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MODULE 2: Communication

4 Communicating

Key words
chime, illiteracy, inaccessible, integrate, lifeline, mailbag, transcribe

Reading

1 Look at the map and photograph. Where are they from? Do you think communicating is more challenging for people living in places like this?

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2 Read the article below. Do you think it is a successful postal service?

Letters to the mountains

Although the Internet has been celebrated for its unrivalled success in bringing the world closer together, not everyone in the world has access to a computer. For many people the Internet and sending e-mails are an abstract technology that does not relate to their everyday lives, and instead they favour writing and posting letters in the traditional way. But the postal authorities in Himachal Pradesh, a state in the north of India, have introduced a new service for their customers which integrates traditional mail and e-mail. People write their letters, then deposit them at their local post office. There, they are transcribed and then sent by e-mail to post offices in other parts of the country. Here, the e-mails are printed out and taken by the postman to their final destination.



Some of these letters, however, which are addressed to very remote places, like the Himalayas, have to be taken by hand to their destinations. They are carried by 'mail runners' who travel long distances on foot, often through mountains or other inaccessible areas. These postmen, who wear special uniforms and carry a mailbag and a bell, were introduced by the Indian post office over 150 years ago. There are now over 1600 'mail runners' in the territory of Himachal Pradesh.

There is often an atmosphere of excitement when the chime of a postman's bell is heard in a village, some of which rarely see outsiders due to their distant locations. The runners also often bring news from other villages and from the outside world. Illiteracy is often high these days, so a runner may have the added responsibility of reading the contents of the letter to the recipient, if they cannot read it for themselves. The runners of Himachal Pradesh are therefore clearly more than just a postal service. They are a lifeline between the villages and the rest of the world.



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3 Read the article again and answer these questions.

a In which part of India is Himachal Pradesh?
the north of India

b How are people's traditional letters sent by e-mail?
they are copied

c Who takes the printed e-mails to the very remote areas?
mail runners

d How many of these people are there in Himachal Pradesh?
over 1600

4 Complete the table with words from the text. (¶ = paragraph)

Word	Definition	¶
unrivalled	better than everyone or everything of the same type	1
local	belonging or relating to a particular area or neighbourhood	1
bell	a hollow object, typically made of metal and used to make a sound	2
rarely	not often; seldom	3
recipient	a person or thing that receives something	3

5 Which statement is true? Correct the false statements with extra information from the text.

a Himachal Pradesh is a postal service in Northern India.
Himachal Pradesh is a territory in Northern India.
The second statement is true. Himachal Pradesh introduced a postal service in northern India.

b It is a remote and mountainous area.
It is an easily-accessed mountainous area.
The first statement is true.
It is inaccessible.

c The postmen wear a special uniform and belt.
The postmen carry the post in a custom-made bag.
The second statement is true. The postmen wear a special uniform and carry a bell.

6 Number the following sentences from 1-7 according to their order of occurrence in the text on page 26.

6. Letters are carried by 'mail runners' who travel long distances on foot.
4. E-mails are printed out and taken to the correct address.
1. People write the letters.
3. The letters are copied and sent by e-mail.
7. Letters are delivered to their addressees.
5. Some letters are taken by hand to their destinations.
2. People take the letters to the post office.

7 Make notes on the following without rereading the article.

a The geography of northern India
mountainous, remote, inaccessible

b How the Himachal Pradesh postal service works People write letters, letters are taken to post office, letters are copied and sent by e-mails, e-mails are printed and taken by mail runners to their correct destinations.

c Modern vs. traditional forms of communication
Modern communication: Internet / e-mail
Traditional communication: letters

Over to you

8 Why do you think people still write traditional letters? Would you do that? Why or why not?

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Language practice

1 Complete sentences a–e with words from these lists.

bar	clothing	glass	grain
item	piece	slice	

a Some people like ice and a slice of lemon in their water.
b I'm reading a book about using computers more efficiently. It contains some very useful pieces (s) of advice.
c The storm broke six panes of glass in my office windows.
d The last item of clothing I bought was a white shirt.
e Everyone was very hungry – there were only a few grain (s) of rice left in the dish.

