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English Monthly

ATLANTIC
TRAGEDY

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Editor's letter



George Sandford
Chief Editor

Spring is upon us and with it comes those squally April showers. Luckily, this edition of Praski's English Monthly reviews the practical raincoat and perennial fashion icon, the trench coat. Down under, those interested in getting fit while looking trendy are donning their Activewear - but are they doing any exercise? We investigate. Still, on a health theme, we look at the benefits of switching from black tea to green.

Our celebrity chef this month is Slovenian Ana Roš who won the Best Female Chef in the World 2017 award. It would be hard to top that achievement but the subject of our woman profile has done just that. Author and former unemployed single mum J.K. Rowling has sold more books than you can shake a stick at. We present her fascinating life story.

As usual, we are out and about globetrotting and our very own writer and newshound, Daniel Sandford gives us the lowdown on the beautiful and exotic islands of Cape Verde situated off the coast of Senegal in West Africa. Our cover story looks back at arguably the world's most famous voyage and civilian shipping disaster involving RMS Titanic. It's all hands on deck to bring you this tragic but fascinating story.

For those who like to look at the numbers we review the Brazilian economy and ask if its recent decline has finally bottomed out. Finally, in the technology section, we see how the Qwerty keyboard came about and consider Bill Gates' idea of introducing a robot tax.

Once you've digested that little lot, there are plenty of exercises to test your language skills and knowledge. My word you'll be brainy! Happy reading.

Vocabulary

Squally - characterised by squalls (sudden but short bursts of strong winds, rain, sleet or snow)
Perennial - all year-round
To don - of clothing or safety equipment, to wear, put on
More X than you can shake a stick at - a greater number than you can count, a great many
Globetrotting - travelling around the world
Newshound - reporter

To give the lowdown on X - to give background or inside information
Civilian - ordinary person, not a soldier or combatant
All hands on deck - everyone is required to meet a crisis or great demand
To look at the numbers - to review and analyse financial data
To bottom out - of a market value - to reach its lowest point (from which it is expected to cover)
My word - a polite exclamation of surprise or wonderment
Brainy - clever, intelligent



News and current affairs

Please Offer Me Your Seat

If you are a polite and a young man or woman or a considerate person of any age, you might give up your seat for an older person, blind person or pregnant lady perhaps but what about someone with no obvious impairment? No way, José, you can stand with the rest - but think again, not all disabilities are visible.

In the UK, under the Equality Act 2010, you are considered to have a disability if you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities. If someone is in a wheelchair it's obvious, but many other conditions that meet the criteria may be less apparent. These include cancer, fibromyalgia, chronic pain, chronic fatigue, balance and dizziness issues as well as mental health issues.

But you, the humble passenger, are not a mind reader, so how can you tell if a person has what is sometimes termed an 'invisible disability'? Now, Transport for London (TfL) has a neat solution. People can obtain (blue) badges

and cards that say, "Please offer me a seat" and for pregnant women, there are "Baby on board" equivalents. The initiative was trialled last autumn and after positive feedback from users where 72 percent said their journeys had improved, the scheme was fully implemented this spring. Its aim is to remove the need for apparently healthy people to have to get involved in a lengthy or embarrassing explanation of why they need to sit down.

The good news is that people will not need to jump through a series of bureaucratic hoops to get one of the coveted cards as according to TfL, the application is free and open to all, with no proof of disability needed to apply. Wow, so no red tape involved but doesn't that open it up to slackers and fakers? Probably one or two people will abuse the system, but on balance it's believed it's best to make life easy for the majority of honest citizens. Well done London. It's thought to be the first such scheme in Europe - perhaps we'll see it rolled out to other cities in the future.



Discussion point

What is the culture and etiquette in your country for giving up seats to others?

Do you think the scheme is a good idea or is there a risk that it stigmatises disabled people by literally labelling them?

Vocabulary

- Considerate** - thoughtful to others
- Impairment** - a reduction in ability or bodily functionality, a specific disability
- No way, José** - a phrase meaning not under any circumstances
- Apparent** - obviously present, seen
- Fibromyalgia** - a condition causing chronic, widespread pain and extreme sensitivity to touch
- Chronic** – (of a disease), constant, ongoing
- Fatigue** - extreme tiredness and exhaustion
- Mental health issues** - psychological disorders
- Humble** - here: unassuming, ordinary
- Mind reader** - someone able to read others’ thoughts, often used ironically or sarcastically
- Baby on board** - a card or sticker often placed in the back of cars to inform other drivers to be careful because you are travelling with a baby
- To jump through hoops** - to fulfil a number of complex (usually administrative) procedures
- Coveted** - highly prized
- Red tape** - informal term for bureaucracy
- Slacker** - lazy person who does not do their fair share of work
- Faker** - a false person, here: someone pretending to be ill
- To roll out** - to extend an initiative (after a trial) to other parts of an organisation
- Etiquette** - the unwritten expectations of good behaviour and manners
- To stigmatise** - to mark somebody with disgrace, to publicly identify as bad in some way
- To label (a person)** - to characterise or stereotype

Pirates

It's that time of the year already when we look forward to or dread, depending on your perspective, the release of the latest in the Pirates of the Caribbean series, Dead Men Tell No Tales. Look out for a sighting of the loveable rogue at a swashbuckling cinema near you. Single-handedly, the tottering and camp Johnny Depp has made this classic Hollywood genre popular again.

The pirate fraternity are an unruly bunch and can't be trusted as far as you could throw them but thankfully, they only live in history books and films, or do they? Like slavery, piracy is something we associate with the past but is still very present today.

These days, you are less likely to be waylaid by pirates in the Caribbean and although it's not unknown, there are many other global piracy hotspots. For many years, one of the most lucrative seas for piracy was the waters around Somalia and the Horn of Africa. Pirates in this area tend to be well-armed using automatic weapons and grenades. As well as seizing boats and goods, they often take hostages for ransom. However, their activities have been somewhat curtailed in recent years by the establishment of The Maritime



Security Centre and the patrols and counter-piracy measures taken by the fleet of Operation Atalanta, which was established to protect merchant shipping. Nonetheless, in the first such incident for five years, an oil tanker heading from Djibouti to the Somali capital, Mogadishu was hijacked by Somali pirates but was released after the intervention of the Puntland Maritime Police. Similar operations take place in other regional targets such as the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea.

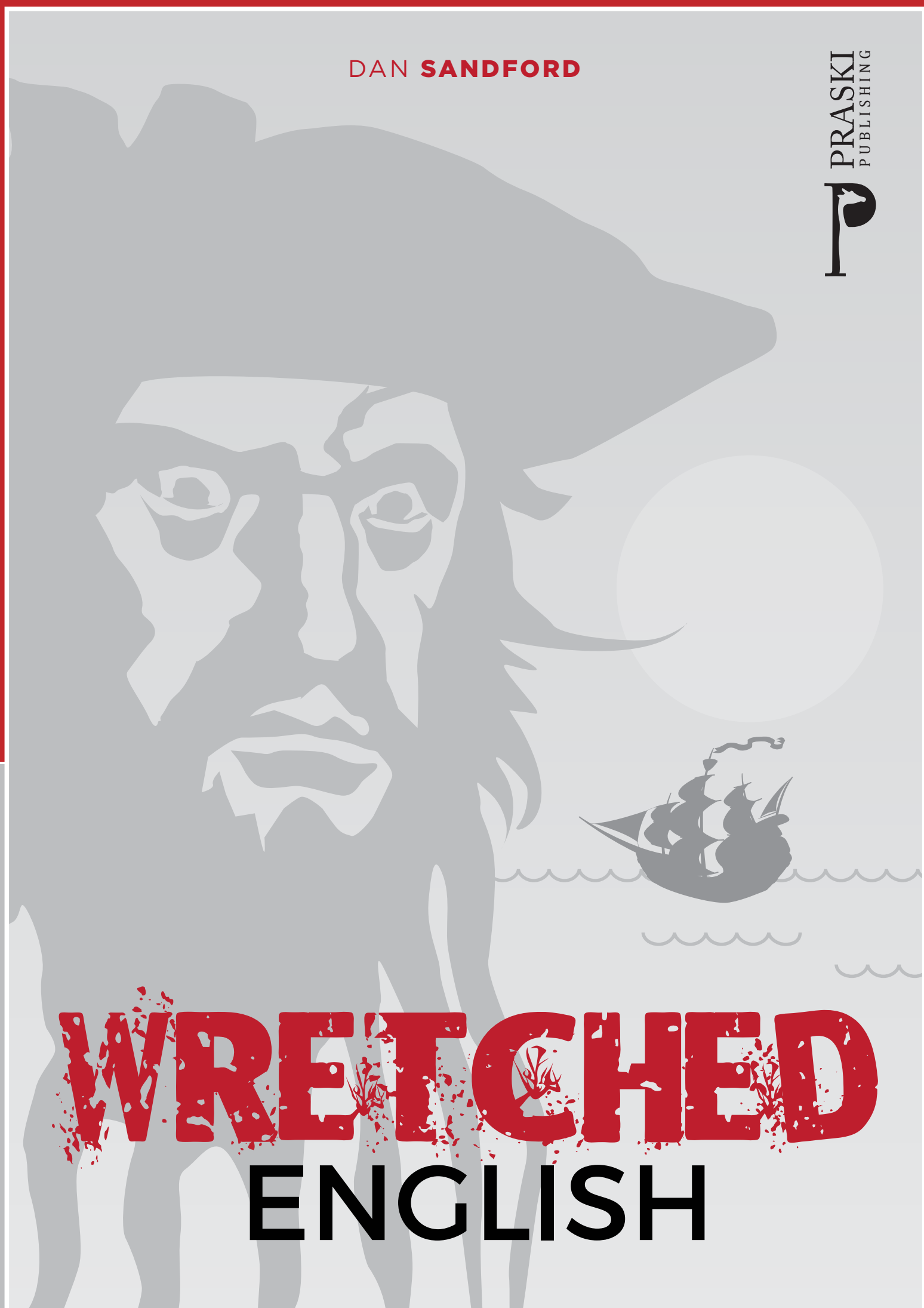
However, these days, 50 percent of the world's piracy takes place in Asian waters, in particular, the South China Sea and around Indonesia, the Singapore Strait and the Strait of Malacca. These narrow bottlenecks provide the ideal location in which to ambush passing ships. Some audacious attacks have taken place, including the hijacking of an oil tanker and one containing chemicals. Other danger spots in the world include the waters around Nigeria, India and Bangladesh. Local countries as well as the EU and USA, spend a fortune policing the oceans in an ongoing battle against organised crime on the high seas.

So remember, the next time you see JD acting the goat and looking bewilderedly at his sexton, there are real pirates just over the horizon.

Vocabulary

- Dread** - strong negative anticipation
- A loveable rogue** - someone who is not completely honest but charming and likeable nonetheless
- Swashbuckling** - daring and romantic, particularly associated with pirates and sword fighting
- Single-handedly** - without any assistance from others
- To totter** - to move in a weak or unsteady manner
- Camp** - as an adjective of a man behaving ostentatiously effeminately or theatrically
- Vogue** - here: fashion, genre
- Unruly** - disorderly, badly behaved
- Fraternity** - a group of people sharing a sense of brotherhood through common interests or lifestyle
- Someone who cannot be trusted as far as you could throw them** - someone is totally unreliable and untrustworthy
- To be waylaid** - to be held up, delayed
- Lucrative** - financially rewarding
- Hostage** - a person held (illegally and against their will) as surety for completion of a deal
- Ransom** - a sum of money demanded and given for the release of a captive
- Curtailed** - limited, much reduced
- Merchant shipping** - commercial as opposed to military shipping
- Bottleneck** - a place where a road or waterway narrows, often leading to congestion
- Ambush** - a surprise attack by people waiting in hiding
- Audacious** - extremely bold
- Hijack** - the unlawful and forceful seizure of an aircraft, ship or vehicle
- High seas** - open ocean, particularly beyond the jurisdiction of a country
- To act the goat** - to act in a silly way, often to get attention and make others laugh
- Bewildered** - baffled, confused
- Sextant** - an instrument used for measuring altitude and distance in order to navigate

An interesting and educational way of learning English through learning about some of England's most historical rogues and controversial figures. It comprises 10 chapters of text, comprehension, discussion and colloquial vocabulary.



