Military service

Recruitment and training

Armed Forces recruitment practices vary from country to country. In the UK, the British Armed Forces operate a network of careers advisers throughout the country who can offer potential recruits advice by e-mail or in person in one of the many Armed Forces Careers Offices. In addition, different specialist recruitment teams visit schools, career fairs and country shows where serving soldiers, seamen and airmen are on hand to talk to in person.

Responsibility for recruitment into the British Army is ATRA (Army Training and Recruitment Agency). Its operations are divided into four inter-related functions: recruiting, recruit training, specialist training and career training. Recruiting is the attracting, selecting and enlisting officer cadets and recruits by promoting a career in the Army to all sections of the British youth. Recruit Training is the initial training of recruits and officer cadets in military skills. Specialist training is the special-to-arm training to prepare soldiers for their first appointment and, lastly, career training is the continuation training and professional development provided in order to enhance soldier’s career progression and to meet the Army’s need for specialists.

To support the ATRA Recruiting Group, a network of 123 recruitment offices operates throughout the UK. There are also 61 Army Careers Advisers who regularly visit schools and universities. In liaison with the Army’s Director of Corporate Communications, the Recruiting Group carries out multimedia recruiting campaigns.

The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and the Initial Training Group are responsible for training officer cadets and recruits. Officer Cadets undertake a one-year course to prepare them for their first command appointment although most go on to attend a further specialist course before actually commanding their first troop or platoon.

Recruits undergo a 12-week course in basic skills at an Army Training Regiment, which prepares them for specialist training. Young soldiers may be enlisted on a Junior Entry into either the Army Apprentice College where they are prepared for a career in a technical corps, into the Army Foundation College where they are prepared for a career in a combat arm, or on a School Leavers Scheme where they are prepared for service in the infantry.

During basic training all officer cadets and recruits are instilled with the particular ethos of the British soldier. Specialist Training is conducted at 18 different schools with courses lasting from between a month to 18 months depending upon the skills required. The fundamental principle is that any officer or soldier is able to move directly from the course to join their regiment on operations.

All young officers are trained on special courses which emphasise the ethos of their particular arm or Service in preparation for their first command of a troop or platoon. Soldiers may undertake more than one course in preparation for their first appointment, particularly if they have to be trained to drive.

An officer or soldier will spend as much as one third of their career attending training courses. ATRA courses are designed according to the Systems Approach to Training. In a nutshell, this ensures that course content is based on a clearly stated requirement, that it is relevant, that there is a procedure for periodic review and that the required entry standards for students are properly identified.

It is a fundamental principle that all those who start a course should have a high chance of finishing it, albeit to a minimum standard in some cases. To that end, the needs of the individual are addressed before beginning the course and extra preparation, coaching or distance learning is given to bring all candidates up to a roughly comparable standard.

(Sourced in part and adapted from UK MoD / ATRA)

Adventurous Training

As part of the above training, all soldiers and officers will participate in various adventure / adventurous training exercises. Adventurous training is a key part of Army development and prepares soldiers for both difficult mental and physical situations. Preparation and planning hones logistic skills and the physical challenges ensure the Army is fighting fit and prepared for anything.

One example of a major adventurous training exercise is the British Army’s Antarctic Expedition which sailed a 72 foot yacht over 20,000 miles to explore the Danco Coast in order to record historical, wildlife and geographical information.
The Expedition ran from August 2001 to May 2002 in five phases. During the preparatory phase, every aspect of the Expedition was meticulously considered. This included an extensive refit programme for the yacht, obtaining and testing equipment, and selecting, building and training all members of the team. A total of just over 100 people took part in the Expedition. Many of these were novices making their first ocean passage. A squad of male and female volunteers drawn from The Regular and Territorial Army and representing a balance of experience and skills formed the Antarctic Team, training for some 18 months prior to departure.

In August 2001, the John Laing departed the UK for the 8,000 mile passage to The Falkland Islands. Just over three months later, the ship left the Falklands, sailing to the area of the Danco Coast. Mountaineering parties were then landed and the expedition explored the Danco Coast by ski and sail in order to record historical, wildlife and geographical information. This included the ascent of mountains which had no recorded previous ascents. Prior to the Expedition’s visit, much of the area was still largely unexplored and both climate and topography represented a significant challenge. The Expedition returned to the Falkland Islands in February 2002 and to the UK in May of the same year.

