to Stonehenge, Blackpool Tower and Canterbury Cathedral.

Julia's with her boyfriend at the airport, kicking their cases through the departure lounge of what they hope is Terminal 3 and the right place to be for the package holiday charter flight that their tour operator assured them would be leaving sometime this morning. To their right, the 1st class passengers are sipping champagne cocktails; to their left, those in economy and tourist class are drinking coffee from the machine and, under their feet, those on stand-by, are looking hopefully up from their sandwiches.

Mum and Dad are already on the open road. They decided to make an early start on their touring holiday through the Loire valley. Your turn to drive now. Come on, let's get moving. Switch on, then. OK, it's all clear. Pull out, there's nothing coming. Well, take the handbrake off. Right, indicate. Come on, drive away. At last! Right, keep over. Keep to the right. Change gear, then. Come on, accelerate!'

'Porter!' 'Sir?' 'How much?' '50p.' 'No thanks; I'll manage my own luggage.' Uncle Mac is about to board the 10.40 inter-city express to Glasgow for a fortnight's holiday back in the homeland. 'Do I have to change?' 'No, it's a through train, sir, non-stop all the way.' It looks as if quite a few expatriates have had the same idea. The compartments all look full – especially the non-smokers – and the buffet car already sounds like Glasgow on the night of a Celtic-Rangers football match.

My brother's on the **slip road** of the M1 **motorway** at **Junction** 14, a **rucksack** on his back containing **sleeping bag**, biscuits and a change of underwear. He's been there for an hour and a half with his homemade sign saying 'Anywhere', trying to **thumb a lift**. There are no **hostels** or **transport cafés** in sight. The rucksack is getting heavier and the sky is getting darker. It's not much of a life sometimes, **hitch-hiking**.

Oh dear. Granny's coach has got stuck in a traffic jam, a queue of cars as far as the eye can see. OK, so central Birmingham is on the direct route from Blackpool to Canterbury. But during the rush-hour? With thousands of commuters heading for home? Not a good plan. After all, what are bypasses and ringroads for? 'Right, you can overtake this one. There's no speed limit here. Oh, a diversion. You'd better turn off the main road. Pull across to the middle. Now keep in the right lane. I mean the left lane. I mean ...'

Crashes at take-off, mid-air collisions, flight recorders never recovered, no survivors ... This is your captain speaking' wakes Julia's boyfriend up. Another nightmare over. The stewardess is smiling down at him. 'Fasten your seat-belts, please.'

Uncle Bill and Auntie Jane have settled into their **cabin**, **unpacked** their things and have gone up **on deck**. The sea is calm, the sunset is out of this world, and Uncle Bill is beginning to feel just a little bit **seasick**. They are due to **set sail** in half an hour.

Traffic is still **crawling** along behind and in front of Granny's **coach**. You can see the casualties by the side of the road, in **lay-bys** and on the **grass verges** – **bonnets up**, **overheated engines**, **steaming radiators**. The **guide** is into his second hour on the history of Canterbury Cathedral. 'Toilets 1 mile!' the cry is heard. There is great happiness.

'Right, here's a **garage**. 'Essence' must mean **petrol station**. We'd better **pull in**. Come on, **slow down**. Now, what's French for 'fill up the tank' and 'top up the battery' and ... ?"

Brother got a **lift** half an hour ago – for five miles. He was dropped at the next **exit** off the motorway and is now trying his luck on a **minor road**. There's a **four-star hotel** on his left (**full board** £35 a night for a **single room**), a **guesthouse** on his right (£15 per person for **bed and breakfast**) and a long road ahead of him.

Granny's having her **packed dinner** and gazing at the silhouette of Canterbury Cathedral against the night sky. No matter. She can sleep on the **return journey** (**reclining seats** and **air-conditioning** on the coach), and tomorrow's another day. There's a **trip** to the local brewery; that sounds much better.

Uncle Mac is sitting on his cases in the **corridor** outside the **guard's van**, surrounded by a ring of miniature bottles of scotch.

Julia's plane has **landed**. Her boyfriend's wondering whether to try and save something from the bottles of **duty-free spirits** he's just dropped. Julia's more interested in the **connecting bus** that's supposed to take them to their final **destination**.

Uncle Bill is **on the bridge** with the **captain**, asking him if there's any chance of being **put ashore** before the sea gets any rougher.

'Well, it's about time we found a bed for the night, don't you think? You see that **motel** on the left? There! There, where I'm pointing! There, the one with the ... Hey, **pull up!** Pull up! Oh dear, **pull over**. I wonder what the French is for 'I'm sorry, we appear to have dented your bumper'.

Practice

1	Which form of transport – train, car, boat or plane – do you associate with each of the
_	words and phrases below?
	1 set sail 6 fast lane 11 quayside 16 charter flight 2 a cruise 7 to indicate 12 mid-air collision 17 to disembark 3 traffic jam 8 sundeck 13 departure lounge 18 express 14 buffet car 19 bypass 5 bonnet 10 take off 15 pull in 20 guard's van
2	Discuss or write the answers to these questions.
	 1 What, for you, are the pleasures and horrors of modern driving? 2 Look at the aspects of travel listed below. What are they like in your country? How are they different in any other country you have been to? a roads and car-drivers b airports c train services d hitch-hiking possibilities
3	What's the furthest you have travelled in one 24-hour period? Describe the journey.
4	Think of films or film sequences – disaster movies, car chases , train adventures , sinking ships – that involve travelling. Describe in detail the ones that impressed you most.
5	Write or act out a conversation in a car. A driving instructor is taking a learner driver out for their first lesson. The learner knows absolutely nothing about cars.
6	Write, in dialogue form, a conversation in which three friends argue about how they should travel to a distant city for a long weekend. One thinks it would be best to go by car, the second is for going by train, and the third would prefer to go by coach.
7	Write a circular letter to parents on the travel arrangements for a school's weekend excursion from London to the North of France, which you have organised.
8	Write a dramatic paragraph from your latest novel, as the hero tries desperately to get to the airport in time to catch his plane to Prague. It begins: <i>Jackson jumped into his waiting Porsche and</i>
	Add here any other words or expressions that you meet on your travels.