GET IT ON AMAZON



Business and finance

Brazil in Bother but still Buoyant



Brazil's once booming economy has been on shaky ground in recent years

Like a spectacular float swaying to the samba beat at the Carnival, Brazil was the star of the world's new markets and the ostentatious B in BRICs, yet more recently the B has stood for bad news. The country's GDP since 1980 has looked something like a heart monitor tracking arrhythmia but now the patient looks in danger of going into cardiac arrest.

So what's gone wrong? While the country enjoyed some spectacular growth of as much as 8 percent for a few years, much of this was artificially created and sustained, through government subsidies, tax concessions and business and personal loans. A sequence of corruption scandals involving the government and impeachment of former President Dilma weakened international confidence and the massive strain on public services proved unsustainable, leading to a service breakdown, strikes and riots as the poorest people felt disenfranchised. Many

of the new middle classes who were beneficiaries of the boom years now find themselves saddled with personal debt that they can longer afford.

There are other problems too - unemployment has risen in the last two years from 10.2 to 12.6 percent. Inflation, while falling, still remains quite high at around 6.2 percent. Reforms are needed in the taxation system and pensions, not to mention the need to fight and win the battle against the corruption that has blighted the country for years.

Yet despite all this, there are some reasons for cautious optimism and to believe that the worst is behind. The trade balance is improving, as are consumer and business confidence. While growth forecasts remain very modest, there's a sense that in 2017 the country is starting to turn the corner but perhaps that's to be expected for, in Brazil, there's always another party to go to.

Vocabulary

- In bother** - in trouble

Buoyant - able to float, optimistic, positive in outlook

Float - here: a vehicle with a platform on which people stand during a parade

Swaying - moving from side to side

Ostentatious - in a showy, conspicuous manner

BRIC(s) - the idea formed in 2001 - 2003 that as fast-growing economies, Brazil, Russia, India and China would become the major world economies by 2050

GDP - gross domestic product, the monetary value of all finished goods and services produced by a country within a given period (usually a year)

Arrhythmia - a condition involving an irregular heartbeat

Cardiac arrest - heart attack

To enjoy - here: to experience, to benefit from
- Disenfranchised** - not cared for or able to participate in society, deprived of basic human rights

Beneficiary - a person who receives something or benefits from it

To be saddled (with debt or heavy responsibility) - to be weighed down and left holding something

Inflation - the rise in the price of goods and services over a period of time, such as a year

Blighted - of plants, damaged by a disease or parasite, having plans or aspirations frustrated

Trade balance, balance of trade (BOT) - the difference between a country's total imports and exports

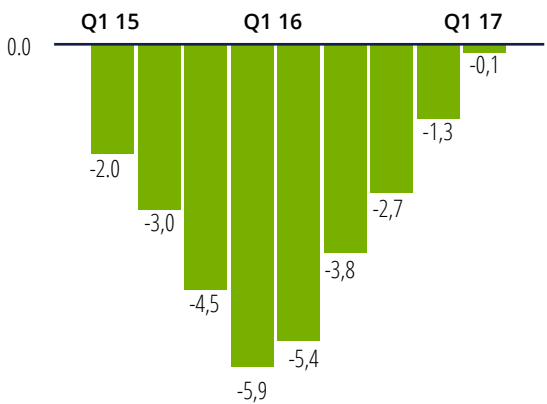
To turn the corner - to change to a more favourable situation

Brazil Beyond Rio 2016

Brazil's economy is stuck in a deep recession, but tentative signs of improvement are emerging

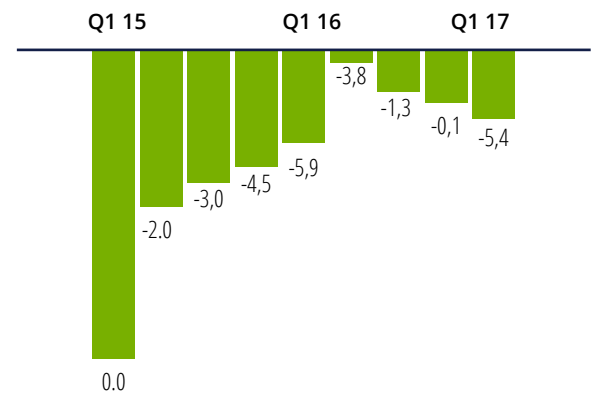
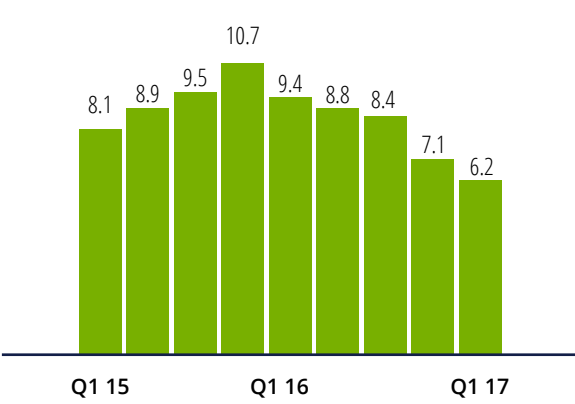
GDP GROWTH RATES (in %)

Analysts saw the economy contracting 3.3% in 2016 and recovering weakly in 2017 with 0.9% growth.



INFLATION RATES (in %)

Inflation has been falling steadily since its peak at the end of 2015



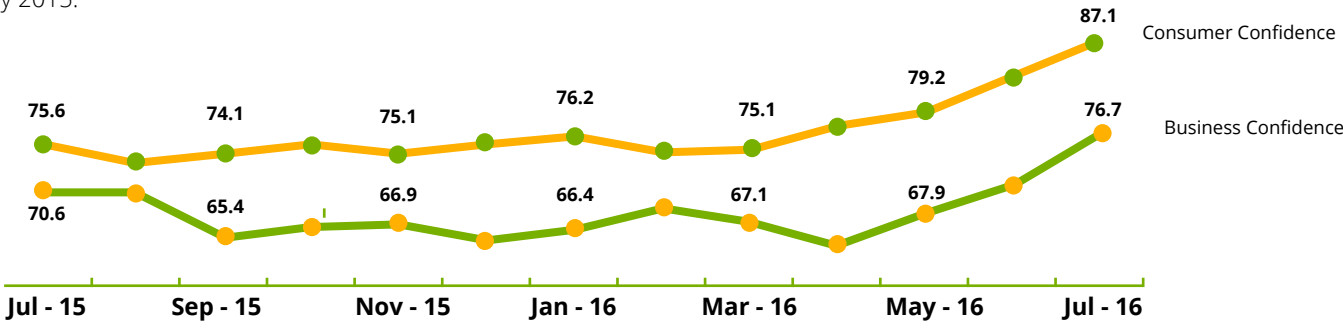
THE SILVER LINING

CURRENT ACCOUNT BALANCE (in % of GDP)

The economy is showing early signs of a recovery. Thanks to and an improvement in the trade balance, the current account recorded a surplus for 3 month in a row. Business and consumer sentiment have risen in recent months following Michel Temer's presidency.

BUSINESS AND CONSUMER CONFIDENCE INDICES

Businesses are consistently more upbeat while consumers haven't been this optimistic since early 2015.



Comprehension test

Say if the following statements are true or false:

Text

- 1) The country's economy grew year-on-year from 1980 - 2016.
- 2) Much of the economy's growth was driven by borrowed money.
- 3) There is insufficient money for public services.
- 4) The only people to have come out well from the economic problems are the middle classes.

Infographics

- 5) The GDP growth rate got progressively worse from Q1 2015 - Q1 2017.
- 6) Over the last year, inflation has fallen.
- 7) The current account balance is now worse than it was two years ago.
- 8) Confidence in the economy is improving.





Work

Managing People - Giving Feedback



Get your copy of English for Managing People from www.praskipublishing.com

As a manager, how good are you at giving feedback? Did you give a lot or do you work on the basis of "if it ain't broken, don't fix it?" Do you regularly praise your employees or do you think it's unnecessary and people should get on with their work?

In extracts from Managing People, we look at giving positive and negative feedback and some useful phrases.

:: GIVING POSITIVE FEEDBACK

Giving positive feedback is very important in order to show that you recognise good performance and make an effort to appreciate it. Some people are reluctant to give positive feedback because they think people should not be rewarded for doing what they should be doing anyway. However, if you only give employees negative feedback, this is very likely to create a negative environment and one where people are likely to hide mistakes.

There are many great ways of giving praise and positive feedback; here are some.

Every day - No, it's not too much! At the end of the day when people leave the office or you leave, say thanks - that's all it takes. When people bring things to you; "Thanks, that's helpful."

If you start to look for it, you will find lots of ways to show appreciation throughout the day and you will find that your staff really appreciate it!

General words of praise given for a specific piece of work - Thanks, great, excellent, super, fantastic, brilliant, wonderful, really useful, really helpful, an immense help, congratulations, well done!

Attributed praise - specifically showing cause and effect.
Thank - say what they did - describe its effect - thank again.

"Thanks, James when you identified the problem, it saved us days of work - it was great, thanks!"

Positive feedback within a dialogue:

Prompt: "How do you think X went?"

Follow up: "Yes, me too. I was particularly pleased with A, B and C. It was helpful because"

Personalising - It increases the impact when you use the person's name. Also, when you say, "I was pleased" or "you helped me," this has more impact and value than a general thank you or a passive voice statement such as, "It was appreciated."

Giving negative feedback

Some managers also avoid giving negative feedback because they feel uncomfortable or just don't know how to go about it. On the other hand, some managers also confuse feedback with punishment and express anger or irritation which can damage the relationship and trust with the employee.

As opposed to positive feedback, with unsatisfactory performance issues it's better to depersonalise matters and focus on the problem - e.g. this is the situation, what caused this problem, what can be done about it or what can we do? Here, the passive voice becomes useful in helping to keep things objective. If you are harsh with criticism and make accusations, the employee may become defensive, angry or upset.

Keep in mind that your object is to rectify the problem, not punish the person. The DESC model of feedback can be very helpful:
:: Describe the problem
:: Explain the consequences
:: State what you want to happen
:: Contract

The last stage is important in getting the employee to take responsibility and make a firm commitment to do something; you don't have to write a contract, you just say something like, *"So are we agreed that what you will do is ...?"*

Better still, you could get the employee to describe the agreement; *"So can you explain what you will do differently next time?"*

Clean language

It is important to use what David Grove described as clean language. This is used in therapy and coaching. It works on the basis of improving the accuracy and effectiveness of communication by removing the use of metaphors and internal assumptions that people may have. Therefore, you should not ask your employee to pull his socks up but say specifically, what part of his work or effort needs improving.

Body language

An important part of any communication is body language, it's important that this should be consistent with the message that you are transmitting. Show enthusiasm with positive praise but objectivity and practical concern for negative feedback or criticism.

:: USEFUL PHRASES FOR MANAGING PEOPLE

Discussing the positive past

What do you think went really well?
What part of your work pleased you the most?
What did you do best last year?