PROCEDURE alpha  (p14-15)

Joining up

Task 1

Draw a spidergram on the board or on an OHP transparency. In the centre write the words ‘forces recruitment’ and ask students how their armed forces go about recruiting. Elicit answers from students and write them on the spidergram.

You may like to pre-teach: advertising / media campaign, to take out ads (advertisements) in the press / magazines, to target, hoardings, by word of mouth, careers fair, booth / stall, recruitment office / tool, appeal to one’s sense of adventure / patriotism / duty / national pride.

Tell students that many armed forces use advertising campaigns to attract new recruits. As part of these campaigns, a series of posters (such as those here) is usually produced.

Ask students whether their armed forces use posters as a recruitment tool. If not, why not? Then give students a few minutes to consider the two questions in task 1 (pre-teaching convince if necessary) and discuss their answers in class.

Task 2

Put students in pairs. Tell them to look at the eight points in task 2 and ask them to discuss why civilians join the army in their country. Walk around the class monitoring and assisting where necessary.

When discussing the task in class you may like to come up with the top five reasons for joining the armed forces.

Listening

Task 3

Tell students they’re going to hear three people talk about why they joined the army and to note their reasons for joining. Play track 6. Review in class.

Answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Barry</th>
<th>Karl</th>
<th>Jason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✔</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note that the third speaker uses ‘school’ in the US sense of college / university education.

Task 3 [6]

A: Hi Barry, come and join us. Do you know Jason?
B: No, we haven’t met. Hi Jason.
C: Nice to meet you Barry.
A: Barry. We’re talking about why we joined the military. Why did you join the army, Barry?
B: Oh, adventure, I suppose. I left school when I was 16 and started work straight away. I was working in the local factory in town. Anyway, one day – I remember it was a Saturday – I was shopping with my girlfriend when I met some friends from school. They were in the army and they were having a great time. They were travelling to different places, like Cyprus and Germany, and Canada and it sounded great. So, I decided there and then that was the life for me. It was just what I wanted. Adventure, excitement, the opportunity to travel sounded great. So, the next morning I went down to the recruiting office and a month later I was doing basic training. And here I am. A soldier.
A: So you just decided. I mean, just like that!
B: Yep. Best decision of my life. One day I was working in a factory and the next day I was running around with an SA80!
A: An SA80?
B: Yeah, that’s the combat rifle in the British Army.
C: And what about your girlfriend?
B: Oh, Jeannie. Yeah, Jeannie and I got married two years ago.
C: And what does she think about you travelling to different places?
B: She’s not very happy. She was happy before we had our first baby, but not now with the kids. Anyway, enough about me. What about you, Karl? Why did you join up?
A: Oh, I always wanted to be a soldier. Even when I was a little boy.
C: You probably watched too many war films when you were young.
A: No, that’s not the reason. The military is a tradition in my family. Both my father and my grandfather were in the navy and my older brother also joined the navy.
B: Yes, but you’re a soldier!
A: No. So, now I’m in the mountain brigade and I’m a skiing instructor. I’m on the army skiing team and I have a chance of a place on our Olympic skiing team.
B: Wow, that’s great!
A: Yes, if I’m lucky. We have a lot of good skiers and there’s a lot of competition. And what about you Jason? Why did you join the army?
C: Well, for me it was sort of a family tradition too. My father was in the Marine Corps and my brother is in the army. But the main reason I joined was basically because I want to go to university when I leave the army.
A: I’m sorry, I don’t understand. What’s the connection?
C: Well, in the United States they have a programme called the GI Bill. Basically it means that if you serve on active duty for at least two years, then, when you leave, they pay you money to go to school or university.
B: That’s a great idea.
C: Yes, it is. They don’t pay all of the costs of university, but the money they give you really helps. A lot of people join up for that reason.

Have pairs report to the class on their reactions to the speakers’ reasons for joining the military and the likelihood of the men remaining in the forces.

