STARTING BLOCKS
The Erasmus generation

LISTENING COMPREHENSION

1 Get ready

A. You are going to hear the following words. Circle the syllable which you think will be stressed (*accentuée*).

1. Europe	**5.** university	**9.** improve	**13.** environment	**17.** interviewee
2. Erasmus	**6.** Birmingham	**10.** personal	**14.** organize	**18.** memorable
3. programme	**7.** European	**11.** advantages	**15.** opportunity	**19.** beneficial
4. experiences	**8.** benefit	**12.** interesting	**16.** recommend	**20.** atmosphere

B. Read some of the interviewer's questions. Do you expect the intonation to rise (↗) or fall (↘) at the end of each sentence? Write the correct arrow (*flèche*) in each blank.

1. Laura, what would you say was the main benefit of your year in Germany? .....

2. And from a more personal point of view, what were the advantages? .....

3. Could you give us one or two examples? .....

4. Did you feel lonely at all? .....

5. How do you rate (*évaluer*) the Erasmus programme? .....

6. Which university were you at in the UK? .....

7. And where did you go to in Europe? .....

8. What were the principal academic benefits, would you say? .....

9. So, would you say that your year was mainly work-orientated? .....

10. So the student life is good in Rennes, is it? .....

2 Part 1

C. What is the name of the radio programme? .....

D. Fill in the grid while and after listening to Laura.

Laura's surname	☐ Paisley ☐ Finlay ☐ Mosley ☐ Mainly ☐ Mesday
Home university	Aston ..... near .....
Host university	Frei Universität in .....
Studies	.....
Academic benefit	.....
Personal advantages	.....

E. Complete Laura's sentence. (one blank = one word)

I'd say that really the most important examples are that it ..... me all about ..... customs... all about ..... life... because I had a lot to ..... , including a place to ..... , a study ..... , all that sort of thing...

F. Deduce the meaning of *customs* in the previous sentence.

☐ *douane* ☐ *coutumes* ☐ *costumes*

G. What adjectives does Laura use to qualify the friends she made in Berlin?

1. ..... **2.** ..... **3.** .....

H. True or false? Circle the correct answer and justify.

1. T F Laura only made friends with German people. .....

.....

2. T F The Erasmus grant (*bourse*) did not enable Laura to travel around.

.....

.....

I. Complete Laura's view on her Erasmus experience.

Oh, for me it was a very very ..... experience. I'd ..... it to all students.

3 Part 2

J. Fill in the grid while and after listening to Alan.

Alan's surname	.....
Home university	.....
Host university	.....
Studies	.....
Feelings about his year abroad *(à l'étranger)*	....
Academic benefits (one blank = one word)	I had to write lots and lots of ..... in French and French essays follow a very strict ..... , a very ..... pattern. So this really helped me ..... my written work and also ..... my thoughts much better.

K. Pick out sentences used by Alan to say that his Erasmus year was not only work-orientated.

1. .....

2. .....

3. .....

L. Deduce the meaning of the verb *socialize*: .....

M. Complete the following passage. (one blank = one word)

At the beginning, yes, but... slowly my language ..... did improve and I got much more ..... when I was speaking French. And now I have a ..... feel for the French language.

N. What are the two personal benefits that Alan gained from his year in France?

1. ..... **2.** .....

TEXT 1

Dreams

READING COMPREHENSION

1 Part one (from the beginning to l. 18)

A. Choose the best translation of *settled* (l. 4): ☐ *d'accord* ☐ *résolu* ☐ *fixé* ☐ *réglé*

B. True or false? Circle the correct answer and justify by quoting from the text.

1. T F Dominic has already told his father about his plans.

.....

2. T F Dominic's father agrees to let his son take up a baseball career.

.....

3. T F Dominic and his father finally come to an agreement (*accord*).

.....

C. In the passage from l. 9 to l. 16, what does Dominic want to prove to his father?

☐ In America, the children of American citizens can succeed.
☐ In America, the children of poor Italian immigrants can succeed.