Discussing the negative past

Is there anything you felt didn't go as well as hoped?
Is there anything you would have done differently?
What can we take from that experience?

Discussing objectives

The main objective for this year is
What do you see as the priorities for this year?
What do you hope to achieve this year?

Discussing development needs

In which areas do you feel you still need to improve?
What development would help you in your job?
What would be the best way of meeting that need?

Giving instruction

If you do this, you get this effect

Click here for the drop down menu and select
Let me show you
How this works is ...

Establishing goals

How will you know when you have mastered this?
What will you be able to do differently?
What will be different as a consequence?
What will be the benefit?

Identifying the current position

So where are we now?
How would you rate your current level?
How well can you do this now?
What is it that needs to be improved upon?

Describing

What happened was
Something we need to discuss is
Something you do/don't do that I find problematic is....

Explaining consequences

When you ..., I
The effect of that was
Consequently, as a result, this means that, this led to, this leads to

Identifying the target position

What would be the desired level?
How will you know when you've got there?
What will you know that you don't know now?

Involving in the learning process

What works for you?
How would you like to go about it?
What learning method do you prefer?
What would be the ideal approach?

Agreeing deadlines

So, by the 15th, you need to be able to
The target date for completion is
It needs to be finished by
You need to master this skill by

Contracting

Do you agree that ...?
Do I have your agreement
So what we've agreed is
So will you definitely do that?

Confirming understanding

So to sum up, what we've agreed is
Perhaps you could summarise what we've agreed
So what we're saying is
So are we agreed that

Giving praise and encouragement

That's much better.
Well done!
Yes, you've got it now.
I can see you're getting the hang of it.
That's good, great, excellent, fantastic!
I found that really helpful.
I appreciate the fact that you
You did a great job.
I wouldn't have managed without you.
The quality of your work has really improved.



Vocabulary

If it ain't broke, don't fix it - a popular phrase supporting the belief that things that are working well should be left alone

Ain't - slang contraction of isn't

Reluctant - unwilling, not keen to do something

To go about X - to do X

Synergy - a combining of forces where the sum total is greater than the total of the individual parts

Know-how - knowledge of how to do something, skill

Requisite - required, necessary

Language Test

Test - Complete the text using words from the box

encouraging | full potential | accountant | synergy | ad hoc | annual review |
know-how | vision | management | requisite | performance feedback

It's sometimes said that 1) _____ is the only job you get to do because you are good at something else; a good 2) _____ becomes manager of the accounting team but it doesn't follow that they possess the 3) _____ skills. Managing people involves creating a motivating 4) _____, providing leadership, clear objectives, inspiring, 5) _____ and developing people to their 6) _____. Managing people concerns not only the management of individuals but developing the team to create unity, 7) _____ and mutual support. Beyond this, the manager needs to keep track of business goals and provide 8) _____ through 9) _____ schemes and informal, 10) _____ chats. It's a tall order so it's no surprise that some managers fall short of the mark. Luckily, this guide is on hand to provide the basic 11) _____.



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Cover story

A Titanic Tragedy



The RMS Titanic sets sail from Southampton, 10th April, 1912

It's now over 100 years since the fateful voyage of the Titanic but it remains as fresh in our memories as if it were yesterday. What exactly went wrong and why does it still fascinate us?

In many ways, the early 20th century was like present times. The industrial revolution had transformed society and there had been vast technological advances such as electricity, telephony and photography. It was a period of faith in man's newly elevated scientific capabilities, buildings were getting taller and the race for the fastest transatlantic crossing was on. Cunard ruled the waves with its impressive luxury liners, Mauretania and Lusitania, but chief rival White Star fought back with the most ambitious and largest 'Olympic class' passenger ship to date, built in the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast.

The ship is well-known for its opulent interior design, elegant ballroom and restaurant but it was the design features below decks that would plant the seeds of the grand voyager's demise. Ironically, Shipbuilder Magazine, in a special report at the time, described the vessel as 'practically unsinkable' but this was misguided. Unlike Cunard ships, where bulkheads were sealed off from each other, on the Titanic, if entering the ship, water could flow freely from one bulkhead to another, greatly increasing the amount and speed of water flooding in. On deck, there were problems too. Apart from the prestige, this was above all a commercial venture and revenue was maximised by packing the ship to the rafters. There were 2,435 passengers serviced by 900 staff but the 16 lifeboats and four inflatables were woefully inadequate, accommodating just 1,178 people. Before it even left port, the Titanic was an accident waiting to happen.



The RMS Titanic set sail on its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York on 10th April 1912. Being such a prestigious and publicised event, anybody who was anybody at the time was on board. Contemporary celebrities included Isidor Straus, owner of Macy's department store, industry baron Benjamin Guggenheim and the multimillionaire John Jacob Astor IV. However, 700 third class passengers housed on the lower decks made up the ballast of passengers.

The drama of the sinking started to unfold around 11.30 pm on 14th April. Having been warned by radio of icebergs in the area, lookouts spotted an iceberg straight ahead. The ship's engines put into reverse thrust as the colossus veered to avoid a head-on collision. A deep sigh of relief was breathed all around in the belief that an impact had been avoided. Too late did the crew and captain realise that the ship had sustained a 300 foot-long hole under the water and that five compartments had already been flooded. Realising that the ship would inevitably sink, the captain summoned the

lifeboats be readied for the abandonment of the ship. However, pandemonium and chaos ensued and many of the earlier lifeboats were launched unfilled, leaving yet fewer places for those that remained. As the insufficiency of escape



craft became known to the passengers, lovers, husbands and wives and children parted company for the last time in the dark as some were lowered onto the boats to safety while others stayed on board to await certain death in the icy waters. The tragedy at this intense human and personal level, beautifully portrayed in the eponymous movie featuring Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet, remains haunting and impossible to erase.

At 2.20 pm, less than three hours after the ship was first struck, it turned upright and disappeared beneath the water with all remaining souls perishing. In all, 1,514 people, including many women and children, lost their lives and it's remarkable that it wasn't more.

Countless inconclusive enquiries followed and many hypotheses have been proffered over the years, including criticisms of the strength of the metal and wood used and theories about 'popping rivets.' It is likely to engage engineers for years to come but technicalities and human tragedy aside, the

enduring appeal of the Titanic disaster lies in its symbolic reminder of man's folly, his over-confidence and misplaced belief in his omnipotence. Titanic provides a stark reminder that even with state-of-the-art technology, we can still get things horribly wrong - and that's a message as relevant today as it was in 1912.

Comprehension Test

- 1) In what ways was the early 20th century similar to current times?
- 2) Apart from just making money, what was one of the motivations for building luxury ocean-going liners at the time?
- 3) What technical fault was a major design error?
- 4) What kind of people made up the passengers?
- 5) Why was it not initially realised that the ship had been hit by an iceberg?
- 6) Why were only some passengers able to escape on lifeboats?
- 7) What makes the sinking of the Titanic relevant today?

Vocabulary

Titanic - immense, huge, powerful
Fateful - having far-reaching or disastrous consequences
As if it were yesterday - a phrase used for something strongly remembered
To rule the waves - to be the dominant naval force
Liner - a large, luxurious passenger ship
Opulent - expensive and luxurious
Demise - death, failure
Bulkhead - a dividing wall or barrier between separate compartments inside a ship or aircraft
Packed to the rafters - of a venue, absolutely full of people
Inflatable - a plastic or rubber boat that needs to be filled with air in order to be used
Woefully inadequate - terribly, lamentably insufficient
To set sail - of any ship with sailing boat or otherwise, to set off on a voyage
An accident waiting to happen - a dangerous situation that contains all the elements for an accident to occur
Maiden - first, not having done something before
Prestigious - high social status, commanding respect and admiration
Anybody who is anybody - all the most famous and successful people
Contemporary - of the time
Industry baron - an extremely successful and powerful business owner
Ballast - here: used as a metaphor, normally, heavy material placed in the bilge of a ship to ensure stability
To unfold - to develop, to become apparent
Lookout - a person stationed to keep watch for danger or trouble

To spot - to sight, to notice
Thrust - a sudden, forceful movement
Colossus - person or thing of enormous size or importance
To veer - to suddenly change direction
Head-on collision - a direct crash between two planes, trains, ships or vehicles coming from opposite directions
Inevitably - with no other outcome possible
Abandonment - the leaving
Pandemonium - panic, confusion, wild noisy disorder
Ensued - followed, occurred
Eponymous - having the same name
Haunting - highly poignant, evocative, disturbing
Erase - rub out, remove
Souls - a term used for people who die at sea. The distress signal SOS stands for 'Save Our Souls'
To perish - to die
Countless - numerous, too many to count
Inconclusive - without a clear outcome
To proffer - to forward, to content, to present
Rivet - a metal pin holding sheets of metal together
To engage - to preoccupy
Man - here: mankind, the human race
Folly - foolishness
Omnipotence - unlimited power
Stark - bare, harsh



Woman profile

The Public and Private Lives of J. K. Rowling



By Daniel Ogren, CC BY 2.0

For an unemployed single mum J.K Rowling has done quite well

Twenty years since the *Philosopher's Stone* burst on the scenes, the Harry Potter craze is as popular as ever but considerably less is known about the character's reticent creator. So what do we know about the elusive Ms Rowling? Joanne Rowling was born in the west of England in the county of Gloucestershire in 1965 and grew up in nearby Chepstow, Gwent in Wales. She was an avid reader as a child who revelled in the magical world of Narnia created by C.S. Lewis and enjoyed other classic British children's authors, such as Edith Nesbit (the *Railway Children*), Dodie Smith (The Hundred and One Dalmatians, I Capture the Castle) and most of all, Elizabeth Goudge (The Little White Horse). These books would lay the foundation for her own works of fantasy.

Having gained a degree in French and Classics at Exeter University, she worked for Amnesty International in London. It was on a train between Manchester and London that she created her immortal character and wrote the first chapter of the Harry Potter series. Can you believe she spent the next five years mapping out the storylines for each book? That's what you call good planning!

Her life changed when she moved to Porto in northern Portugal to work as an English teacher. She met television journalist Jorge Arantes, later marrying him and bearing his child, Jessica. But things did not work out and they soon divorced. Around the same time, her mother died, having battled with multiple

sclerosis for ten years. A depressed Joanne returned to the UK to live near her sister in Edinburgh. She was a single mum, unemployed and felt a failure but she soldiered on to bring out the book that would catapult her to riches and fame. It was her publisher's suggestion to use the genderless J.K. instead of Joanne on the basis that their target audience of boys might not read a book written by a woman. The K was taken from her grandmother Kathleen. In 1997, *Harry Potter & the Philosopher's Stone* was released and received immediate acclaim.

As the series evolved with the subsequent release of *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets* (1998), *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* (1999), *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire* (2000), *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix* (2004), the whole world became gripped by Pottermania with each book breaking new sales records. But when the books were adapted for film, the fame and popularity of the characters reached new heights. In all, there have been eight blockbusters, which have won countless accolades and Oscars and are among the highest grossing films of all time.

In 2016, a prequel was released, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*, based on the story of a book that v Potter found in his desk. It was originally released in 2001 under the pseudonym Newt Scamander. Perhaps feeling trapped by the constraints of the Potter world, yet still creative, she branched



out to write books for adults, including three crime novels, *The Cuckoo's Calling* (2013), *The Silkworm* (2014) and *Career of Evil* (2015) under the nom de plume of Robert Galbraith. For all we know, she may have written half of the Amazon book catalogue under various guises yet to be revealed.

