

ENGLISH For Today

Book Four: OUR CHANGING TECHNOLOGY

The National Council of Teachers of English

Second Edition

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ENGLISH FOR TODAY

Book Four: OUR CHANGING TECHNOLOGY

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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ENGLISH FOR TODAY

Book Four: Our Changing Technology

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Lesson One

Machines in the City

the heart of the big city *the*
 center of the city
tied *linked*
machine age *period when*
 most work is done by
 machines

1. Dick Mallory is a book publisher. His office on the fortieth floor of a skyscraper in the center of New York City is the world he works in. The world he lives in is a white house on a quiet street in a suburb 30 miles from the big city. Whether he is at work in the heart of the big city or at home in the quiet suburb, Dick's life is tied to machines. In many ways he represents modern man in the big city—modern man in the machine age.
2. In a typical working day, Dick and his wife are awakened by the buzzing of an electric alarm clock. As he pushes a button to silence the alarm, he turns on the radio beside his bed to hear the morning news. Then he goes to the bathroom for a quick shave with his electric shaver.
3. After dressing, Dick goes to the kitchen, where his wife has begun to prepare breakfast. Eggs are cooking on the electric stove, bread is being toasted in an electric toaster, and coffee is being made in an electric coffee maker. From the electric refrigerator Dick takes a carton of cream, another of fresh milk, and a can of frozen orange juice. He opens the can with an electric can opener and mixes the contents with several cans of cold water. Then the orange juice is ready, and Dick and his wife can begin breakfast. During breakfast, they sometimes watch the morning news program on television.
4. After breakfast Dick gets the car out of the garage, and his wife drives him to the railroad station. The station is crowded with other commuters like himself, people who must travel 30 or even 50 miles to the city and back every day. Some are reading the morning paper:

on schedule *at the set time*

whipped open *opened quickly*

bank of elevators *several*
up *elevators side by side*
 upward bound

more urgent points *matters*
 requiring attention at once
a matter of routine *a usual*
 thing to do

Once *when*

muffled *not very clear*

others are talking with one another, waiting nervously for the train. If the train is late, their routine, timed to the minute, could easily be upset. But exactly on schedule, the train arrives at the station. Forty-five minutes later it arrives in the city, still on schedule.

5. With the other commuters, Dick hurries from the train into the station. As he nears the door, it is whipped open by an electric eye, and he passes through into the waiting room. A moment later he steps onto a moving stairway that takes him rapidly up to the street level. Buses and taxis are everywhere, but because Dick's office is only four blocks away, he always walks.

6. Soon he is inside the sixty-story skyscraper where his company has offices. At a long bank of elevators he waits until a green light flashes for an up car, then steps inside. He pushes the button for the fortieth floor, the door closes, and the car rises smoothly and noiselessly.

7. When the elevator reaches the fortieth floor, the door again slides open, and Dick steps into the familiar hall with its early-morning quiet, and hurries to his office. He turns on the lights and is soon at work. There is much to be done before the clerks and secretaries begin to arrive.

8. An hour later the day's routine begins with the arrival of the mail. As he reads it, he usually takes notes, and on the more urgent points picks up the telephone and calls other departments in the building and other businesses in New York. It is a matter of routine for Dick to call the company's offices in Chicago and San Francisco, and sometimes even to call its representatives in London and Paris. Once he has the information he needs, he dictates letters into a recording machine for his secretary to type and return to him later for his signature.

9. At times Dick is aware of the workers in the outer office answering telephones, typing letters, and filing papers. From a room next door he hears the even clicking of a machine that is duplicating copies of schedules and instruction sheets. Other machines are taking pictures of important letters and documents and producing many copies in a few minutes. From a special office nearby comes the hum of an electronic computer, which is recording orders, billing customers, and making out the company payroll.