2 Complete the following sentences with your own ideas using the contrast words in brackets.

a (however)
Our English teacher didn't give us any homework for the holiday.
---.

b (although)
---, I kept in touch with him through e-mails.

c (in spite of)
---, I arrived at the meeting on time.

d (but)
It is a very remote area, ---.

3 Write a sentence of your own using each of the words below with *some*, *much* or *many*. Make sure you use the correct quantifier with countable and uncountable nouns.

a money:
---
b suitcase:
---
c sugar:
---
d postman:
---
e service:
---
f wood:
---
g computer:

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Quantifiers

- For countable nouns, use ***many*** + noun.
  *There are **many** animals in the zoo.*
- For uncountable nouns, use ***much*** + noun.
  *I didn't get **much** sleep.*
- Use ***some*** to talk about unspecified quantities (countable and uncountable nouns).
  *I made **some** money running errands.*
  *He played **some** records for me.*
- Use a plural noun without ***the***, for talking about things in general.
- Use ***the*** for regions or names of countries.
- Use ***the*** the second time you mention something.
- Use ***a / an*** the first time you mention something.
- Use ***a / an*** for one of many possible examples.

4 Complete these conversations with *a*, *an*, *the* or x (no article)

a A What does your father do?
B He's an accountant.
A Does he work in an office?
B Yes, it's in the city centre.

b A Do you prefer letters or e-mails?
B It depends. I wrote an e-mail to one of my friends this morning, but at the weekend I wrote a letter to a relative who lives in x England.
A I only write e-mails these days. I can't remember the last letter I wrote.

c A Have you got a pen I could borrow, please? I want to leave a note for my parents.
B Yes. Here you are. Do you need a sheet of paper and an envelope?
A No, thanks.

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Correlative Conjunctions

- Subjects connected by ***both*** ... ***and*** take a plural conjugation.
  Both *Ahmed* ***and*** *Anwar attend these meetings.*
- Verb conjugation with ***either ... or*** depends on the subject (singular or plural) closest to the conjugated verb.
  Either *Faisal* ***or*** *the girls need to attend the course. (second subject plural).*
  Either *Noura* ***or*** *Sarah is going to visit next weekend. (second subject singular).*
- Verb conjugation with ***neither ... nor*** depends on the subject (singular or plural) closest to the conjugated verb.
  Neither *Omar* ***nor*** *Waleed lives in the city. (second subject singular).*
  Neither *Lubna* ***nor*** *my other friends care about their future. (second subject plural).*

5 Choose the right form of the verb.

a Both Nader and Yaseen (*live* / *lives*) in a suburb outside Kuwait City.
b Either he or they (*is* / *are*) going to take care of the problem.
c Neither my aunt nor my grandmother (*want* / *wants*) to come to the celebration.
d Both my father and my brother (*intend* / *intends*) to finish the project.
e Neither Jameela nor the other students (*believe* / *believes*) in last minute revision.
f Either the managers or their assistants (*has* / *have*) investigated the situation already.

6 Expand the following sentences using *either ... or, neither ... nor,* or *both ... and,* without changing their meaning.

a For some reason, Ahmed or Waleed's numbers aren't in my phonebook.
For some reason, neither Ahmed nor Waleed's numbers are in my phone book.
b Samira and Salma started a degree in medicine last year.
Both Samira and Salma started a degree in medicine last year.
c Next season's Premier League will be won by Liverpool or Arsenal.
Next season's Premier League will be won by either Liverpool or Arsenal.
d The long distance charges will have to be paid by the caller or the receiver.
The long distance charges will have to be paid by either the caller or the receiver.

