

TRANSKRYPCJA NAGRAŃ

Task 1

Speaker A

Updating your interior design can enliven your surroundings and bring a new sense of order to your living space. I knew what I wanted to change in the aesthetics of my flat but on the one hand I didn't feel I had enough expertise to do it myself and on the other I wasn't too keen to hire a professional. I doubted whether a stranger could take my vision and run with it. Still, after I considered the scale of the project, I had no choice but to take a risk. The woman I hired was firm, charged a flat fee and demanded payment up-front in full on any purchases that had to be made. I hesitated about that for fear that I might be swindled, but eventually I reluctantly agreed, and it was one of the best decisions in my life. She helped me narrow down the overwhelming choices and knew exactly where to find the best deals. The thing I appreciated most was her fresh perspective on my home.

adapted from <http://porch.com>

Speaker B

As interior design is subjective, it can be an intimidating process to hire someone to make decisions about your home. But I felt so bored with my apartment that I was ready to take the plunge into the unknown. I just needed a professional who could rise to the occasion. But I was already overdrawn and I really had to keep the expenses within my budget. The designer I hired charged an hourly rate so to trim down her fee I decided to do my own purchasing and installation. However, when I asked for a shopping list and the floor plan so that I could choose certain items myself, she was very vocal in her displeasure. She had a go at me and made snide remarks about my stinginess. I gave back as good as I got and at some point we found ourselves in a no-win situation. But let's face it, I didn't hire a designer to do the shopping or order things on the Internet, did I?

adapted from <http://www.huffingtonpost.com>

Speaker C

I'm not a person who willingly cedes control, so knowing the effect I wanted to achieve, I decided to attempt the makeover myself. I thought that it would spare me the onerous task of trying to convey my ideas to a stranger. But I work long hours so I had to carry out the project in stages and it turned out to be a real mess. The colours were wrong, the lighting was too dim and the tiles in the bathroom needed redoing because they were misaligned. I had no choice but to hire a professional to put things right. The problem was that by that time all my savings had run out. To cover the designer's fee I got a substantial loan and after a week of lengthy negotiations signed a contract. I had the flat done within a month, and surprisingly the result wasn't much different from what I had wanted originally.

adapted from <https://www.houzz.com>

Task 2

Text 1

It's been years since Michael Edwards, a member of the British ski jumping squad, competed at the Calgary Winter Olympic Games in Canada in 1988. He came last in both the 70 m and 90 m jumps and got half the points of the competitor who finished second to last. It wasn't much of a surprise for his team members as they were aware that he had barely qualified for the Olympics. But despite his poor record, he was so affable that he touched people's hearts. He even got the nickname Eddie the Eagle, which was an ironic reference to his lack of ski-jumping skills. There was always something heroic about Edwards. As he was self-taught, he didn't have the appropriate technique and his jumps were terrifying, but he had been jumping for less than two years while his rivals had been at it since they were toddlers. He was also a working-class lad competing in an elite world of the posh and privileged. That was why the establishment hated him, but the rest of us loved him. The British squad's resentment only grew after their return from Canada as they were instantly forgotten, but Eddie the Eagle was in huge demand. Edwards had gone out to Calgary as an unknown amateur and returned home a star.

I met him in London, where he was promoting the film *Eddie the Eagle*, based on his life story. The film is about that classic British stereotype, the plucky loser. From the first scene, we see the hapless, hopeless Edwards, determined to succeed but destined to trip up over his laces at every finishing line. The young Eddie of the film wears leg callipers, and is constantly discouraged from sport by his father. However, the reality was somewhat different from the film. Young Eddie was in fact an able sportsman. He played football, cricket, rugby, volleyball. He dabbled in everything, and was frequently on the winning side. He even had trials as a goalkeeper for his local team, Cheltenham. Obviously, like all competitors, he had some mishaps, but I think the filmmakers shouldn't have focused only on that.

When Michael Edwards isn't plugging the life story of Eddie the Eagle, he works as a builder and plasterer. While few Britons can remember the names of the world-class jumpers he competed against, today he still remains a household name. However, although everyone knows who Eddie the Eagle is, he can walk anonymously in the streets of Britain because all his characteristic features, the thick rug of hair, the specs and the chin which had the shape of a ski-slope, have gone. When you talk to him, there is still something ineffably Eddie about him, mainly the guilelessness and ever-ready giggle. True, I remember that in Calgary in 1988 he didn't fly like an eagle, he was probably closer to an ostrich, but although he finished last, he hardly disgraced himself because he completed his jumps and displayed consistent good humour. It seems he has earned people's abiding affection by somehow epitomizing the Olympic motto, 'The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not winning but taking part'.

adapted from <https://www.theguardian.com>

Text 2

Interviewer: To continue with our series of programmes on what the world of work is like and to help you choose your career path, today I'm talking to a parliamentary assistant. Sandra, how did your career begin?

