AUDIO SCRIPT

Listening

Task 1

For items **1-10** listen to part of an interview about statistics and decide whether the statements **(1-10)** are **TRUE (A),** or **FALSE (B)** according to the text you hear. You will hear the text **TWICE**. You have **20 seconds** to look through the items.

(pause 20 seconds)

Now we begin.

P = Presenter, T = Tom Hunter

P: So next, statistics - often thought to be the worst kind of lying there is! A recent survey found that 60% of Britons believe the probability of tossing a coin twice and getting two heads is 50%, rather than the correct answer of 25%. Our guest today, Tom Hunter, thinks this is a worry and says we need to get to grips with stats. Tom, welcome.

T: Hi.

P: So, what's the problem? We don't really make use of stats and probabilities in our daily lives, do we?

T: Oh my! Well, that's a common belief, but gosh! I mean, we're surrounded by statistics: opinion polls, crime figures, product claims in advertising ...

P: Exactly! I mean, it's just used to sell stuff and so we ignore it!

T: Well, of course, statistics can be used to manipulate, but they also inform policy development, scientific progress and many individual decisions. The heart of the matter is that there are good statistics and bad ones. And knowing the difference is empowering.

P: OK. So, how can we tell the good from the bad?

T: Well, we need to recognize that different approaches to data collection have different degrees of validity. And we need to look for underlying problems with any research we encounter.

P: For example?

T: Well, say a food company is having some research done to see if its product has health benefits, right? It has a vested interest in the process, so researchers may get pressured into finding positive results. They may worry about not being employed again, which may affect their conclusions. Similarly, asking 50 people on social media will be less valid than a survey of 5,000 people chosen at random. That's not just because the sample size is too small, but also because social media will tend to attract people of similar views, so this grouping effect may exaggerate the results further.

P: Shouldn't publishers filter out this poor research?

T: Mmm, you'd hope so. Obviously, research in a respected journal, reviewed by other experts, will be better than something published anonymously online, but even peer reviews can

underestimate aspects like sample size. And interpretations can also be wrong. So, we always need to be on our guard.

P: Yeah, you mean the wrong conclusions may be drawn, whatever the data?

T: Absolutely. Take the issue of relative and absolute figures.

P: Relative and absolute?

T: Yeah. Say Company A produced 10,000 units last year and increased it to 12,000 this year. That'd be a 20% rise relative to its previous performance and an absolute increase of 2,000 units. Company B, on the other hand, produced 1,000 units last year and 1,400 this year - a rise of 40%. So, by comparing the relative changes, Company B could say it performed twice as well as its rival, but in absolute terms its rival produced an extra 1,600 units compared to Company B.

P: I see.

T: But what's more, Company B may have employed more people to get its increase, while Company A may have achieved theirs whilst cutting staff. So, far from doing 100% better than a rival, Company B's actually being hugely outperformed. And, of course, one year doesn't make a trend. It could just be an anomaly.

P: Maybe they had one client who ordered a huge amount and won't repeat it.

T: Exactly. So you can see it's the focus on either a relative or absolute figure and choosing the start and end point for the figures that can be used to twist data to suit your own ends.

P: Sure. So, what about the probabilities we started with?

T: Well, the initial problem is basic maths. However, people also misunderstand how probability works as a prediction tool. They don't understand variables and the degree to which they're dependent.

P: OK...

T: If you had just thrown a head, or indeed six heads or ten, the probability of the next throw being a head is still 50%, not 25% or smaller. That's because these are random events out of your control. However, the probability of having a heart attack, say, is dependent on whether you've had one before. If you have, the risk of another is greatly increased.

P: Time to cut down on salt!

T: Well, maybe, but claims about direct correlations also need to be treated sceptically. As an extreme comparison, the fact that TV sales may increase in line with crime does not prove that one affects the other!

P: Well, you're beginning to convince me, but can you give some other examples ...

You have 20 seconds to check your answers.

(pause 20 seconds)

Now listen to the text again.

(text repeated)

You have **20** seconds to check your answers.

(pause 20 seconds)

Task 2

> For items **11-15** listen to the text. Choose the correct answer (**A, B** or **C**) to answer questions **11-15**. You will hear the text only **ONCE**.

You now have 25 seconds to study the questions.

(pause 25 seconds)

Now we begin.