Her body of work has certainly stood her in good stead as she is Britain's bestselling living author and one of the country's richest women with a net wealth of around GBP 600 million - not bad for an unemployed, single mum. But as well as financial riches she now has a happy marriage with Neil Murray, with whom she has a son and a daughter.

However, she doesn't spend her days counting her money but has been actively involved in charities for many years. She was president of Gingerbread, an organisation set up to help single parent families. Along with MEP Emma Nicholson, she co-founded Lumos. Appalled by the sight of children kept in caged beds in mental institutions in Romania and the Czech Republic, the women set out:

“To end the systematic institutionalisation of children across Europe and help them find safer, more caring places to live.”

The author has donated millions of pounds to children's charities, raised money through fundraising readings and supports Great Ormond St. Children's Hospital in London. She has also donated over GBP 10 mln to multiple sclerosis.

Despite these good works, she is far from being the press's darling - in fact, quite the opposite. She is a reclusive person who rarely gives interviews. Furthermore, she has taken out numerous legal actions against celebrity magazines and tabloids, including suing OK! Magazine for photographing her family on holiday and taking The Daily Mail to court for trying to dig up dirt on her early life by interviewing her first husband. Although she is arguably one of the most famous people in the world, she remains a very private person wishing to engage with others through her stories, while keeping herself to herself.

In a rare interview with broadcaster Lauren Laverne, she admits that she is hopeless at small talk, has a handful of close friends, no grand travel or luxury lifestyle plans and just prefers to 'keep chugging along' like a regular office worker. So maybe at the end of the day, she's just a very ordinary person who just happens to write extraordinary books, or, maybe there's something she's not telling us. We'll probably never know for sure.

Vocabulary

Reticent - reluctant to open up and tell people things
Elusive - deceptive, illusory, hard to locate or pin down
Avid - very keen, enthusiastic
To revel in something - to derive great pleasure
Immortal - living or lasting for ever
To soldier on - to battle on despite difficulties
To catapult - to project very quickly and forcefully
Genderless - being neither (obviously) male or female
Acclaim - praise
Mania - a mental illness involving extreme excitement, also widespread public hysteria when attached to a person or group - such as Beatlemania
Grossing - money earning
Prequel - a film that is made after another but chronologically depicts a time before

Pseudonym - a false name
To branch out - to extend into other activities
Nom de plume - pen name, name other than their own assumed by a writer
Appalled - greatly dismayed, horrified
Multiple sclerosis - a progressive motor neuron disease
The press – newspapers, media and reporters
To be X's darling - to be the favourite of X
Reclusive - avoiding the company of others, preferring to be alone
To dig up dirt - to look for, and publicise, damaging or embarrassing events or actions in someone's past
To keep one to oneself - to prefer to be alone and quiet
A handful - a small number
To chug along - to move slowly and steadily

Language Test

Match the two halves of sentences from the text.

1	Joanne Rowling was born in the west of England in the county of Gloucestershire in 1965	a	she worked for Amnesty International in London.
2	She was an avid reader as a child	b	and they soon divorced.
3	Having gained a degree in French and Classics at Exeter University,	c	to live near her sister in Edinburgh.
4	She met television journalist Jorge Arantes	d	and grew up in nearby Chepstow, Gwent in Wales.
5	But things did not work out	e	having battled with multiple sclerosis for ten years.
6	Around the same time, her mother died,	f	but she soldiered on to bring out the book that would cata-pult her to riches and fame.
7	A depressed Joanne returned to the UK	g	who revelled in the magical world of Narnia created by C.S. Lewis.
8	She was a single mum, unemployed and felt a failure	h	later marrying him and bearing his child, Jessica.





Health and beauty

Getting Back to Nature - Soaps with a Clean Conscience



Along with just the right amount of sunlight, a good night's sleep and a balanced diet, soap and water have long been cited as the key to a clear, healthy looking complexion. Increasingly, however, experts are less enthusiastic about traditional soap as a way of promoting spot-free, moisturised skin. What has led to these concerns and what can we use instead of conventional products? Historians believe that soap was being used as long ago as in ancient Babylon, around 2800 BC; in those days, it was made from a mixture of boiled fat and ashes. For centuries, soap was only for wealthy people, and it was used for laundry, not bathing. It wasn't until the early nineteenth century, when French scientists discovered how to mass produce soap, that it became more affordable.

Methods of soap production have changed very little, though science has enabled us to learn more about the ingredients and their effects. What we now know is that while soap is effective in removing dirt and germs from the skin, it also contains ingredients which strip the skin of the natural oils that keep it soft and supple, while the artificial scents can cause skin irritation to some consumers. Modern mass-produced soaps also contain controversial substances called parabens which are used to prevent bacteria growth in personal care products. Some studies have linked parabens to cancers. They also contain SLS (sodium lauryl sulfate), which is a surfactant used to reduce the harsh effects of some chemicals used in cosmetics. SLS can irritate the

eyes, and many consumers avoid it because it can be harmful to aquatic life further down the food chain.

Nowadays, there is plenty of choice for eco- and health-conscious consumers who want a natural but effective soap product. Look for brands that are certified organic and that don't use synthetic ingredients. Abahna uses natural plant ingredients such as wild flower honey, aloe vera and shea butter, and only therapeutic essential oil to fragrance its soaps. Friendly Soap is a UK brand that makes cold-pressed soaps that do not contain parabens, palm oil or SLS. Cold-pressing soap avoids the need for artificial lathering agents. Earthbound Organics makes its own range of beauty products that are all paraben-free and use organic oils as a base. They add wonderful gentle fragrances using organic herbs, most of which they source locally. Their Honey and Oatmeal soap is a great exfoliating product, while they also offer a baby-friendly soap that features gentle calendula as a key ingredient.

Look too for locally made natural soaps when you visit craft markets and organic stores. Many are based on local products so are environmentally as well as skin-friendly. As more and more people start to think carefully about what substances they put on their bodies and ask, "What exactly is in this stuff?" genuinely natural soaps provide a reassuring answer. Now off you go to the bathroom for a quick scrub.

Vocabulary

- (To go/get) - back to nature** - to return to a simpler life, often in the country or a natural environment
- To have a clean or clear conscience** - to be guilt-free in the certain knowledge of having done nothing wrong
- To cite** - to quote, to give as an example
- Ashes** - the powdery residue that remain after burning (particularly wood or coal)
- Supple** - pliant, flexible
- Surfactant** - a surface-active substance, such as detergent

- Essential oil** - an oil that comes from a plant and has its smell
- To lather** - to make soft soapy bubbles
- To exfoliate** - to remove dead skin cells
- Calendula** - a herbaceous plant from which soothing creams are made
- Craft market/fair** - an event in which individuals and small businesses sell handmade and local products
- Scrub** - here: a vigorous wash



Fancy a cuppa? Try going green

Green tea may not be everybody's 'cup of tea,' and may even be unpleasant to first-time drinkers but can provide a healthy and refreshing alternative to the black stuff. When you consider the health benefits that green tea provides, it is worth trying to drink at least one cup a day and more once you become accustomed to it. There are no official guidelines on how many cups you should drink per day whether it's one, five or more, it just depends on how much you like it and how many times you want to visit the loo. For those who can't take to the taste add a little ginger, or lemon and honey. You can also buy green tea mixed with wonderful ingredients like wild berries and even soursop (a tropical custard apple that is sometimes called graviola). However, most purists will prefer to drink green tea neat.

Green tea has been used in Asia for thousands of years to treat ailments. So why is it more beneficial than black tea? It's all in the processing. Green tea does not go through the fermentation process and by not doing this it manages to hold on to catechin polyphenols, antioxidants that fight disease and help keep us healthy. Numerous benefits are meant to be gained from drinking green tea but not all have been proven.

It has been said that the catechins found in green tea are connected to weight loss as they avert the accumulation of body fat and raise body temperature so

that you burn extra calories. Green tea, like black tea, is a source of caffeine. This stimulates your body to burn calories and fat. According to the University of Maryland Medical Centre, a person wanting to lose weight should drink two to three cups of green tea a day to benefit from the catechins alleged to help weight loss. Something to bear in mind is that if you are allergic or sensitive to caffeine, you may want to discuss it with your doctor before making a brew. The same goes for anyone who suffers from high blood pressure or has heart problems.

Some studies, like the one carried out at New York's University's Langone Medical Centre, show that the polyphenols help limit the risk of cancer and heart disease. The same study also reports that drinking green tea can lower the risk of catching a heavy cold or flu. So make sure you drink plenty in the winter months.

Green tea may be beneficial but always remember as well as caffeine, it contains those nasty tannins which can decrease the absorption of iron and folic acid. This is not good for pregnant ladies or for couples trying to conceive. That said, for most people a couple of cups a day can serve as a useful, liquid health supplement and one that's certainly better for you than a bottle of pop. Now if you'll excuse me, I need to powder my nose, probably had one cup too many today.



Try going green

Vocabulary

- Cuppa** - informal term for a cup of tea
- One's cup of tea** - something to one's liking - also comes in negative form - e.g. that's my cup of tea
- Loo** - popular, polite informal term for toilet
- To take to X** - to like or tolerate X
- Neat** - without anything added, a term usually applied to spirits - "he takes his whisky neat"
- Ailment** - a physical disorder or illness

- Fermentation** - the process of breaking down substances into simpler, more refined substances
- It has been said** - it is important to mention, it cannot be denied
- To bear in mind** - to remember, to take into account
- A brew** - a pot or cup of tea
- To conceive** - here: to create a pregnancy
- Pop** - informal term (particularly in the north of England) for fizzy drinks
- To powder one's nose** - euphemism for going to the toilet

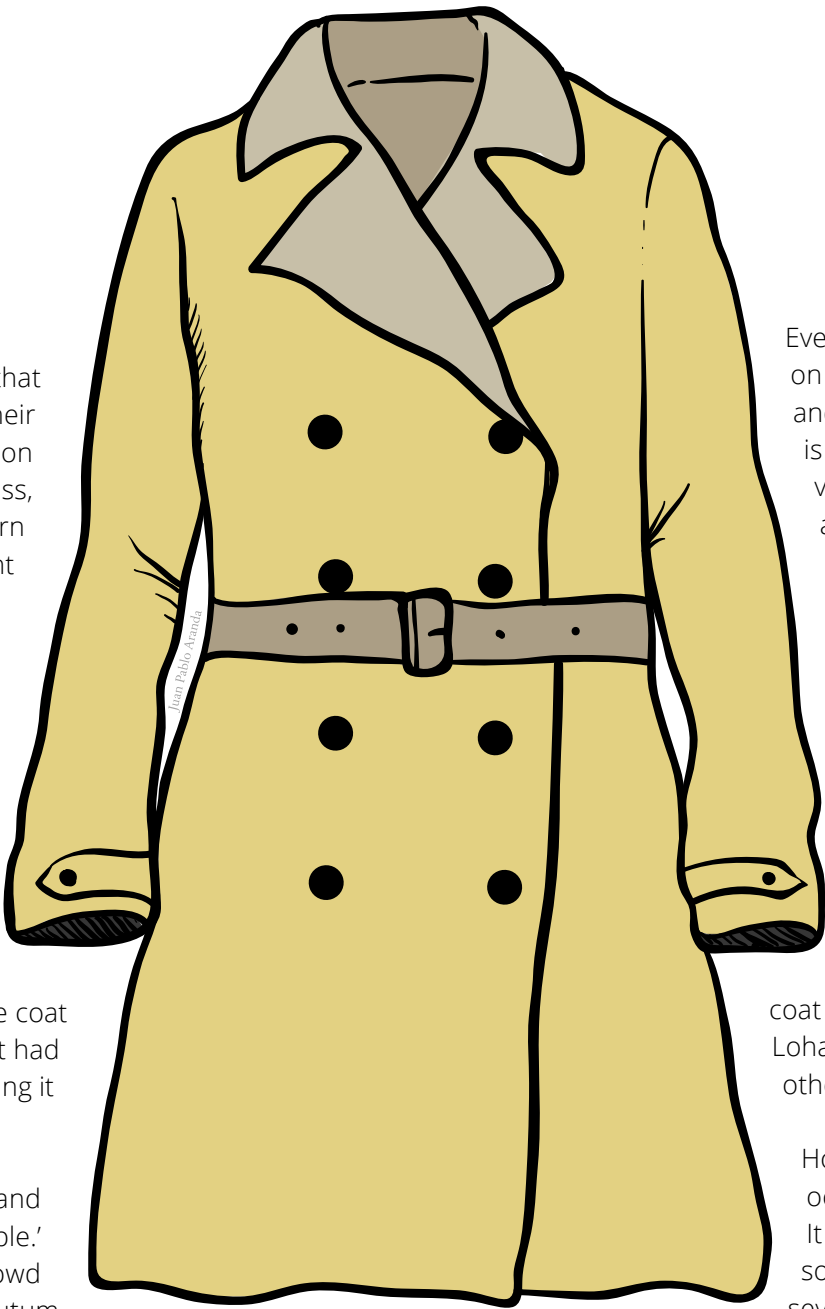


Trendy trench coat

The trench coat is a classic garment that every man and woman should have in their wardrobe. It usually makes an appearance on catwalks in early spring. The design is ageless, well-cut and is lightweight so can be worn in-between seasons. It makes any garment worn underneath look stylish and tailored.