10. Often Dick is also aware of other sounds, the more or less muffled traffic noises that come from the street down below—the honking of horns, the blowing of



Werner Wolff/Black Star

A dictating machine in use

whistles, the screeching of brakes. These are curiously mixed with the clang of hammers and riveting machines and with the shouts of the workmen putting up a new skyscraper next door. But Dick is used to noise—for the big city, a city of machines, must be a city of noise.

11. Although he is used to the noise, Dick usually looks forward to the end of the day, when he can return to his house in the quiet suburb. For relaxation he may mow the lawn with his power mower; or sometimes he repairs a piece of furniture with his electric tools. He may help his young children build a pen for their pet rabbit. Or he may just sit in a comfortable chair watching television or listening to his favorite music on the record player.

12. In the office or at home, machines are a part of the Mallorys' life. Like many other city people, they would find it hard to live without machines.

COMPREHENSION

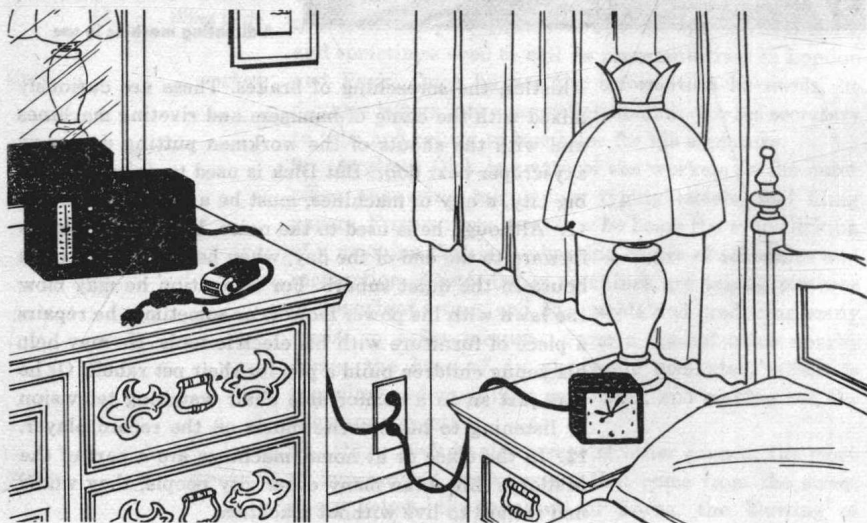
Yes-No Questions

1. Is Dick a book publisher? Yes, he is.
2. Is his office in a skyscraper? _____
3. Is the skyscraper in Chicago? _____
4. Does Dick live in a suburb? _____
5. Is the suburb 10 miles from the city? _____
6. Is Dick's life tied to machines? _____
7. Is Dick awakened by the paperboy? _____
8. Does he listen to the morning news? _____
9. Is the radio beside his bed? _____
10. Does he use an electric shaver? _____

Or Questions

1. Is Dick a salesman or a book publisher? He's a
2. Is his office on the thirtieth floor or the fortieth floor? _____
3. Does Dick live in a white house or a red house? _____
4. Is the suburb quiet or noisy? _____
5. Does Dick go to the railroad station by bus or by car? _____
6. Is the station deserted or crowded with commuters? _____
7. Does the train arrive late or on schedule? _____
8. Does Dick take a taxi to his office or does he walk? _____
9. Is his office building forty or sixty stories high? _____
10. Does Dick hurry to his office or does he take his time? _____

Alarm clock, razor, and radio—all run by electricity



Wh Questions

1. How is Dick awakened? He's awakened by _____.
2. How does he silence the alarm? _____.
3. What does he turn on after he wakes up? _____.
4. Why does he turn on the radio? _____.
5. What device opens the station door for Dick? _____.
6. What machine carries him up to street level? _____.
7. What must Dick do to get to the fortieth floor? _____.
8. What does he use the telephone for? _____.
9. What machine helps him to write letters? _____.
10. What machine records orders, bills customers, and makes out the company payroll? _____.

Contradiction and Comment

First contradict the statement. Then supply a comment that explains why the statement is incorrect. Refer to the reading whenever you need to.