7 What would you say in the following situations?

a You have dialled the wrong number.
---
b You are talking on the phone to a friend but now you can no longer hear them.
---
c The postman has given you a letter addressed to somebody else.
---
d You think you have been given the wrong change at the post office.
---

8 Choose the correct article in the following sentences.



The history of the postal service

- Originally British postal services only carried letters to and from **(1)** *a/an/the* King.
- 1626 **(2)** *A/An/The* new postal service began. **(3)** *A/An/The* service was between Plymouth and **(4)** *a/an/the* capital, London.
- 1635 King Charles I said that everyone in Britain could use **(5)** *a/an/the* postal service. But it cost a lot of money to send **(6)** *a/an/the* letter.
- 1680 London introduced **(7)** *a/an/the* new cheap price for all letters. **(8)** *A/An/The* price was one penny.
- 1840 **(9)** *A/An/The* first stamp was used.
- 1974 Postcodes were introduced all over Britain. **(10)** *A/An/The* letters of **(11)** *a/an/the* normal postcode are related to **(12)** *a/an/the* name of **(13)** *a/an/the* town or city.

Self-assessment

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(1) a- Both letters are formal because the writers use complete structures and formal words and phrases.

b- Letter A: The student wants to join the International Exchange Programme.

Letter B: The director of Study Abroad replies to the student and gives more information about the Inernational Exchange Programme.

Writing A formal letter of application

1 Read these two letters written by a university and a student, then answer the questions.

a Are both letters written in formal English? Why do you think this is?

b What is the purpose of each letter?

A

To the Director of Study Abroad,

Re: Application for the International Exchange Programme

I am writing to apply to join the International Exchange Programme, beginning September 2009. I am currently studying for a BA in Economics at City University and I believe studying abroad will provide an excellent opportunity to enhance my skills. Please find my CV and application form attached. If you require any further information, please feel free to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully,
Omar

B

Dear Omar,

Thank you for your application to our International Exchange Programme. The Study Abroad committee will be spending the next few weeks reviewing everyone's applications. All applicants will receive notification of our final decision by letter on August 31st. In the meantime, if you have any additional questions please contact our Study Abroad Officer at studyabroad@cityuni.com.

While we consider your application, here is a mini-prospectus for you to study further. If you no longer feel this programme is right for you, please inform us as soon as possible.

- *Through the International Exchange Programme you are given the opportunity to study for three to twelve months at a university in another country. The academic work you complete abroad will be credited towards your final degree. Students who wish to apply for our exchanges must have at least a grade B average.*
- *It is a great chance to immerse yourself in the language, lifestyle and culture of another country and to broaden your experience during your studies. You don't have to be a language student to take part and you will receive additional funding to cover travel and accommodation. All other costs must be met by the student.*
- *New programmes are regularly introduced, so you should contact your chosen department for the most up-to-date information. Programmes currently available include Engineering, Biological Sciences, Computer Science, Economics, History, Law, Mathematical Sciences and Business.*

We suggest that you explore their websites. There are also some catalogues available in the Study Abroad Office, Room G09.

We hope you feel this exciting opportunity is right for you. Thank you again for your application and good luck.

Yours sincerely
The Director of Study Abroad,
City University

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2 Look at the two letters again and answer these questions.

a Which letter is written to be read by more than one person?
Letter B

b Which letter gives personal information?
Letter A

c Which sounds more polite? Justify your answer.

d Make a list of the expressions of gratitude used in each letter:

3 Fill in the application form for the International Exchange Programme. You should use formal language.

Application form for City University's International Exchange Programme	
Full name:	
Date of birth:	
Home address:	
Phone number/mobile:	
E-mail:	
Current degree:	
Course applied for:	
Academic record	
Subjects	Grades
Other achievements (please give details of any other academic, or non-academic achievements, that you think are relevant)	
Personal statement (you should include your reasons, both academic and personal, for applying for the exchange programme)	
Signature: Date:	

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