Task 4
Give students a minute to read questions 1 and 2 and then ask them to listen to the rest of the conversation. Review the answers in class.

Answers
1 Karl, because he loves being a soldier. Jason, because he really likes it. Also, his commander has put his name forward for officer training school.
2 Barry, because he wants to spend more time with his family.

Task 5
Ask students to study the examples of the past simple. Then ask them when the past simple is used. It’s used to talk about things that...
1 happened at a definite time in the past
2 happened over a period of time in the past
3 regular actions / habits in the past

It may make things clearer to draw some timelines to illustrate the examples in their course book. X marks a specific time, day, month or date.

Definite time in the past

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(last week)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jason visited the army recruitment office.
Last week, Jason visited the army recruitment office.
Elicit more examples from the class and write these on the board.

Now, give students a few minutes to complete task 5 and review it in class using timelines to illustrate the answers if necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 was doing</td>
<td>6 was</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 was talking</td>
<td>7 practised</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 was telling</td>
<td>8 didn’t have</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 was doing</td>
<td>9 finished</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 assigned</td>
<td>10 decided</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pronunciation  **Regular -ed endings and past participles**

**Task 6**

Give students a few minutes to complete the task, then play track 8 for students to check their answers. Review in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 4 1 7 1 10 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 3 5 1 8 1 11 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 1 6 1 9 1 12 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 6  8**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>decide</th>
<th>decided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>join</td>
<td>joined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>like</td>
<td>liked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>play</td>
<td>played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td>started</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watch</td>
<td>watched</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Task 7**

To complete this task successfully, students will have to be familiar with the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and the following terms: voiced / unvoiced / voiceless.

Where this is not the case, simply demonstrate the rules in class using several examples.

If your students are familiar with the terminology and script, give them a few minutes to complete the task and review the task on the board or on an OHP transparency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ d / or / t /</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ d /</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ t /</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Speaking**

**Task 8**

Put students in pairs and give them a few minutes to complete this task. Then ask each student to report to the class about their partner.

---

**Period of time in the past**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past (grandfather in navy) (father in navy)</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Both my father and grandfather were in the navy. (they were in the navy for a period of time in the past)

**Habits in the past**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You probably watched too many war films when you were young.

Elicit more examples from the class and ask them to draw a timeline for their sentences.

Then ask students to study the examples of the past continuous. Using a timeline, contrast the use of the past simple with the past continuous, explaining that it's used to...

1. talk about actions and events happening around an unspecified period of time in the past
2. give background information

**Unspecified time in the past**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>patrolling</td>
<td>saw wire-cutters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I was patrolling the perimeter fence when I saw a pair of wire cutters on the ground.

There are no Xs to show when the action started or when it finished as this is not known. The only X marks a one-off event (saw wire cutters) that occurred during the performance of the action.

Show that when, as and while are often used to link the two tenses.

**Give background information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Past</th>
<th>Now</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We were working on a base in the middle of Slovakia.
A military career

Task 1
Put students in pairs and have them discuss the answers to questions 1–5. Review in class.
If you have a multinational group, use the answers to stimulate discussion and invite other students to ask questions.

Listening
Task 2
Ask students to listen to the conversation about service in the British Army and answer questions 1–5 in task 1. Play track 9.

Answers
1 16 4 only after serving four years
2 17 5 yes
3 22 years

After reviewing in class, ask students to listen again and answer the true / false questions. Play track 9. Where the answers are false, elicit the correct answers.

Answers
1 True
2 False (six years)
3 False (He intends to stay for 22 years.)
4 False (He’ll get his promotion only if he passes the course on his return to Germany.)
5 True

Task 2  [9]

A: Good morning, Private.
B: Good morning, sir.
A: Private Barley, this is Lieutenant Lars from the multinational headquarters.
C: Good morning, Private.
B: Good morning, sir.
A: Now, Lieutenant Lars is writing an article about the battalion for the headquarters’ newsletter and he wants to talk to one of our soldiers. Would you mind chatting with him for five minutes?
B: Yes sir. Uh, I mean no, sir. I mean, I don’t mind at all, sir.
A: Very good. Lieutenant, I’ll leave you in Private Barley’s capable hands.
B: So, what would you like to know, sir?
C: Well, let’s start with your background in the military? When did you join the army?
B: Right. I joined up straight after school when I was 16 years old.
C: 16. That’s surprising. What’s the minimum age for joining the army in Britain?

