



# ACTIVE READING

# PRACTISE YOUR ACTIVE READING SKILLS!

- Read the question
- Read the text
- Find the information
- Write notes
- Write your answer



# Voice Across the Sea

Man is, pre-eminently, the animal who communicates, but until little more than a hundred years ago his thoughts could travel abroad no more swiftly than the sailing ship or the running horse.

The great change began when lightning itself became a messenger for mankind. At first, the electric telegraph was regarded as a

superfluous novelty, but within a single lifetime engineers had spun a cocoon of copper wires around the world. In 1886 was laid the first successful Atlantic cable. From that moment, Europe and America were only seconds, and no longer days, apart. However, even when the telephone was invented in 1876 it was not possible to speak across the Atlantic; the early submarine cables could carry only telegraph messages. They were too sluggish to respond to the hundredfold-more-rapid vibrations of the human voice. Although a transatlantic telephone service was opened in 1927, it depended entirely on radio, which meant that even at the best of times conversations were liable to fadings and cracklings, and to eerie, Outer Space whistles and wails.

The first transatlantic telephone cable went into service in 1956. As a result of the vastly improved service, there was an immediate jump in the number of calls between Europe and America. More cables had to be laid – first across the Atlantic and later across the still wider expanses of the Pacific.

By the dawn of the Space Age, therefore, the problem of inter-continental telephone calls had been solved – but it had been solved so successfully that it had raised yet more problems. The cables could carry only a limited number of conversations, and it seemed unlikely that they could keep up with the rising demand. Moreover, just as the Victorian cables could not cope with the telephone, so the submarine cables of the 1950s were unable to deal with the latest miracle, television – and for very similar reasons. The electric signals involved in the transmission of TV pictures were a thousand times too complex to be handled by a cable. A new breakthrough was needed and the satellites provided it in the nick of time.



Pre-eminently – mainly, or to a very great degree-  
онцгой, давуу, илүү

swiftly – quickly or immediately- яаран сандран

sailing ship – Дарвуулт завь



mankind – the whole of the human race, including  
both men and women- хүн төрөлхтөн

Telegraph – (especially in the past) a method of sending and receiving messages by electrical or radio signals, or the special equipment used for this purpose - **цахилгаан холбоо**

regard – to consider or have an opinion about something or someone – **авч үзэх**( ех. гэмт хэрэг гэж авч үзэх, баатар мэт үзэх)

superfluous – more than is needed or wanted- **маш их**

novelty – the quality of being new and unusual- **шинэлэг**

cocoon – ороож бүрхэх, бүрхүүл

copper wire – зэс утас

laid-first – анх байрлуулсан

transmission – the process of broadcasting or sending out something by radio or television, on the internet, etc., or something that is broadcast or sent out - **Дамжуулалт**

sluggish – moving or operating more slowly than usual  
and with less energy or power- **болхи, удаан**  
apart – separated by a distance or by time- **салангид**

hundredfold-more-rapid – **зуу дахин хурдан**  
transatlantic –crossing the Atlantic ocean, - **атлантын**  
**далайн цаадах**

Dawn –the period in the day when light from the sun begins to appear in the sky- үүр цайх

space age – very modern

intercontinental – between continents- тив

хоорондын



**Liable** – having (legal) responsibility for something or someone- **үүрэг бүхий**

**fade** – to (cause to) lose colour, brightness, or strength gradually- **гандах, өнгө алдах**

**crackling** – short, dry, sharp sounds made by something – **тас няс хийсэн чимээ**

**eerie** –strange in a frightening and mysterious way-**аймаар**

**outer space** – the part of space that is very far away from Earth- **сансар огторгуй**

**whistle** – to make a long, high sound while moving quickly through or past something- **шүгэлдэх, исгэрэх**

**wail** – to complain loudly or strongly- **чанга уйлах, чарлах**

**vastly** – very much –**маш их, асар их хэмжээгээр**

immediate – happening or done without delay or very soon after something else- **шуурхай**

expanse – a large, open area of land, water, or sky – **өргөн уудам**

in the nick of time – at the last possible moment- “**яг хэрэгтэй цаг үед нь**”

cope – to deal successfully with a difficult situation- **давж гарах**

handle – a part of an object designed for holding, moving, or carrying the object easily- **залуурдах, гартаа байлгах**

breakthrough –an important discovery or event that helps to improve a situation or provide an answer to a problem- **нээлт**

satellite– **хиймэл дагуул**

## Exercise 4

- 1 **Using your own words**, explain what the text means by:
  - 'Man is, pre-eminently, the animal who communicates' (lines 1–3)
  - 'the electric telegraph was regarded as a superfluous novelty' (lines 15–17)
  - 'a cocoon of copper wires around the world' (lines 17–18)
- 2 From paragraph 2, **using your own words** explain why it was not possible to use the early 'submarine cables' for telephone calls across the Atlantic.
- 3 **Using your own words** explain what the 'yet more problems' mentioned in paragraph 4 were and say what solved them.

