

DIRECTIONS FOR TEACHERS

LISTENING SECTION

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN ENGLISH

Thursday, June 16, 2005 — 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., only

BE SURE THAT THE LISTENING SECTION IS ADMINISTERED TO EVERY STUDENT.

- 1 Before the start of the examination period, say:

Do not open the examination booklet until you are instructed to do so.

- 2 Distribute one examination booklet and one essay booklet to each student.

- 3 After each student has received an examination booklet and an essay booklet, say:

Tear off the answer sheet, which is the last page of the examination booklet, and fill in its heading. Now circle “Session One” and fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet.

- 4 After the students have filled in all headings on their answer sheets and essay booklets, say:

Look at page 2 of your examination booklet and follow along while I read the **Overview** and **The Situation**.

Overview:

For this part of the test, you will listen to an excerpt from a documentary about Nellie Bly, answer some multiple-choice questions, and write a response based on the situation described below. You will hear the excerpt from the documentary twice. You may take notes on the next page anytime you wish during the readings.

The Situation:

For women's history month, your local public library is sponsoring a forum on women who possess the qualities of an American hero. You have chosen to make a presentation on Nellie Bly. In preparation for your presentation, listen to an excerpt from a documentary broadcast on PBS about Nellie Bly. Then use relevant information from the excerpt of the documentary to write your presentation.

Now I will read the passage aloud to you for the first time.

- 5 Now read the passage aloud, including the attribution at the end. Read with appropriate expression, but without added comment.

Listening Passage

As Nellie Bly tells the story, it was on a Sunday in the fall of 1888 that the idea came to her. Feeling restless, she had the urge to go elsewhere and travel the globe like the fictional Phileas Fogg, the protagonist of Jules Verne's well-read "Around the World in Eighty Days."

It was then that the inspiration came to Bly: Why not have the "New York World," the newspaper she worked for, send her on a race around the globe to beat the 80-day trek of the fictional Fogg? Like so many other Bly story ideas, this was a winner that would capture the public's interest -- and once again put the young female journalist on center stage.

On Monday morning, she proposed the idea to managing editor John A. Cockerill. For a year, Cockerill and the other men at the newspaper put off Bly. Much of the senior staff's reluctance had to do with Bly's gender. "[New York] World" business manager George W. Turner preferred a man for the project. A man did not need a chaperone, Turner argued. Besides, he said, a man could leave behind the "dozen trunks" that a woman would also need for such a trip.

Bly was far from convinced. She replied that she would travel light -- and that she did not need a chaperone. After a year of rebukes, Bly heard rumors that the editors had selected a man. Her direct and feisty response was classic Bly. "Very well," she threatened. "Start the man and I'll start the same day for some other newspaper and beat him."

Cockerill acquiesced. The decision was made to send her on a Monday, and on Thursday she sailed off in an attempt to better the 80 days of the fictional Fogg. Bly carried only one piece of hand luggage for the journey and it was just 16 inches wide and seven inches high. Into it she squeezed two traveling caps, three veils, a pair of slippers, toilet articles, an ink stand, pens, pencils, paper, pins, needles, thread, a dressing gown, a tennis blazer, a small flask, a drinking cup, a few changes of underwear, handkerchiefs and a jar of cold cream. Many suggested she take along a revolver. She left it behind....

On the morning of November 14, 1889, Bly set sail from Hoboken Pier on a liner named the Augusta Victoria. The "[New York] World," once reluctant to send her, now put its full resources behind the voyage. "The 'World' today undertakes the task of turning a dream into reality..." read the newspaper's page-one story. "Nellie Bly, so well known to millions who have read of her doings, as told by her captivating pen, will set out as a female Phileas Fogg...."

In a little over six days, Bly arrived in England. The "World"'s London correspondent, Tracy Greaves, met her and told her that Jules Verne wanted to meet her. Assured the side trip would not ruin her tight schedule, Bly traveled day and night to Amiens, France.

Verne asked her where Bly would stop. She had her itinerary memorized: New York to London, then Calais, Brindisi, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, Aden, Colombo, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, Yokohama, San Francisco, and then, if all went as planned, a triumphant return to New York City. If Bly could be said to be riding on Verne's literary success, she repaid the favor by bringing fresh publicity to his novel. "Around the World in 80 Days" was re-issued in over 10 new editions.

Since Bly's reports took a long time to arrive back in New York, the "[New York] World" had to fabricate news during the time she was gone. One ploy was to launch a sweepstakes that asked readers to guess exactly how long Bly's trip would take. By the end of the solo circumnavigation, the newspaper would receive over half a million guesses.

Everywhere Bly went, she brought her feminist and progressive perspective on the world. In Port Said, Bly saw that, to keep the beggars at bay, the male boat passengers took to the streets with canes and the women with parasols. Bly refused to take the casual weapons with her, saying that "a stick beats more ugliness into a person than it ever beats out." On shore in Singapore, Bly visited a Hindu temple, but a holy man prevented her from entering. Bly's response was true to form:

“Why?” I demanded, curious to know why my sex in heathen lands should exclude me from a temple, as in America it confines me to the side entrances of hotels and other strange and incommodious things....

Bly observed the world around her carefully, but also kept a worried watch on the pace of her trip. After a required overnight in Singapore that threatened her next connection in Hong Kong, she later wrote, “What agony of suspense and impatience I suffered that night!” Caught in a brutal storm on her way to Japan that again threatened the success she said, “I’d rather go back to New York dead than not a winner.”

When she arrived in San Francisco, it became apparent that her fears were for naught: she would best Fogg’s fictional record. She described the transcontinental run that followed as a “maze of happy greetings, happy wishes, congratulating telegrams, fruit, flowers, loud cheers, wild hurrahs, rapid hand-shaking and a beautiful car filled with fragrant flowers attached to a swift engine that was tearing like mad through flower-dotted valleys and over snow-tipped mountains.”

Bly described her journey as a queen’s ride. Everywhere she went she met cheering crowds. Bly wrote that she “rejoiced with them that it was an American girl who had done it.” At the tender age of 25, Bly was the most famous woman on earth. Nellie Bly songs were sung in music halls. A Nellie Bly housecoat was advertised. The “[New York] World,” not afraid to cash in on its star reporter, even marketed a parlor game called “Round the World with Nellie Bly.”

When a reporter from “The San Francisco Chronicle” remarked that her mad dash around the world was something quite remarkable, Bly responded: “Oh, I don’t know. It’s not so very much for a woman to do who has the pluck, energy and independence which characterize many women in this day of push and get-there.” Bly was suggesting that she was more than just a lone and feisty reporter. Her bold trip was a symbol of the newly politicized and independent women of her age who fought for new possibilities that now included a trip around the world -- without a chaperone.

—excerpted from “A Trip Around the World,”
PBS Online 1999–2000

6 After reading the passage aloud once, say:

You may take a few minutes to look over **The Situation** and your notes.
(Pause) Now I will read the passage aloud a second time.

7 Read the passage a second time.

8 After the second reading, say:

Now turn to page 4 of your examination booklet, read the directions, and answer the multiple-choice questions. Be sure to follow all the directions given in your examination booklet and your essay booklet. You may now begin.