B: 16, sir. But there are limitations on what you can do.
C: Like what? Can you give me examples?
B: Well, yes, sir. For example, you can’t go on operational deployments until you’re 17.
C: That means you can’t take part in hostilities until you’re 17.
B: That’s right, sir.
C: And what about this mission? How old is the youngest soldier in the battalion?
B: 18, sir. You have to be 18 to serve in a United Nations mission.
C: 18, I see. So, how long have you been in the military?
B: I joined up six years ago.
C: Six years. And are you going to stay on and make the army your career?
B: Yes, sir. I’ve signed on for the full contract, that’s 22 years.
C: 22 years. Does that mean you can’t leave until you’ve completed 22 years?
B: Not exactly, sir. You sign on for 22 years but you can get out after four years if you don’t like it. But you normally have to serve a minimum of four years.
C: And when will you get promotion?
B: Well, I’ve applied for the next lance corporal’s course so if I pass the course I’ll be promoted when we get back to Germany in six month’s time.
C: OK and can you tell me about your experience in the army?
B: Yes, sir. I did basic training. That was 14 weeks. And then my combat infantryman’s course and then I got posted to my battalion.
C: Have you always been in the same battalion?
B: Yes sir, that’s the way it works in the British Army. At least in the infantry. You normally get posted to a battalion or regiment and you stay there for your whole career.
C: And what about deployments abroad?
B: Well sir, the whole battalion goes away on the deployment, they stay there for six months or two years or whatever and then the whole battalion comes back.
C: So you never deploy individually.
B: Not usually, sir. At least, not usually in the infantry. Sometimes you get posted away. That’s when you get posted to do a special job, like a training position. But then when the job’s finished, you go back to your unit.
C: And have you ever been posted away?
B: No, sir. At least, not yet.

Language tactics Phrasal verbs

Task 3
Don’t discuss phrasal verbs with students before they attempt this task. Point out that they should replace the more formal verbs in the dialogue with the more informal verbs listed using them in their correct forms. Give students a few minutes to complete the task then review in class.

Answers
1 joined up 4 get out
2 stay on 5 put in for
3 signed on (for the full 22 years)

You may now wish to go into greater detail about phrasal verbs and introduce further tasks.
Speaking

Task 4

To help students master the intonation patterns in sentences 1–4, you might like to model the start of each sentence aloud by having students repeat chorally and individually. You could then go on to practise substitute drills, e.g.

What (I / he / she / we / they) found most (surprising / interesting / unusual) about the (British / Slovenian / Bulgarian) Army was...

When you feel students have mastered the phrases, ask them to complete the sentences. When reviewing the answers, check that the intonation used is correct. Accept any reasonable answers.

Listening

Task 5

Give students a few minutes to read through the questions before listening to the conversation. Play track 10 and then review in class.

Answers
1 2 weeks
2 sorting out their stores / running through their drills
3 No. The wagons haven’t arrived yet
4 yes (once)

Task 5  [10]

C: I’ve just got a few more questions.
B: Yes, sir.
C: First of all, how long have you been here? I mean, when did the battalion arrive in theatre?
B: We came out at the end of last month. So, we’ve been here for two weeks.
C: And what have you been doing since you got here?
B: Well, we’ve been sorting out our stores. Not all of our gear has arrived yet. The wagons, for example.
C: The wagons.
B: That’s what we call our vehicles, sir.
C: Right.
B: Well, as I was saying, the wagons haven’t been shipped out yet. And then we’ve been running through our drills. Especially contact drills, things like what you do if you’re ambushed. Things like that.
C: And, have you been out on patrol yet?
B: Yes, sir. In fact I’ve just got back from my first patrol.
C: And how was it?
B: Tense. It was difficult. The people seem really friendly but we know that we can’t relax for a minute.

