BASELINE TEST B AUDIO SCRIPT

Listening 1 Exercise A

Alan It's January 1st and I have a new challenge ahead of me!

Cecilia I know! You're going to start working out, going to the gym, and running marathons!

Alan Ha ha. Very funny. No, starting this month, in fact from today I will be …

Cecilia You'll be taking relaxation classes. Yoga maybe?

Alan Cecilia! I don't expect to be laughed at. I'm trying to be serious.

Cecilia Sorry. OK, so what's the new challenge?

Alan I plan to perform random acts of kindness. Every day.

Cecilia That sounds OK. A little bit of kindness is always a good thing.

Alan Yes, I thought so too. So how about you? Are you doing anything different this year? You're the kind of person who is always doing something new and exciting.

Cecilia Yeah, lots of stuff. I hope to travel more and broaden my horizons. Oh, and read more books. I spend way too much time on social media and it drives me crazy. It's such a waste of time.

Alan I agree. I think I'd better cut down the amount of time I spend online, too. I really have trouble ignoring all the instant messages I get, too.

Cecilia Let's do a deal – no more than an hour a day on the internet.

Alan Good plan! That'll be much easier than gradually cutting down the time we spend on it.

Cecilia What else should we do? Oh, I know. Here's another idea. We can make an effort to cut plastic out of our lives. Plastic is so bad for the environment.

Alan I couldn't agree with you more. Do you know how many birds and fish are killed by plastic? It's terrible.

Cecilia I do. It's absolutely awful, so let's play our part and do something about it.

Alan You're on!

BASELINE TEST B AUDIO SCRIPT

Listening 2 Exercise B

Susan Today, I'm delighted to welcome Carlos Romero on our show. Carlos, welcome!

Carlos Thanks for inviting me, Susan.

Susan Carlos, you have an unusual job, don't you? Please tell us a little about it.

Carlos I do! I'm very lucky … I oversee a team in a research lab near the Masaya Volcano in Nicaragua. For years I'd been dreaming of traveling to Central America, and suddenly I got a job there!

Susan And I understand that you study a very special species of bird? Is that correct?

Carlos Yes, I'm in charge of monitoring a colony – or group – of parakeets that live in and around the volcano.

Susan Parakeets? Is that a type of parrot?

Carlos Well, they're similar. They share many of the same features. The ones I study are green parakeets.

Susan And why are you researching that particular species?

Carlos We're trying to figure out how the parakeets survive in this habitat. The volcano is active, so it's a pretty terrible habitat, filled with dangerous gases.

Susan That's incredible!

Carlos Yeah, it really is incredible. The smell that comes from the poisonous gases inside the volcano is disgusting. It makes me feel sick. Humans have to protect themselves against the gases, but the parakeets are fine. They're very adaptable, it seems.

Susan Do you enjoy your work?

Carlos I love it! I'm extremely conscious of how fortunate I am. I'm lucky to have such a worthwhile job, lucky to be making a contribution to scientific research, and lucky to be in Nicaragua. When I was in college, I never thought I'd have a job like this one day.

Susan Will you return to the States one day?

Carlos I guess so, because research will be needed in other environments, but I hope to be here for a couple of more years. It's going to leave a lasting impression on me, I know that.

Susan Well, Carlos, thanks so much for coming on the show and talking to us. Good luck with your research!

Carlos You're welcome. Thank you!