The trench coat first came on the scene over a hundred years ago. Because of its name, you may think that the coat was designed and worn in the First World War. It wasn't exactly. The prototype evolved before the war in the shape of a 'Mack', named after its creator Charles Mackintosh. It was made from rubberised cotton that was designed to keep out the wind and rain and worn by civilians and the army. The coat was successful at repelling the elements but had a major drawback, it made the person wearing it sweat profusely.

Outfitters developed better materials and fabrics that were waterproof and 'breathable.' Two clothiers that stood out from the crowd were John Emery of the company, Aquascutum, and none other than the founder of the fashion house, Burberry, Thomas Burberry. He was the man who invented 'gabardine' in 1879. The great thing about gabardine was that it was tightly-woven, hard wearing and water resistant. This new tough fabric was a hit with the British army who were one of the first customers to buy the coats made from gabardine. So how did this garment turn into the classic trench coat? Mr. Burberry took a coat design he had used thirteen years earlier for officers at the War Office, added a few embellishments, like shoulder straps and metal rings, and hey presto, the trench coat was born.



Even when the war was over the trench coat carried on and was worn by civvies. Remarkably, the shape and design didn't change very much and even now is made from twenty-six pieces of gabardine of various sizes. The coat still has the buckled belt and D-rings. What makes the classic design so chic is the crossover buttons, raglan sleeves, cuffs with wrist straps and shoulder straps.

The Burberry trench was imitated by other fashion designers. It was cool to walk out on the town wearing a trench as many a film star wore it in the movies. The most famous golden era wearers were Marlena Dietrich, Bridgette Bardot, Audrey Hepburn and the unforgettable Humphrey Bogart in the film Casablanca and Peter Sellers in Inspector Clouseau. Younger celebrities to don a trench coat are Natalie Portman, Kim Kardashian, Lindsey Lohan, the Duchess of Cambridge and a string of other like-minded dressers.

However, the classic coat has a dark side and has on occasions, had some less desirable associations. It was popular with Italian fascists in the thirties, some Mods in the sixties and punks in the late seventies. Flashers are associated with trench coats, as are some perpetrators of vicious crimes – like school shootings, as the coat is easy to open so a good garment if you want to reveal your body or conceal a weapon.

Despite its bad press, it has managed to survive and and is as popular as ever. The modern trench comes in an array of colours as well as the traditional khaki, black and beige. Fashion designers John Paul Gautier, Stella McCartney, Valentino and Loewe are up there with Burberry showing off their timeless designs. The trench coat is an icon and here to stay.

Comprehension Test

Say if the following statements are true or false

- 1) The trench coat was originally designed for World War I soldiers in the trenches.
- 2) The material, gabardine, was invented by Burberry founder, Thomas Burberry.
- 3) Over the years, the design of the coat has barely changed.
- 4) In the 1940s - 1960s, the trench coat was worn by movie stars but not ordinary people.
- 5) Due to some negative associations, the trench coat is no longer fashionable.

Vocabulary

Garment - piece of clothing
Prototype - first design, original model
Rubberised - coated or soaked in rubber
Profusely - greatly
Outfitter - a store that provides clothing and equipment, particular for activities like hunting and fishing
Clothier - a person or business that makes clothes
Tightly woven - made from many, tightly packed interlacing threads
Hey presto! - suddenly as if by magic
Civvies - civilians or civilian clothing, people who are not soldiers
Buckled - here: clasped with a buckle
Chic - very fashionable in a classy way
Crossover buttons - buttons that are done up on the opposite side of a garment to the one on which they are attached

Raglan sleeves - sleeves that extend in one piece of material to the neck
Cuff - the thicker material or folded part of the end of a sleeve near the hand
To don - to put on, to wear
A string of X - a large number, a succession - “she’s had a string of affairs”
Like-minded - having the same opinions
Flasher - a man who exposes his genitals to women in public
Perpetrator - a person who does something bad
Conceal - hide, keep secret
Bad press - negative publicity or bad reputation
Array - large group or number
Khaki - a yellowish, light brown, often used in military clothing
Beige - a very light creamy brown colour



(In)Active in Oz

With a great climate, beautiful beaches and all-year-round sun, sea and surf, it's no surprise that the Aussies are outdoor types but now there's a new craze sweeping the continent. As the boundaries between work and play become blurred, many companies now have gyms or play facilities and the dress code is decidedly informal. That's an ideal environment for activewear.

The idea behind it is that if you dress in sportswear all the time, you can pick up some incidental exercise whenever you feel like it - jog home instead of catching the bus or do a few pushups in the office. Furthermore, so the story goes, there's a psychological link between dressing sportily and feeling active and healthy. You'll have a better self-image and feel more inclined to exercise. But what about those old grey baggies? They are hardly flattering and can make your bottom look like a sack of potatoes. That's where activewear comes in because it combines lightweight, practical sportswear with fashion, enabling you to look fit and cool at the same time. Not surprisingly, there is a whole host of trendy Australian activewear brands to choose from such

as Dharma Bums, L'urv, Pink Punk Active and the market leader, Lorna Jane. The brands offer clothing for all shapes and sizes and activities ranging from yoga to CrossFit.

While the trend applies to both men and women, it's more popular with females. So have the nation's fitness levels gone through the roof? Not really. It seems that the looking good aspect is rather more appealing than a gruelling workout, and a survey by online retailer TheActive.com.au revealed that 72 percent of Aussies wear activewear for non-sporting activities such as going to the supermarket. Such was the irony of the lazy sportsperson trend that a comedy group's (Skit Box) satirical video about it went viral with nearly five million YouTube hits.

Activewear provides sporty clothing that helps you to exercise easily any time while looking the bee's knees - so time for a run? Hmm, whack a steak on the barbie while I think about it.



Activewear by Pink Punk Active



Pink Punk Active - fair use

Vocabulary

Inactive - not active, not in use, note the negative form 'in' not 'un'
Blurred - unclear, ill-defined
Decidedly - unmistakably, most definitely
Incidental - by chance, without planning, occurring naturally
So the story goes - so it is said (expressing a degree of doubt)

Baggies - loose-fitting, baggy trousers or tracksuit bottoms
To go through the roof - to rise extremely, also to be very angry
Gruelling - extremely physically demanding
To look the bee's knees - to look great, highly admired
Barbie - Australian slang for BBQ



Food and drink

Meet Ana Roš - The World's Best Female Chef



Ana Roš is completely self-taught

Move over, Melania Trump! Another lady is putting Slovenia on the map and her path to success is a fascinating one. Until recently, many would have struggled to place Slovenia on the map, but Ana Roš is certainly ensuring that things are changing. The 2017 Best Female Chef in the World - decided by more than 1000 of the most important movers and shakers in the culinary world - may not have the profile of some of her male counterparts, but that's exactly how Ana Roš likes it.

Ana's story is even more incredible when you know that she is completely self-taught. In fact, this former ski champion passed up the opportunity to go to Brussels to be a diplomat in order to help run her husband's family restaurant. Not knowing much about gastronomy, Ana started to travel and to eat at well-regarded restaurants to learn her trade.

Hiša Franko is in the tiny town of Kobarid in the stunningly beautiful Soča Valley, just three kilometres from the Italian border and only a little further from Austria. Roš promotes a zero-kilometres policy which means that all the key ingredients used at Hiša Franko are sourced within walking distance of the restaurant.

It's safe to say that Ana Roš honed her craft through trial and error but it's an

approach that has paid dividends. Ask any Slovenian which is the best restaurant in Slovenia and the name Hiša Franko will crop up. This was reinforced when in 2016, Ana was featured in the popular Netflix series "Chef's Table."

What is remarkable about Ana Roš is that she enjoys the high esteem of her industry colleagues and the general public in equal measure. The atmosphere at Hiša Franko is relaxed and welcoming, it's certainly not a place where you need to watch your Ps and Qs or worry about which knife to use first. At the same time, her peers speak about her in the highest terms. Cristina Bowerman, the first female chef working in Rome to be awarded a Michelin star, said of Roš in 2015, "Strong woman, great cook, really deep not only in conceiving the dishes but also at playing with them," adding that she was the number one chef whose food she'd choose to eat.

Despite her success, Ana Roš doesn't look set to become a media darling. For sixteen years she has quietly gone about her business of creating exciting food in a quiet corner of Slovenia and this is exactly how Ana wants to continue. So if you want to catch a glimpse of her and sample her delights, you'll just have to call in on her, not so secret restaurant.

Vocabulary

- To put (somewhere) on the map** - to make it famous, to bring it to public attention
- Movers and shakers** - most influential people
- Culinary** - relating to cooking
- To pass up** - to decline, to not take an opportunity
- Gastronomy** - the practice of preparing, cooking and eating food
- Trial and error** - by experimenting, making some mistakes along the way

- To pay dividends** - to produce rewards
- Crop up** - to appear, sometimes unexpectedly
- In equal measure** - to the same degree
- To watch your Ps and Qs** - to be careful about manners and politeness
- To catch a glimpse** - to see for a passing moment

Catch up with the latest food and drink gossip over a coffee



Coffee Break



MARY BERRY IN HOT WATER

Oh, Mary! What have you done? In the last edition, we described you as Britain's grand dame of the kitchen but this month you are persona non grata with British viewers. Has she murdered the kitchen porter? No, but some say she's murdered a meal. In her BBC programme, Mary Berry Everyday, she's only gone and suggested people add white wine and cream to their Bolognese sauce. Really, what was she thinking? Maybe she swigged a little too much cooking brandy.

Discussion points

Do you have your own favourite variation on a classic dish?
Have you ever cooked a meal that went disastrously wrong?

Vocabulary

- To be in hot water** - idiom: to be in trouble
- Grand dame** - an old woman who is highly admired and respected
- Persona non grata** - a person unwelcome or out of favour
- Kitchen porter** - the lowest job in the kitchen, carrying, fetching and cleaning
- To swig** - to take and swallow a large quantity of drink in one go

Microbreweries and Craft Beer

Years ago, I'd heard the term 'microbreweries' thrown around, usually by Americans attempting to redeem themselves when criticised by their European counterparts for unleashing such watery concoctions as Coors or Miller on the world. East Coast USA had a wealth of these small breweries producing small amounts of beer in a traditional way. A great many of these beer styles originated in England and were developed specifically for export to British colonies or trading partners.