К = Katherine, S = Sam

K: Hello, InTech Corporation. Katherine speaking. How can I help you?

S: Oh, hello there, Katherine. It's me, Sam.

K: Oh, hi. How're you?

S: Not too bad, thanks. Listen, I'm just calling to check whether the delivery we sent out on Monday has reached you yet.

K: It has, yeah. It came in this morning, I believe.

S: Oh, that's good. I was just panicking over nothing, then.

K: Well, better safe than sorry, isn't it?

S: Exactly. Anyway, how're you? How're things your end?

K: Oh, you know. We're hanging in there. Sales have actually picked up a bit this quarter, so that's good, and we've actually taken on a couple of new people, so can't complain, you know. How's life with you? How's the little one?

S: Oh, she's good. She's just coming up to one now and she's crawling around everywhere and babbling away to herself all the time.

K: Aww!

S: Yeah. I'll send you pictures if you want.

K: That'd be lovely, yeah. And how's Mary?

S: She's OK. She's been away a lot with work recently, actually, which has been a bit of a pain, but hopefully that'll ease off a bit soon.

K: Mmm, yeah, that can't be easy. Hey, how was your holiday? Didn't you go away somewhere recently?

S: Yeah, that's right, we did. Two weeks in Crete. Oh, it was lovely. Over far too quickly, of course, but much needed.

K: Oh, that's good, though.

S: Yeah.

This is the end of the listening comprehension part. You have 1 minute to complete your answer.

Integrated listening and reading

> Read the text below, then listen to part of an interview on the same topic. You will notice that some ideas coincide and some differ in them. Answer questions **16-25** by choosing **A** if the idea is expressed in **both** materials, **B** if it can be found **only in the reading text**, **C** if it can be found **only in the audio-recording**, and **D** if **neither** of the materials expresses the idea.

Now you have 10 minutes to read the text below.

(pause 10 minutes)

> Now **listen** to part of an interview on the same topic and then do the tasks (questions **16-25**), comparing the text above and the interview. You will hear the interview **TWICE.**

TV Host: Speaking of school, your kids will not be dusting off the bookshelves this year. That's because they've traded their library cards for e-mails and e-texts in their smartphones. A new study has some pretty alarming findings. One in three U.S. high school seniors did not read a book for fun in 2016. But 82 percent of them read texts on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram every day. In the 1970s 60 percent of teenagers read a book, magazine or newspaper every single day. Now that number is down to just 16 percent. And joining us now is Rollins College communication professor Dr. Ted Grinnell. Dr.Grinnell, thanks for joining us.

Dr. Ted Grinnell: Thank you.

TV Host: I find these statistics sad and surprising, do you?

Dr. Ted Grinnell: Not surprising, but sad and scary to be honest with you. I don't have kids but I get them when they are 18, and I see the impacts. Every year it gets worse and worse, and worse.

TV Host: What are those impacts?

Dr. Ted Grinnell: Well, social media, we know, it causes really negative mental impacts. Our students become more insecure, they become more anxious, they become less able to gather data, and they can't spell, they can't write, they can't use grammar, and they really have no idea how to read and do the research that they will have to do when they go into the working world. So, we're seeing a real decrease in the skills which they need to get good jobs.

TV Host: What frightens me more than anything is what are we creating with this generation and how do we get it back, Ted? Is there a way to try to get these kids to understand the importance of just getting a good book and reading it?

Dr. Ted Grinnell: I mean the thing is that they are not a dumber generation at all. They are incredibly active and smart but they want immediate gratification and unfortunately, what they go to for that immediate gratification and things that they get depress them and make them really sad and obsessive. But I think we really have to as parents and as educators force students to maybe think less about tests and more about reading and actually focus on growing the skills that will matter. Because no one's going to ask you what your SAT score is after you get to college, right? And actually most schools are stepping away from that kind of stuff. So, we need to step away from that. If you give your kids allowance, tie the allowance to reading. Limit their screen time. And it doesn't really matter if you are looking at educational websites or not. Limit all their screen time and it'll definitely bring positive results…

You'll hear the interview again in 30 seconds.

(pause 30 seconds)

Now listen to the interview again.

(Text repeated)

Now you have five minutes to finish the task and transfer your answers to the answer sheet.

This is the end of the integrated task. Now you can start working on your reading task.