Grammar  Present perfect and present perfect continuous

Task 6

Focus attention on the uses of both tenses in the examples. You may wish to illustrate the differences between the tenses by using timelines as before.

Focus attention on the World English box and point out that speakers of American English will often use the past simple tense where British English speakers will use the present perfect.

Additional activity

Put students into small teams and ask each to write:
1 A question using the present perfect (containing the word ever)
2 A sentence using the present perfect
3 A question using the present perfect (containing the word yet)
4 A sentence using the present perfect (containing the word just)
5 A sentence using the present perfect continuous (containing the word for)
6 A question using the present perfect continuous
7 A question using the present perfect continuous (containing the word since)

Review student questions and sentences in class.

Give students a few minutes to complete the text using ANY appropriate tense. Tell them that, for some gaps, more than one tense can be inserted.

Answers
1 was
2 joined
3 has been
4 had been training
5 have been working / worked / have worked
6 has really paid off / is really paying off / has been really paying off
7 has already learned
8 practise / am practising / have been practising

When reviewing the task, you may like to explain why different tenses can be used.

Writing

Task 7

Ask students to read the six points in task 7 and make notes about each one. Then ask them to use these notes to write a short paragraph of no more than 100 words describing their military career.
Task 3
Tell students they’re going to hear the second part of the conversation and ask them to read the questions and to give very general answers. They should not attempt to note any details at this point. Play track 12.

Answers (after first listening)
1. the ‘hurry up and wait’ mentality
2. paperwork
3. time-wasting

Answers (after second listening)
1. waiting around (for something to happen)
2. having / taking part in large scale exercises every few months

Task 3

A:  You know, that is so typical. The waiting around for something to happen. It’s one of the things about the army that really annoys me.
B:  Ah, me too. It’s like when we deployed here. We were given eight hours notice to move; eight hours to get ready, pack and say goodbye.
D:  Yes. It’s the one thing I can’t stand. Hurry up and wait.
A:  Sorry?
D:  Hurry up and wait. It’s an expression, it means like you get ready for something really quickly and then wait around for it to happen.
A:  Yes. Well, anyone who has been in the military more than a day knows all about hurry up and wait.
D:  Yeah. You know the other thing that really annoys me is the paperwork. All the forms and reports and returns. For example, when I got to the sick bay this morning, I spent half an hour filling out forms! And then after I saw the doctor, I spent another half an hour doing the paperwork for the tests. Incredible!
B:  Yeah, you know what I hate is all the time I spend in meetings and briefings. Last week was a good example. Last week, I had at least four meetings every day! I mean, four meetings every day for five days. When I joined, we used to spend all our time in the field, out on exercise. It’s what I like best about the army. We used to be out in the field...
field every day and there were large scale exercises every few months.

D: That’s progress, Bob. Anyway, when you joined up soldiers still carried swords and shields.

B: Hah, hah. Very funny.

D: You know, for me, the best thing about the army is the friendships you make. I mean, I can go to just about any base anywhere and I’m there one day and I already have a lot of new friends.

C: That’s right.

Functional English  Expressing strong likes and dislikes

Task 4

Ask students to study the examples of spoken English used to express strong likes and dislikes and elicit the circumstances in which it would be appropriate to use them. (They would be used in informal conversations.) Depending on your class, you might like to discuss levels of intensity in expressing strong opinions, e.g.

It’s one of the things that...
    annoys me about...
    really annoys me about...
    I dislike about...
    I really dislike about...
    I can’t stand about...

Pronunciation  Sentence stress

Task 5

Tell students they’re going to listen to the sentences in task 4. Play track 13 once through and ask students to follow the sentences in task 4. Ask students what they noticed about the way in which the sentences were said.

Now play the track again, pausing after each sentence, and ask students to repeat.

Task 5  [13]

It’s what I like best about the army. You know, for me, the best thing about the army is the friendships you make. It’s one of the things that really annoys me about the military. It’s the one thing I can’t stand. The other thing that really annoys me is the paperwork. What I hate is all the time I spend in meetings and briefings.

