

Audioscript

Listening comprehension

For items 1–10 listen to a man talking about a boy called Michael who crossed the Atlantic in a sailing boat and decide whether the statements 1–10 are TRUE according to the text you hear (A), or FALSE (B), or the information on the statement is NOT STATED in the text (C). You will hear the text twice. You have 20 seconds to look through the statements.

(pause 20 seconds)

Now we begin

In 2007, Michael Perham, a fourteen-year-old boy from the south of England, became the youngest person to sail across the Atlantic alone. Michael set off from Gibraltar on the 5,600 kilometre voyage which took forty-seven days. It was a long and, some may say, dangerous adventure, but Michael was determined to get there.

Michael started sailing when he was seven, and says the idea of an Atlantic crossing had been floating around in his head for a few years. Then one day, his father, Peter, who's a keen sailor, decided that the time was right. Michael helped with the design of a new 9-metre yacht which was built for them and to which Michael gave the name the *Cheeky Monkey*.

They say that for a real sailor, crossing the Atlantic isn't a big deal, but people imagine that sharks and huge waves would be the greatest dangers. In fact, Michael's father sailed alongside his son in his own boat to make sure he was OK. They worked in shifts throughout the night: an hour on, then an hour off, because one of them had to be on watch, in case large ships came too near to them.

Are you wondering what Michael ate during his voyage? Well, he says he and his father filled two supermarket trolleys with things like sausages, spaghetti and stews, which could be easily heated in a pan. Everything had to be in tins, though, because that type of food keeps fresher than stuff in packets or jars.

So what did Michael miss most? He says he sometimes missed human contact and having a face-to-face conversation. He got used to his limited food supply but says what he really longed for was hot toast. Knowing what teenagers are like, I'd been expecting him to say burgers or crisps, but then Michael is no ordinary teenager!

When asked how he communicated with his father, Michael explains that it was all done by radio, though for Michael nothing compared with the pleasure of following his father's progress through his binoculars. Michael also communicated with his family at home by satellite phone. One day his father contacted Michael to tell him a part of his own boat was broken, which really disappointed Michael

because it might mean that they would have to go slower. But, in the end, that wasn't necessary.

I asked Michael how he entertained himself on the boat. He told me he'd taken his guitar with him but it had stayed in its case throughout the trip. He couldn't play because the boat was always rolling about! He loved to read and he also had an iPod that his sister had lent him. This he plugged into portable speakers and it was on pretty much all the time.

Was there anything that frightened Michael? He says the weather was a bit of a worry at times, and once he got caught in a force-nine storm, but managed to handle the boat OK. The one event that really shook him was when a flying fish jumped into the boat and hit him on the shoulder. But mostly things were great, like sailing alongside dolphins and seeing the bluest skies anyone could ever imagine.

Everybody is really proud of Michael's achievements. And a remarkable thing about the trip is that he also raised thousands of pounds for the charity known as 'Children in Need'. His school has been very supportive - the head teacher allowed Michael to miss school, saying that a few weeks on the ocean would be an amazing learning experience.

It's quite likely that Michael's next challenge will be to sail non-stop around the world. His father would do the trip in another boat, but it would be a very different experience because they would be in 20-metre boats which travel much faster, so they would never really be in sight of each other. Michael says next time he'll remember to pack some photos, to remember friends and family if he feels lonely, but he'll leave the guitar at home!

You have 20 seconds to check your answers. (*pause 20 seconds*)

Now listen to the text again. (*text repeated*)

This is the end of the listening comprehension task.