Those early beers lost their microbrewery tag when they became popular but the market for more personal beers made by small companies has spread across the world.

There's hardly a country that hasn't jumped on the craft beer bandwagon. Poland in particular, has spawned several well-respected small breweries. The choice can be overwhelming to those unfamiliar with the differences between an IPA and an APA or an Imperial stout and a Baltic porter. So let's have a little look, at some of the main types of beer.

- Imperial stout** – Word has it that the well-travelled Peter the Great had a fondness for British stout and quickly began importing it. Typical stout would have spoilt during the journey, so English brewers increased the alcohol content. Despite having an alcohol by volume (ABV) of over 9%, these are often dangerously palatable. It goes without saying that this kind of beer was a favourite tippie of Rasputin.
- Baltic porter** – A kind of dark beer, lighter than Imperial stout but sweet and generally packs a punch. Baltic porter was one of the preferred beverages of the Prussian, Polish, Finnish and Swedish upper classes, in the 18th century. ABV is usually around 7.5%.
- India pale ale** – During the political stand-off between Britain and Russia in the



Anyone for a glass of Sheep Szt?

1800s, the export trade to Russia dried up. British brewers quickly sought to enter a new market. By adding hops to traditional ale, they found that ale could be shipped to India where refreshing pale ale was welcomed by the sunburnt, thirsty British. India pale ale has a strong flavour, which is not to everyone's liking. ABV ranges from 5% to 9%. Go easy on them.

American pale ale – American pale ale emerged much later on the scene and can trace its roots back to 1975. The owner of Anchor Brewing Company set out

on a trip to London, Yorkshire and the Midlands in England to uncover brewing techniques and recipes. He used these to recreate something similar in the States to commemorate the 200th anniversary of the start of the American War of Independence. APAs are sometimes slightly lower in alcohol content but the main difference is that they use American hops. ABV is typically between 4.1% and 6%.

Of course, there are many more varieties out there, such as smooth oatmeal stout or peaty whisky ale, your best bet is to get down to your local and get supping.



What do you recommend?



There is no shortage of craft beers on offer

Beerhub

Warsaw neighbourhood Jelonki may be far away from the fashionable centre but the unassuming Beerhub on Ulica Powstańców Śląskich is the perfect place to get acquainted with the many beers on offer, whether it be while watching football, playing a board game or enjoying the beer garden in the summer. This cosy watering hole has six craft beers on draught, two very affordable draught lagers and cider or wine on tap for the spoilsports. If you're feeling really thirsty don't worry for there are hundreds of bottles to choose from too. Landlord and landlady Patryk and Magda are usually on hand to offer advice and help you with your choice, should you be struggling. We caught up with them for a little natter about the pub's first year in business and the Polish craft beer market.

When did you open?

We opened last year on the 30th of April, so we are going to celebrate our first anniversary soon.

Was the first year what you expected? If not, why?

Totally! We can even say that our first year in business has been beyond our wildest expectations. We are receiving a lot of positive feedback from people who frequent Beerhub. It gives us the energy to continue evolving.

What made you decide to open a pub specialising in craft beer? Do you have a bar background?

We decided to do something for ourselves and create our own place. We used to work from 9 till 5 but we really like challenges. One of us used to work in Dublin and has some bar experience from a traditional Irish pub.

What do you say to people who just want a 'normal' beer?

We have Czech lagers, so this is a substitute for 'normal' beer. Anyway, we always give them the chance to try a small sample of craft beer and sometimes they go for it.

Do you regularly get asked if you sell spirits?

Not really. Most of our clients are satisfied with what's on offer – besides our wide variety of beers on tap and in bottles, we also sell ciders, spritzers and wine.

Do you think craft beer has changed the way Poles view beer?

This is a long process, unfortunately. There is only a small percentage of Poles

that are really into craft beer, however, Poles have become more aware of and interested in craft beer.

Are people more likely to spend time in the pub now than in the past? Is a pub culture developing?

We think that people have always loved to spend time in pubs, so it hasn't changed, but since pubs with more draught beers have grown in popularity, people are more demanding and interested in the quality of the product that they get.

Do you see the market for craft beer getting bigger or waning?

The market is definitely growing. There are a lot of new contract brewers (*), new beer styles and pubs with a lot of beers on tap. It is thriving.

What is your favourite beer and why?

It is a West Coast IPA from one of the Warsaw craft breweries. They seem to have found the perfect balance between malt and hops, and bitterness.

What is the strangest beer you have stocked?

It was a stout called "Sheep szit", also from a Polish brewery, called Browar Birbant. The concept was introduced from Iceland, the beer malt had actually been smoked with sheep dung.

How can a buyer avoid buying a poor example of craft beer – e.g. one labelled as being original but in fact mass-produced?

Buyers should buy from beer specialists rather than big supermarkets if they want to avoid this scenario.

You introduced food last summer, are there any new plans afoot this summer?

We have a couple of ideas, and will definitely treat our clients to something new. At present, we are toying with the ideas of weekend brunches and showing films in the summer.

So there we have it, according to the experts, the craft beer craze shows no sign of letting up and might be here for good. Why not head out and taste it for yourself now that you are armed with a little more knowledge.

***a contract brewer is one brewer hiring another brewer to brew its product for them, satisfying the modern punter's desire for variety without actually having to fork out on the real estate and machinery a brewery requires**

Vocabulary (article)

- To redeem oneself** - to do something that makes up for former wrong doing

Tag - name, label, reference

To jump on the bandwagon - to follow a popular trend

To spawn - to give birth to, to produce

Spoil - here: go bad/off

Palatable - easy on the palate and pleasant to taste

It goes without saying - it is obvious that

Tipple - an alcoholic drink taken regularly

To pack a punch - to be very strong
- Stand-off** - a deadlock between two equally strong opponents, usually politically or in industrial disputes

To dry up - to cease to exist

Hops - the flowers of the hop plant used to flavour beer

Peaty - having a smoky, earthy character

To sup - to drink

Watering hole - informal term for pub or bar, particularly a favourite one

Spoilsport - someone who does not join in with the fun and spoils it for others

Landlord and landlady - the term given to the proprietors of a pub

Natter - chat, informal conversation, often to share recent news

Vocabulary (interview)

- To frequent** - to go somewhere on a regular basis (stress on second syllable opposite the adjective form)

Spritzer - a mixture of wine and soda water

Waning - weakening, reducing

Thriving - doing very well, flourishing

To fork out - to pay (often a high price, reluctantly)

Punter - Brit. inf. customer.

Malt - barley or other grains that have been steeped, germinated, and dried for
- brewing or distilling purposes

Bitter - having a sharp taste or small, not sweet

Dung - the excrement of animals

Afoot - in the pipeline, soon to happen

To toy with an idea - to lightly consider something

Brunch - a late morning meal taken instead of breakfast and lunch

To let up - to abate, to stop

Language Test

Without referring back to the interview, match the questions and answers.

1	Was the first year what you expected? If not, why?	a	One of us used to work in Dublin and has some bar experience from a traditional Irish pub.
2	What made you decide to open a pub specialising in craft beer?	b	There is only a small percentage of Poles that are really into craft beer, however, Poles have become more aware of and interested in craft beer.
3	Do you have a bar background?	c	The market is definitely growing. There are a lot of new contract brewers (*), new beer styles and pubs with a lot of beers on tap. It is thriving.
4	Do you regularly get asked if you sell spirits?	d	It was a stout called “Sheep szit”, also from a Polish brewery, called Browar Birbant. The concept was introduced from Iceland, the beer malt had actually been smoked with sheep dung.
5	Do you think craft beer has changed the way Poles view beer?	e	We decided to do something for ourselves and create our own place.
6	Do you see the market for craft beer getting bigger or waning?	f	We are toying with the ideas of weekend brunches and showing films in the summer.
7	What is the strangest beer you have stocked?	g	Totally! We can even say that our first year in business has been beyond our wildest expectations.
8	You introduced food last summer, are there any new plans afoot this summer?	h	Not really. Most of our clients are satisfied with what’s on offer.



Adventures in Cape Verde: Santiago



The pillory in the central square of Cidade Velha

In the first of a two-part series, Praski’s Daniel Sandford recounts his recent visit to Cape Verde describing its spectacular scenery, colonial history and his encounters with some of the islands’ colourful characters.

CAPE VERDE

Basking 350km off the coast of Africa, this archipelago of islands takes its name from the nearest cape on the African continent, in modern-day Senegal. The islands, which gained independence from Portuguese rule in 1975, provide a relaxed holiday destination with warm weather all-year round.

Visitors to Cape Verde typically head to the white sandy islands of Sal and Boa Vista to get some winter sun. The more adventurous head to Fogo to climb the volcano or to São Vicente to soak up the island's culture. Santiago is the country's biggest island with a population of 175,000 but it receives a small percentage of tourists in comparison to its sandy neighbours on account of dubious flight connections and unpredictable ferry services caused by rough sea conditions. However, it does attract the keen island-hopper.

CIDADE VELHA

Santiago is a mountainous island with rugged terrain and has more of an African feel to it than Boa Vista or Sal. We decided that the coastal village of Cidade Velha, located just 17km from the Nelson Mandela Airport, would be a more enjoyable place to stay than the bustling capital Praia. Following in the footsteps of famous explorers Christopher Columbus and Vasco da Gama, it looked like the perfect place from which to explore the island.

Cape Verde was uninhabited until the Portuguese arrived in 1462. Cidade Velha, originally named Ribeira Grande, was the first colonial settlement in the tropics. It became an important slave trading post for the Portuguese travelling between

Guinea-Bissau and Brazil and the city was the second richest city, after Lisbon, in the whole Portuguese empire. Two churches, a pillory (pelourinho) in the central square and the fort of São Filipe, which proudly looks down on the town like a protective parent, all date back to this early period of history and have secured the village as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, yet most people visit it as a day trip from Praia.

We stayed at the modest and friendly Casa Vitoria, a guesthouse with a terrace overlooking the sea. We were greeted by charismatic Portuguese photographer Tó and his wife Aliana, a Cape Verdean native. We assumed that they were the landlords but were informed that it was outgoing toddler Anna Vitoria, who was in fact, the real boss. A double room costs 25 euros, while breakfast and dinner for two cost the same again. Choosing half board gave us a fantastic insight into local cuisine. Breakfast was served in large quantities, the homemade goats cheese, baobab juice and papaya being the highlight. Baobab juice it turns out is distinctly earthy in flavour and pretty much the healthiest fresh juice on the planet. Dinners involved meat and fish accompanied by expertly cooked rice and a variety of vegetables, including the much-loved yam. The freshly caught fish was particularly scrumptious, washed down with jars of sangria and small bottles of Super Bock.

Cidade Velha is small. Its black-sanded beach is more likely to be occupied by fishing boats than flabby tourists and its quaint streets and churches don't take very long to walk around. There is more than meets the eye though. The town was first chosen as a settlement due to the banks of the large river that runs through it being a perfect place to grow plants. The valley around the river is ideal for walking. Tó, our host, acted as a guide, first showing us around the Forte Real de São Filipe and then taking us across some wasteland to a nearby village.