Speaking

Task 6

Put students in pairs. Write the four topics on the board or on an OHP transparency and then ask students to express strong opinions (likes and dislikes) about each of the topics. Encourage them to use as many of the examples from task 4 as possible. Walk around the class monitoring and assisting with stress and intonation where necessary.

Task 7

If you have a strong group, you might like to ask students to discuss their most memorable experience in the military with a partner first, before asking them individually to tell the class about it.

Listening

Task 8

Tell students that they’re going to listen to a conversation where four people are talking about a funny experience. Ask them to identify the name of the person telling the story. Play track 14, stopping after sentence Yeah, that’s good advice… to elicit the answer to question 2.

Now tell students to listen to the conversation where four people are talking about a frightening experience and ask them to identify the name of the person telling the story. Play track 14 from the sentence You know, talking about helicopters… to the end to elicit the answer to question 1.

Answers

1  Bob
2  John

Now play the whole conversation again. Pause the recording after the first part of the conversation and check the answers to questions 1–5. Play the second part of the conversation again and review student answers to the same set of questions.

Answers  Conversation 1
1  last year / in Germany
2  British troops and Polish infantry
   Private Mike Farrow (Faz)
   John
3  Private Farrow borrowed a machine gun from a Polish soldier on board a helicopter. He accidentally dropped it and it discharged (blank rounds).
4  The Polish soldier jumped on the weapon, picked it up and it stopped firing.
5  He didn’t think it was funny.

Answers  Conversation 2
1  a couple of years ago / Sierra Leone
2  ten men
3  They were in an Army Air Corps helicopter that experienced a bird strike. The helicopter plummeted, but the co-pilot managed to take over the controls.
4  The pilot sustained a broken jaw and three broken ribs, but the helicopter landed without loss of life.
5  He thought it was the most frightening experience he had ever had.
Task 8

A: You know, John, talking about exercises, I saw your pal Faz the other day. He’s down with 3 UK Battalion.
B: Right, well just as long as I don’t see him.
A: Why’s that, John?
B: OK. Last year we were on exercise in Germany. It was an air mobile exercise and we were moving about in helicopters. It was a multinational exercise and there were British troops and Polish infantry in the helicopter. Anyway, this bloke Faz...
C: Is that his real name?
B: No, it’s... Farrier?
D: Farrow. Mike Farrow. Private.
B: Yeah, Farrow. Well this Farrow – or Faz or whatever – he was talking to one of the Polish blokes. The next thing he had the Polish soldier’s machine gun. Anyway, his section IC sees him and tells him to put the weapon down. And then the next moment it’s like World War 3! I don’t know what happened, but there we were inside a helicopter with an accidental discharge of a machine gun. Faz had dropped the weapon and it continued firing.
A: What happened?
B: Well, one of the Polish NCOs grabbed the weapon and stopped it.
A: I mean, was anyone hurt?
B: No, no. They were blank rounds, you know practice ammunition. But even so we were lucky no one was hurt. We were all wearing helmets and body armour. It wasn’t very funny at the time, but we had a good laugh with the Polish guys afterwards. The amazing thing was how quickly the Polish soldier reacted. He just jumped on the weapon.
D: Conclusion – don’t go out on patrol with Private Farrow.
B: Yeah, that’s good advice.
A: You know, talking about helicopters. I think my worst experience ever was in a helicopter.
B: When was that, Bob?
A: It was in Sierra Leone a couple of years ago. We were ten blokes in this Army Air Corps helicopter flying along at about a 100 miles an hour. Then suddenly, there was this loud crash and the windshield shattered. The cockpit door was open and you could see blood and Pleyxiglas everywhere. My first thought was that we’d been hit by a surface to air missile. But it wasn’t the rebels – it was birds!
D: A bird strike?
A: Yeah, birds. Can you believe it? Anyway, the pilot was slumped over the controls and the helicopter just dropped like a stone. At that moment I was convinced we were going to hit the ground. We were just falling like a stone.
B: So, what happened?
A: Well, we lost about 500 feet and then the co-pilot managed to pull the pilot off the controls and take over.
C: Was the pilot OK?
A: Just about. The pilot had a broken jaw and three broken ribs.
D: Narrow escape.
A: You can say that again mate! It was probably the most frightening experience of my life. And the amazing thing was, it was just like people say: I saw my life flash before my eyes.