Sandra: I ended up working in parliament more by accident than design. When I was at university I started helping in a local MP's constituency office as a volunteer. I just thought I would get some work experience that way. It was a real blessing as it helped me develop a real passion for parliamentary work. Most parliamentary assistants follow a well-trodden path: public school, studies at Oxbridge, parliament. Those without that background, like me, have to find a different way in. After graduation I just took a part-time job in the constituency office and worked hard to prove that I was capable of joining the parliamentary office in London. I love the thrill of watching the decision-making process of government at work and feeling part of it. Parliamentary assistants are low in the food chain and many are simply tea carriers doing mind-numbing admin work. That's sometimes how I feel too after I've sealed my thousandth envelope of the day, but generally I must say that I feel quite fortunate. I don't have fixed office hours and I'm given a generous degree of autonomy and responsibility. I just have to get the work done. The downside is that I never get a real break from work and I can be called upon at any time.

Interviewer: And I bet that's only one of the challenges you have to face.

Sandra: Well, another hard part of the job for me is dealing with people's frustrations that spill over. In order to save an MP's time, the procedure is that assistants are the first in the firing line when it comes to contact with the public, whether it is in correspondence or meetings. We have to deal with all kinds of mindless abuse, or even threats, especially on social media. Research shows that when people do not have to reveal their identity, they get more aggressive or offensive. Even when people have to log on to comment, they often come up with fictitious names and feel free to be abusive, something which rarely happened when letter writing was the order of the day. And there is one misconception about my job that I'd like to dispel. Many people believe that MPs, and by extension their assistants, are detached from reality and do not realise the desperate circumstances in which some constituents find themselves. Well, some of them might be but for me working in an MP's office is like having a window into the lives of the most underprivileged in society. In our democracy, appealing to your MP is the last port of call for those who have been abandoned or ignored. And many citizens exercise this right.

Interviewer: But overall you seem contented with what you are doing.

Sandra: Absolutely, and what makes this job even more fascinating, is the place of work itself, the Palace of Westminster. Despite the fact that its condition is deteriorating, which is unfortunate, it is still a truly magnificent building – full of living, breathing history, with a peculiar but fascinating set of codes and customs. The place is a labyrinth of passageways, secret rooms and locked doors. It's certainly not as palatial as people think when they look at the impressive façade. One would envisage spacious offices with every latest convenience you can think of but the reality is not so rosy. Some people complain about the limited space but for me that's a minor issue. The real problem is that the whole place is woefully ill-equipped for the 21st century. The Wi-Fi is agonisingly slow and the heating comes and goes as it pleases. You wouldn't expect that in a building that looks so grand, would you?

Task 3

I can't remember how old I was when I began collecting second-hand books. I'd like to say eight or nine, but that's because I want to be thought of as bookishly precocious. In fact, going by the purchase dates I bothered to scribble in the volumes in my collection, I must have been about 12. I'll settle for that. Twelve's good. There are worse things to do when you're twelve. My father wasn't so sure. From the very beginning, he turned his nose up at my bringing books home before I'd read the previous ones. He didn't understand that books could just sit on shelves, unopened, and still satisfy whatever need drove someone to collect them. 'It would be like me ordering a meal and not eating it,' he said. An eventuality that was, indeed, inconceivable. 'I'll open them all one day,' I told him. But the truth is there remain hundreds I haven't opened yet. Cold on my shelves, they stare out at me, with chill reproach. But who is to say the hour won't yet come when they are needed?

My mother was a reader and understood my passion but nevertheless she also had an issue with it. The books I was bringing home stank the house out. Hardly surprising, given where I found them - on market stalls and in junk shops, floating in public drains or tied up in bundles waiting for the dustbin men to collect them. 'The smell's so bad people will stop visiting us,' my mother complained. To avoid trouble, I would spread out the most sodden books in front of the electric fire in my bedroom, but the smell, like that of burning shoe leather, was no better received.

I have called my zeal for getting hold of second-hand books "collecting" but that's too grand a word for what I did. I just wanted to own as many books as I could.

Well, some people may say that in the digital age my library has run its course. So shall I get rid of it? I'm not talking about selling to turn a profit. I bought many of these books for pennies each and I'd do well to get that number of pennies back. But I could save a little space. I could replaster the walls and hang paintings. Yet I am unable to. The truth is, their presence alone remains vital to me. Books breathe as trees do. With all the books gone our mental climate will change. No matter that I can quickly find a digital version of a novel I'm looking for, I still fly into a rage when I discover I no longer have it, and remember who borrowed it and failed to return it. For me it is irreplaceable. It has my scribblings in it. The marginal expletives. The turned-down pages. And you don't get that on a Kindle, or a free e-book courtesy of Project Gutenberg.

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