As we stumbled over little rocks and past pigs and cows grazing by an impressive collection of scrap metal, I couldn't help wondering if the tour was going to live up to expectations. Plastic bags are unfortunately an ugly but common sight in the villages on Santiago but we soon left behind civilisation as we descended down a steep cliff where a path had been cut out of the rock. We happened upon some people washing clothes at a cistern and then zigzagged our way through a maze of outbuildings. These turned out to be a distillery. A local man offered us a taste of grog (grogue in Portuguese), the fiery rum that is native to the island. After a brief chat, we continued on our way, strolling through groves of coconut and mango trees, spotting a grey-headed kingfisher with spectacular plumage.

Further down the valley, we approached a field of sugar cane, Tó made for a farmer who was holding a machete and bought some sugar cane from him. As we were gnawing on this sweet chewy stick, a vervet monkey appeared on the hillside opposite. He had awoken from the rocks where they tend to sleep in the day. The clumsy monkey set off a small avalanche of little rocks, which rudely awoke several other monkeys who had been deep in slumber. In total, about fifteen monkeys began jumping and running up the mountain. As they scuttled out of sight, we continued down the valley past two very large baobab trees, one being where the fruit for our breakfast juice had come from.

The next exotic fruit in our path was the odd tasting tamarind, hanging from a tree in a casing that looked like a peanut shell. The inside flesh resembled a date and initially tasted sour before hitting our taste buds with a burst of sweetness. This fertile valley which is several kilometres long and the reason the Portuguese chose to inhabit the islands, finishes in the heart of Cidade Velha, where people sit outside their brightly coloured houses and pigs mooch about

freely, much to the disapproval of Tó, who believes the only good place for a pig, is on the dinner table.

OTHER SIGHTS IN SANTIAGO

When you're done with Cidade Velha, you may want to move on to another part of the island but you'll struggle to find a host that's quite as welcoming. Distances are reasonably small and we chose to base ourselves in Cidade Velha for the duration of our stay.

Ecobus, the brainchild of an American, has a number of Toyota Hi-Aces that ply the island's roads powered by cooking oil. A slight whiff of a deep fat fryer is a small price to pay for the ecological advantages of using this type of fuel. They run a regular service on the Praia to Tarrafal road but if you're pushed for time and want to see the whole island in a day, then you can rent the minibus with driver and translator for the day for about 120 euros, which might work out to be affordable if there are a few of you.

Our first stop was the national park of Serra de Malagueta where we went for a hike before calling in at the dingy penal camp of Chão Bom. It was used during the Salazar regime as a prison for opponents of the Portuguese government and later for political prisoners involved in the struggle for independence for Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. We finished off with a brief swim in the northern coastal town of Tarrafal, where the Santiago Lounge Bar is the perfect place to enjoy a drink and watch the sun go down.

Santiago is a bit of a rough diamond but still has plenty going for it and if you want to see some of the authentic Cape Verde then it's preferable to the resorts of Sal, where visitors outnumber locals by a considerable number. Flights to Praia can be as little as 125 euros from Lisbon with TACV Airlines.



Tarrafal



Serra da Malagueta



Cidade Velha black sanded beach

Vocabulary

To bask - to lie in a pleasurable way in the sun
Archipelago - a group of islands
Dubious - doubtful, uncertain, here: unreliable
Island-hopping - moving from one island to another
Rugged - rough, rocky, uneven
Bustling - full of movement and activity, busy and lively
To follow in the footsteps of X - to do the same as X had before
Colonial - pertaining to colonies of an external ruling power
Pillory - a wooden framework with holes for the head and hands, in which people were locked to be subject to public abuse and hit with rotten fruit
Modest - moderate and inexpensive
Toddler - a young child, just older than a baby
Half board - an arrangement with a hotel or guesthouse comprising room, breakfast and one main meal per day
Baobab - a short tree with an edible fruit
Yam - the edible starchy tuber of a climbing plant
Scrumptious - very tasty, delicious
Washed down with - accompanied by a drink
Super Bock - a popular brand of Portuguese beer
Flabby - fleshy and fat
More to X than meets the eye - more than is initially apparent
Bank - here: the sloping ground going down to a river or lake
Wasteland - unused land that is barren or overgrown

Stumble - trip and lose one's balance
To graze - (sheep, cattle) eating grass in a field
To happen upon something - to come across something by chance
To zigzag - moving or being in sharp, alternative left and right turns
Distillery - a place where spirits are manufactured
To stroll - to walk in a leisurely manner
Grove - a small wood containing fruit trees
Plumage - a bird's feathers
To make for X - to head in the direction of X
To gnaw - bite persistently to wear away (note: the 'g' is silent and the word is pronounced the same as 'nor')
Chewy - needing much chewing before swallowing
Clumsy - poorly coordinated and inclined to knock things over or bump into things
To slumber - to sleep
To scuttle - to run hurriedly and furtively (like a mouse)
To mooch about - to loiter around in a bored or restless manner
To ply - here: to work at as a business
Whiff - a brief smell of something
Dingy - gloomy, drab, miserable, dark
A rough diamond - usually applied to a person - someone who appears rough but is in fact kind and pleasant



Technology

Taxing Times for Robots



Bill Gates would introduce a 'robot tax.'

In the last edition of Praski Monthly we looked at the possibility of AI stealing your job and indeed it looks as though robots in the workplace are no longer the stuff of science fiction. Not only will robots on the factory floor and androids in the store have an impact on unemployment, they could put increasing strain on many countries' already creaking welfare systems as the ratio of taxpayers to elderly goes in the wrong direction.

Multibillionaire, entrepreneur and philanthropist Bill Gates has a neat solution; he says let's tax our artificial replacements. In an argument based on very simple logic, he asks if we tax a human job holder then why not its metal stand-in? He believes that this would not only increase government revenues for welfare but also provide funds for retraining, in order to redirect people into jobs where the human touch is important, such as nursing and teaching. He also believes the move would act as a disincentive to ruthless cost-cutters looking to downsize the workforce and usurp them with robots prepared to work 24/7 without a tea break.

You'd think people would be grateful to the Windows wizard, queuing up to shake him by the hand and say, "Thanks Bill, you saved our bacon," but no such luck, in fact quite the opposite. The tycoon has come in for a tirade of criticism from the likes of Harvard and the US Treasury suggesting that as an entrepreneur, he should be ashamed of himself proposing an idea designed to slow the march of progress and add cost to business. They describe his robot tax as a 21st century Luddite solution. They believe it could hinder technological development in a crude attempt to hold onto jobs. US Treasury Secretary Summers also cites a further problem in the form of the grey area of technology-assisted human activity such as microsurgery. Maybe a robot tax is not as straightforward as it first appeared but perhaps it's just a Microsoft prototype destined to come back in versions 2, 3 and 4 - look out for upgrades or download the robot tax app to your phone.

Discussion Point

Do you think a robot tax is a good way of replacing government revenue lost through technology or would it be counterproductive?

Vocabulary

- Taxing** - Here: a double meaning: 1) to tax, 2) very demanding, e.g., it was a taxing journey to our holiday destination
- AI** - artificial intelligence
- Creaking** - 1) making a noise like a wooden boat or loose floorboard, 2) in bad condition
- Philanthropist** - a very wealthy person who gives money for the benefit of others
- Neat** - here: smart, clever in a simple way
- Stand-in** - replacement, substitute (often temporary)
- The human touch** - the human characteristics such as care and compassion

- Disincentive** - something that acts as a discouragement to doing something
- Ruthless** - without pity, compassion or concern
- To save someone's bacon** - to save someone from a (potentially) difficult situation
- Tirade** - a long, angry speech, here: also a great amount
- The likes of X** - X and other similar people/things/organisations
- Luddite** - a person who fears and fights against technology
- Hinder** - hamper, impede, make more difficult
- Crude** - can mean vulgar but here: unsophisticated
- Grey area** - an area of activity whose boundaries are hard to define

The Qwerty Keyboard



If you've ever wondered why the Qwerty keyboard is so called, just look to the first six letters on the keyboard. OK, that's simple enough but have you thought who on earth organised the keys in this apparently random configuration? Surely, alphabetical order would have been simpler. It was created by a Milwaukee printer, Christopher Latham Sholes, in 1867. In fact, over a period of five years, he experimented with a number of designs, such as a two-row, piano style keyboard and various other configurations, including alphabetical. The main problem was that the letters operated by metal levers jammed, particularly when adjacent keys were struck. The optimal design was not, as is sometimes believed, made to slow down overenthusiastic typists but simply to improve typing efficiency and

minimise jamming by utilising two-handed rhythmic typing where keys used in typical combinations were placed at opposite sides of the keyboard.

One of the characteristics of the layout is that considerably more English words can be written with the left hand than the right, so it's rather a left-handed biased keyboard. For right-handers that's just bad luck as it's too late to change now. Actually, back in 1936, Dr. August Dvorak designed a different layout that is believed by a number of people to be faster. However, the chances of us changing away from the Qwerty keyboard are probably pretty slim now even if, in the electronic era, the original constraining factors no longer exist.

Vocabulary

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Music

Father John Misty – Pure Comedy

With his manicured beard and shaggy locks, Father John Misty (Josh Tillman) is a pin-up for the hipster era, and yet like any true hipster, will not openly admit to being one. The former Fleet Foxes star revels in having alternative views and being slightly different from his poppy peers but not too parochial to refuse collaboration with Lady Gaga or Beyoncé.

Josh Tillman grew up in an extremely sheltered, religious household in Maryland, US and only really began to listen to secular music at the age of seventeen, by convincing his parents of Bob Dylan's Christian values. In Father John Misty's latest album Pure Comedy, there are nods to his early idol as he gives a holier-than-thou political and social commentary on the world we live in today.

Father John Misty fans might find this incredibly inspired, others may find it a bit preachy. No matter how deep and thoughtful the lyrics, there is still an inkling of tongue-in-cheek about it. The gentle yet multilayered folky melodies

make a pleasant change from the inane thumping of many of his chart-topping contemporaries and there are definitely hints of old-timers Harry Nilsson and James Taylor when it comes to the vocals.

Pure Comedy comes out on the 9th April 2017 and four tracks have already been released as singles: the powerful title track Pure Comedy, the ironic antiwar tune Two Wildly Different Perspectives and the somewhat sombre Ballad of a Dying Man. The most recently released single is Total Entertainment Forever, a damning look at what passes for entertainment today, to a surprisingly upbeat and jolly sax-heavy melody.

All singles have been met both with critical acclaim and joy from Father John Misty fans, who insist that he has managed to outdo his previous works with this well-polished and thoughtful piece, at a time when many Americans are still trying to get to grips with having Donald Trump as the nation's leader.