You may like to play each of the conversations a third time and have students identify the main tenses used.

You could also use the conversations to highlight examples of colloquial expressions used in informal conversations, e.g.

| Talking about... | We had a good laugh |
| The other day | There was this (loud crash) |
| Right | I was convinced we... |
| Anyway, this (bloke)... | Just about! |
| The next thing... | You can say that again. |

Focus attention on the World English box and point out that British soldiers (chiefly NCOs) will often refer to and address a friend as (a) ‘mate’. For example, I had a game of pool with a few mates and Hello, mate. How’s things?

Functional English Talking about memorable experiences

Task 9

Tell students to study the examples, pointing out the way in which the men had structured their stories. Elicit different expressions you could use to signpost each of the sections and write these on the board.

You may like to invite one of the stronger students to talk about an experience using a similar structure and some of the new expressions.

Task 10

Ask students to read task 10. You may wish to pre-teach: sledge, frostbite, to make it back (i.e. to get back safely), to make it (i.e. survive).

Give students a few minutes to order the sentences and then play track 15, asking students to listen and check their answers.

Answers

The correct order is...
1 I think one of the most...
2 We were doing an adventure training*...
3 Anyway, we were marching through the snow...
4 This soldier called Dave just took over...
5 The training officer at the camp...

* Note that the term ‘adventurous training’ is also widely used in the armed forces.

Task 10

I think one of the worst experiences I’ve ever had was in Norway about eight years ago. We were doing an adventure training exercise. There were nine of us; eight soldiers and an officer – a young second lieutenant. Anyway, we were marching through the snow and suddenly the officer just disappeared. I mean, literally disappeared. He fell down a crack in the ice. We managed to pull him out but he was unconscious. It was freezing cold and our radio and supplies had also fallen through the ice.
This soldier called Dave just took over. He used our sleeping bags to make a sledge to pull the officer, got the lieutenant’s map and compass and just said “Follow me!” After about six hours march, we arrived at our base camp. Quite a few of the blokes had frostbite, but we all made it—including the officer. The training officer at the camp said it was incredible that we made it back. Anyway, Dave got an immediate promotion to Lance Corporal.

Speaking
Task 11
Ask students to answer questions 1–6 individually. Tell them that they can use notes and short forms. Students should then use their notes to tell a partner about their chosen experience. You may like to walk round the class monitoring and assisting where necessary.

Time permitting, students could be invited to share their experiences with their colleagues.

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**Conscript or professional?**

Task 1
Ask students which armed forces have both regulars and conscripts and answer the question accordingly.

Reading
Task 2
You may wish to pre-teach: mercenary, consequences.

Have students copy the chart into their notebook leaving plenty of space for each heading. When students have completed the task, review on the board.

**Answers**

**Professional armed forces**

Arguments in favour:
- good for large rich countries

Arguments against:
- bad for countries with developing economies
- in some countries a professional mercenary army is not widely accepted
- (high) cost
- soldiers require longer leave / study periods (for training courses) than conscripts
- individual rotation and replacement reducing readiness and small-unit cohesion
- problems in getting soldiers to stay on

**Conscript-based armed forces**

Arguments in favour:
- cheap
- soldier unaccompanied
- lower standard of living than professional soldiers
- always available for service
- unit rotation and replacement results in high readiness and unit cohesion when units are fully-trained

Arguments against:
- high social cost in taking young out of education / work

Task 3
Ask students to match the definitions to a word or phrase in the text.

**Answers**

1. unit rotation
2. individual rotation

Task 4
Now tell students to answer the four questions and review in class.

**Answers**

1. For a number of reasons: financial, cultural, social.
2. They get little leave, accept a lower standard of living, are unaccompanied, need little support.
3. They’re always available for service and use unit rotation and replacement.
4. It can reduce small unit cohesion and affect readiness.

Focus attention on the World English box.