D. Tick the correct translation of *"It knocks but once."* (l. 18)

☐ *Elle ne frappe qu'une seule fois.* ☐ *Elle ne frappe presque jamais.* ☐ *Elle ne frappe jamais.*

E. How does Dominic feel at the end of this passage?

☐ He feels that he should give up the idea of becoming a baseball player.
☐ He feels that he must try his luck, in spite of (*malgré*) what his father tells him.

2 Part two (from l. 19 to l. 32)

F. Read from l. 19 to l. 23 and tick the translation of the underlined groups of words.

1. ... *his hand sliding from the pocket*... (l. 19)
   ☐ *glissa sa main dans* ☐ *sortit sa main de* ☐ *éloigna sa main de*
2. *He doubled it into a fist*... (l. 20)
   ☐ *Il serra le poing* ☐ *Il leva le poing* ☐ *Il me montra son poing*
3. ... *close to my nose*... (l. 21)
   ☐ *près de mon nez* ☐ *juste sous mon nez* ☐ *en plein sur mon nez*
4. ... *I had to make my stand*. (l. 23)
   ☐ *prendre une décision* ☐ *lui résister* ☐ *rester debout*

G. Tick the correct box and justify with keywords. Dominic's father:

☐ understands his son. ☐ is mad at his son. ☐ makes fun of (*se moquer*) his son.

.....

H. Quote a sentence showing that Dominic has no choice but to oppose his father.

.....

I. *"I'm leaving town..."* (l. 24) means: ☐ *Je quitte la ville* ☐ *Je vais quitter la ville*

J. What is the meaning of *block* (l. 25)? ☐ *bloc* ☐ *pâté de maisons* ☐ *immeuble* ☐ *quartier*

K. Quote a sentence showing that Dominic's father:

1. finally resigns himself to his son's decision.

.....

2. has doubts about his son's chances of success.

.....

L. Which adjectives apply to Dominic and his father in this passage?

1. Dominic: ☐ stubborn (*opiniâtre*) ☐ weak (*faible*) ☐ determined ☐ resigned
☐ submissive ☐ hopeful ☐ optimistic ☐ strong-willed ☐ rebellious ☐ resolute

2. Dominic's father: ☐ understanding ☐ narrow-minded (*étroit d'esprit*) ☐ resigned
☐ reluctant (*réticent*) ☐ inflexible ☐ furious ☐ disappointed ☐ patient

3 Part three (from l. 33 to the end)

M. True or false? Circle the correct answer and justify by quoting from the text.

1. T F Dominic's father is still angry with his son.

.....

.....

2. T F Dominic's father tries to tell his son that he can't succeed.

.....

.....

N. "*They're hard, tough.*" (l. 37) Choose the best translation of *tough*.

☐ *solide* ☐ *résistant* ☐ *coriace* ☐ *robuste* ☐ *endurant* ☐ *pénible*

O. Quote sentences showing that Dominic:

1. is disappointed with his father's words. .....

.....

2. thinks that his father's skills (*compétences*) didn't make him successful. .....

.....

P. What does the sentence from "*With this difference...*" to "*... I wasn't.*" (l. 43) imply?

☐ Dominic is convinced that he will do better than his father.
☐ Dominic believes that he will fail (*échouer*) just like his father.

Q. What is Dominic's position at the end of the text?

☐ He doesn't want to talk about his plans anymore.
☐ He is ready to go on discussing his plans with his father.

R. Guess the meaning of *relieved* (l. 45): ☐ *inquiet* ☐ *mécontent* ☐ *soulagé* ☐ *triste*

Ten words to remember

Find the equivalents of these words in the text (in the right order) and learn them by heart.

1. *douleur :* .....
2. *tristesse :* .....
3. *adoucir :* .....
4. *coriace :* .....
5. *poussière :* .....
6. *épais :* .....
7. *faible :* .....
8. *raté* (noun) *:* .....
9. *étranger :* .....
10. *soulagé :* .....