Father John is something of preacher

Vocabulary

- Manicured** - of the fingernails and hands, neatly filed and trimmed
- Shaggy** - of hair: long, thick and unkempt
- Locks** - long, often curly clumps of hair
- Parochial** - relating to a church parish, narrow in opinion or scope
- Sheltered** - closed, protected
- Secular** - not connected to religion
- A nod to X** - an indirect reference to X
- Holier-than-thou** - an attitude of moral superiority
- Preachy** - in a preaching way

- An inkling** - a small amount, a suspicion of something
- Tongue-in-cheek** - said or done with irony
- Inane** - without sense, depth or meaning
- Old-timer** - an older, respected person, here: from a previous time
- Sombre** - sad, down in mood
- Damning** - in a way strongly suggesting guilt or wrongdoing
- What passes for X** - what is accepted as X, usually in terms of low quality
- To get to grips with X** - to understand, comprehend or deal with X

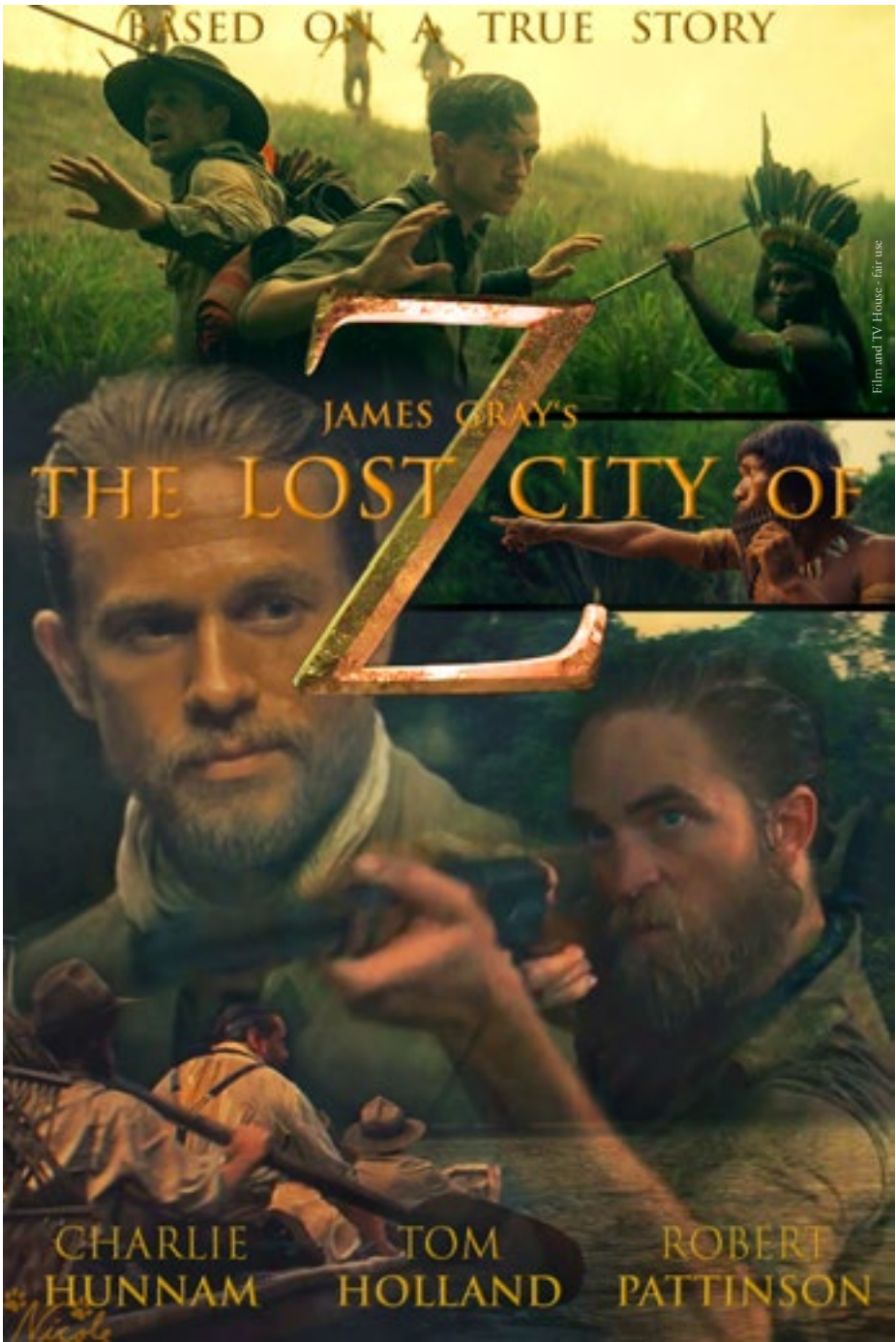


Film review

Popcorn's Film
Review



The Lost City of Z



Colonel Percival Fawcett, who was written about in our Eccentric English section and was the subject of a fantastic book by David Grann, is finally making it onto the big screen. The premise is straightforward enough - a once well-respected explorer who drew up the borders of South America loses his reputation as he unsuccessfully searches for the lost city of Z, in the Amazon. Deep in debt and with his name in tatters, he continues with his obsession and puts his and his family's lives on the line in doing so.

The trailer reveals that the jungle scenery gets the cinematography it deserves and the cast looks pretty sound too. Affable Geordie of Sons of Anarchy fame, Charlie Hunnam, plays the lead role. His onscreen son (Jack Fawcett) will be

depicted by Tom Holland, one of the most promising young actors out there, who played Peter Parker in Captain America: Civil War last year. Sienna Miller gets the role as long-suffering Nina Fawcett, while Robert Pattinson, whose back catalogue includes Harry Potter and Twilight, is cast as Jack's friend, Henry Costin.

Col. Percy Fawcett, seemingly impervious to illness, was not the least bit sentimental and was known for ploughing through the jungle at a breakneck pace, losing many men and mules along the way. It remains to be seen if his persona will be honestly represented in this film or if Hollywood will have made him out to be more mushy than the stoic, bullheaded reality. However, I'm fairly confident that Charlie Hunnam will do the tough Victorian explorer justice.

[watch trailer](#)

Vocabulary

In tatters - in ruins

To put X on the line - to put X at risk

Trailer - a short sequence of extracts from a currently unreleased film or programme to attract advance publicity and interest

Sound - solid, strong

Affable - likeable, friendly

Geordie - inf. Brit. inhabitant of Tyneside and Newcastle

Impervious - unaffected

To plough through - to go roughly, quickly and forcefully

Breakneck - extremely quickly

Mushy - here: sentimental

Stoic - enduring pain and hardship without complaining

Bullheaded - determined and obstinate, not taking others' views or feelings into account





English eccentrics

English Eccentrics - The 5th Duke of Portland



It was not unusual for aristocrats and men of good standing in the 1800s Britain to be bonkers or quirky. One such character was the 5th Duke of Portland – William Cavendish Scott Bentick who, through his bloodline, inherited the seat of the Bentick family when his elder brother died. His ill-health had marred much of his younger life, where he had served in the army and rose through the ranks due to his elevated position, but he was far from distinguished. He sought to shirk his political duties as MP of King's Lynn as soon as he had inherited them. In fact, there wasn't much the Duke of Portland liked, except for horseracing, hunting and books. He quickly became known as a recluse, living a life behind doors at Welbeck Abbey, where he set about transforming his estate into a spectacular underground maze.

He did not invite people to his home and even refused to see doctors. If he had to go out, he preferred to do so at night, trusting a female servant to carry a lantern behind him. On the few occasions he ventured out in the day, he wore two overcoats with unusually large collars, a large hat and did his best to cover his face with an umbrella. His tenants were under strict orders to ignore him should he ever be in their vicinity and rumour has it that an employee who acknowledged him was promptly fired. Despite this aversion to people, he was an avid letter writer and stayed in contact with family and friends. He also penned lengthy notes for his many employees, in fact he hired so many men that he became known as the 'workers' friend,' hiring more than a thousand men over two decades to participate in his many construction projects.

Rumours of disfigurement and madness abound due to his isolation but there are no signs that he was anything other than eccentric. He insisted a chicken was roasted at all times of the day and had an underground railway built that delivered little trucks of food directly to the heart of his lair. He had more than 10 miles of corridors and rooms at his disposal. The longest tunnel enabled him to travel by horse and cart through it directly to the local train station. Due to the perplexing labyrinth, there was no telling whether the duke was at home or not. Just in case somebody did catch him in, he had doors fitted to his bed.

The Duke had glass-topped tunnels built so his fruit trees could get light. He also had a sizeable library but the grandest room of all was a 10,000 square foot hall built out of clay, with a sunset painted on the ceiling and eyes cut into the roof to form skylights. Built as a ballroom, it never saw any visitors and the duke preferred to use it as his private ice rink.

The Duke died at the age of 79 but would remain in the headlines for years to come. A lady in London claimed that he had led a double life as her father-in-law, an upholsterer called Thomas Charles Druce. According to her, when he tired of his alter ego, he faked his own death and returned to Welbeck Abbey to continue living as the duke. Conveniently, if this was the case, her son stood to inherit his estate as the duke had no known children. The case was eventually dismissed and a cousin inherited his seat. The 5th Duke of Portland would go on to heavily influence the character and habits of Mr. Badger in the children's favourite Wind in the Willows.

Vocabulary

- Bonkers** - inf. mad
- Quirky** - strange, unusual, eccentric
- Bloodline** - heredity
- Seat** - here, position as a Member of Parliament
- To mar** - to spoil, to damage, affect negatively
- Shirk** - to avoid work or responsibility
- Recluse** - a person who avoids all contact with others
- Maze** - a confusing network of interconnected paths or passages
- Vicinity** - in the area, close
- Aversion** - strong feeling of dislike, desire to avoid
- Avid** - keen, very enthusiastic
- Disfigurement** - having a distorted or damaged face
- Lair** - the den of a wild animal, here: secret place
- At one's disposal** - available to use
- Perplexing** - confusing
- Labyrinth** - a complicated network of paths or tunnels
- Skylight** - a window in the ceiling designed to let in light
- A sheet of ice**, enclosed by low walls, on which to ice-skate
- Double life** - to live as two totally different people in different circumstances
- Upholsterer** - a person who specialises in covering furniture with material
- Alter ego** - a different version of oneself
- To fake** - to pretend, to do or make falsely
- To stand to do X** - here: to benefit from



Praski news & answers

Praski Tribe

As a recipient of Praski's English Monthly, we like to think of you as part of the global Praski tribe, a community of interest united by the desire to learn and share.

There is an incredible diversity of people and organisations subscribing to the publication ranging from language schools and universities, government departments, multinationals, small businesses and community groups.

If you have an interesting story to tell about the work of your organisation, then we'd love to hear about it and share it with our readers.

To discuss featuring your organisation (free of charge) in this section just drop us a line at the address below.

We can't wait to hear all about you!
contact@praskipublishing.com

Meet Praski's Newest Member

This is Kaoko - isn't she lovely! This elegant, gentle, young female giraffe grazes in the dry Hoarusib riverbed in the northwest of Namibia.

Very nice, you might say but what's she doing here in Praski's English Monthly? Well, we've adopted her - not by taking her out of her natural environment but by donating all profits from Praski merchandising to the Giraffe Conservation Foundation.



We'll keep you posted on her progress in the wild. In the meantime, if you want to pick up some attractive Praski merchandise while contributing to a great cause, visit the [Praski website](#).



Praski's English Monthly Publication Schedule

Q - When is a monthly not a monthly?
A - When it's Praski's English Monthly.

A few people have been asking us if they've missed a copy of the magazine - no you haven't. We are sorry but with our small team and family commitments, we realised that producing high-quality material every month was just a little too ambitious so decided to maintain the high standards by reducing the frequency and put out eight editions a year. This gives a 5 - 6 week publishing cycle plus a small summer break.

Here's the publishing schedule:

Edition	Release date
7	April: 02 - 04 - 2017
8	May: 12 - 05 - 2017
9	Jun: 20 - 06 - 2017
10	July: 31 - 07 - 2017
11	Sept: 22 - 09 - 2017
12	Nov: 02 - 11 - 2017
13	Dec: 15 - 12 - 2017

Answers

Business and Finance - Brazil in bother but still buoyant:
1F, 2T, 3T, 4F, 5F, 6T, 7F, 8T.

Woman Profile - The public and private lives of J. K. Rowling:
1d, 2g, 3a, 4h, 5b, 6e, 7c, 8f.

Fashion - Trendy trench coat:
1F, 2T, 3T, 4F, 5F.

Food and Drink - Microbreweries and craft beers:
1g, 2e, 3a, 4h, 5b, 6c, 7d, 8f.





Praski's English Monthly

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