In the US Armed Forces, *unit rotation* is the practice of moving an entire unit to a theatre of war, maintaining it in place (usually for six to 12 months), and then moving the entire unit home, while replacing it with another unit. *Individual rotation* maintains the same unit in theatre over time but moves individual soldiers into and out of the unit.

Under the *Regimental System* of the British Army, soldiers normally serve their whole career in a regiment rather than being moved from unit to unit. As they accumulate experience, qualifications and are promoted, opportunities arise for individual soldiers to be posted away for a specified period to training posts or other specialist jobs. Posting from one unit to another is known as *trickle posting*. When a soldier has completed his posting, he is normally returned to his regimental unit.
**Speaking**

**Task 5**

Put students in pairs and tell them that they may use both the task 2 reading text and their own professional knowledge to answer the questions. When the task is completed, review in class.

**Possible Answers**

1. Advantages: results in high readiness and unit cohesion
   Disadvantages: time taken to form and train units
2. Advantages: pride and loyalty to regiment. Soldier always returns to home regiment after posting.
   Disadvantages: continuous movement of personnel can reduce small unit cohesion and affect readiness

**Grammar  Contrast and concession**

**Task 6**

Tell students to study the examples, showing how contrast and concession can be expressed using the conjunctions and expressions given. You might like to point out that using a variety of these words in a piece of writing rather than using a single or couple of stock phrases can make the text more interesting.

Now ask students to complete the text using the words provided. Review in class.

**Writing**

**Task 7**

It would help to set a limit of 200 words for this task. Tell students you also expect to see them incorporate appropriate contrast and concession examples as practised in task 6.

**Exercise Cold Winter**

**Task 1**

This task looks at topographical map features.

You may like to pre-teach the vocabulary or prepare a worksheet in which the features have to be matched to their definitions.

Tell students to look at the map and give them a few minutes to label the key. Review in class.

**Reading**

**Task 2**

Tell students to read the first paragraph of the text and answer the two questions. Then review in class.

**Answers**

1. by mail boat*
2. (an old) four-man snow vehicle
3. three hours (90 minutes to the refuge and a further 90 minutes to Whale Bay)
4. at night
5. within a 20 km line-of-sight range

*A mail boat is a small boat that carries mail / post, food and supplies to and from an island. It sometimes also carries passengers and livestock.*
**Task 3**
You may want to explain what a route card is in case any students are unfamiliar with this practice. They are essential when setting out on any potentially life-threatening activity outdoors especially in remote areas and in extreme weather conditions.

Route ‘cards’ are written plans that are drawn up before a planned activity takes place. They can provide minimal information or can run to many pages depending on the level of preparation required. For outdoor activities such as hill-walking, hiking or mountaineering, they will normally indicate checkpoints / camps en route, grid references, bearings, pace and timings; ETD and ETA and emergency contact details.

A copy of the route card for an exercise such as ‘Cold Winter’ will be held at HQ. In the event of a serious accident or, where a group of soldiers is reported overdue, rescue services will be alerted and, thanks to the route card, should be able quickly to locate the group.

Put students in pairs. Ask them to complete the route card. Remind students that the answers to this task can be found in the first part of the text.

**Answers**
1. ETA is 1100
2. day 4
3. 16 km
4. lighthouse
5. ETA is 1430

**Reading**

**Task 4**
Tell students to read the text and then answer questions 1–3. Then review in class.

**Answers**
1. You are en route to the lighthouse, moving along Razor Ridge.
2. One of the scientists had an accident on a snow vehicle (two days ago).
3. She is seriously injured with a broken leg, a head injury and several broken ribs.

**Speaking**

**Task 5**
Put students in groups. Tell them to decide on their objectives and put them in order of importance. Tell each group to elect one student to note down the group’s choices.

**Task 6**
Ask each group to consider the facts that might affect their plan using the headings given and to say what conclusions they can reach.
Discuss the plans in class and then tell the groups that they must now decide on what course of action to take. Ask two members of each group to present their plans in a joint briefing.

**Task 7**
Using the format situation, mission, execution, groups should discuss and develop their plans.
Set a realistic time for students to complete this task. Walk round the class monitoring and assisting where necessary. Listen to each group’s presentation as a class.