MODEL Dick walks to the station.

No, he doesn't. His wife drives him there.

1. Dick Mallory is an engineer. No, he isn't. He's a _____.
2. His office is in Chicago. _____.
3. Dick lives in New York City. _____.
4. Dick works in the suburbs. _____.
5. Dick prepares breakfast. _____.
6. Dick drinks fresh orange juice. _____.
7. Commuters walk to work. _____.
8. The train arrived late. _____.
9. Dick could walk to work if he wanted to. _____.
10. Dick should walk upstairs to his office. _____.

MODEL Dick's wife doesn't drive a car.

Yes, she does. She drives him to the railroad station.

11. Dick doesn't walk from the station to his office. Yes, he does. His office _____.
12. Dick doesn't depend on elevators. _____.
13. Dick doesn't make long distance calls. _____.
14. Dick doesn't dictate letters. _____.
15. The copying machines aren't fast. _____.
16. The big city isn't noisy. _____.
17. Dick can't mow the lawn. _____.
18. Dick can't repair furniture. _____.
19. Dick's children don't have any pets. _____.
20. Machines aren't a necessary part of the Mallorys' life. _____.

Toward Interpretation

1. What are some of the machines that Dick Mallory uses at home? What machines does he use to get to work? What machines does he use at work?
2. What source of power do most of the machines use? Are they quiet or noisy?
3. Name some machines useful for relaxation and pleasure.

You and Your Machines

1. What machines do you depend on during a typical day? Does anyone in your family use machines that you do not ordinarily use yourself?
2. If the electrical power were suddenly cut off in Dick's city, how would his day be different? How would your day be different if the power you use failed?
3. If you could buy more machines, which ones do you think would be most useful to you? How would they be useful?

COMPOSITION

1. Notice that the entire reading is organized according to a time sequence: It takes Dick Mallory through a typical working day. Special time expressions are used to make this time sequence clear. In paragraph 2, the time expressions are "in a typical working day," "as," and "then." Find the time expressions used in paragraphs 4 and 8.
2. There are basically three types of time expressions: subordinating conjunctions, prepositional phrases, and adverbs of time. The latter two can be used as sentence connectors. (See the composition exercises for Lesson Five). Here are some of the subordinating conjunctions commonly used to indicate time relationships:

after	now that
as	once
as long as	since
as soon as	until, till
before	when
by the time (that)	whenever
every time (that)	while

The grammatical exercises at the end of this lesson provide practice with *when* and *while*, *before* and *after*, and *until* and *since*.

When the subordinate clause begins the sentence, it is usually followed by a comma. When the subordinate clause comes at the end of the sentence, there is no comma. Look at the use of the comma in the following sentences:

When you write, you should be careful of the punctuation.

You should be careful of the punctuation when you write.

Now turn to paragraph 7 and observe the punctuation in the first and last sentences. The *when* clause begins the first sentence, and so there is a comma after "floor," the last word of that clause. In the last sentence the *before* clause comes at the end, and

so it is not set off by a comma. Rewrite these two sentences so that the *when* clause comes at the end and the *before* clause comes at the beginning. Remember to change the punctuation. Now write some sentences of your own using any of the subordinating conjunctions in the list above.

Time Clause First

1. After I come home from school, I change my clothes.
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Time Clause Last

6. I have stopped smoking since I read reports of the medical research.
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

3. Here are some of the prepositions commonly used in phrases that refer to time:

after (breakfast)	at (ten o'clock)	during (lunch time)
before (breakfast)	in (January)	from ... to (Monday ... Friday)
	on (January 1st)	for (two hours)
		since (yesterday)
		until (tomorrow)

Prepositions are usually followed by nouns, as in the examples above. When a verb follows a preposition, it must be in the *-ing* form: for example, *after opening the mail, before going to bed*. When the *-ing* form of a verb is used as a noun, it is called a *gerund*. Look at paragraph 3: There are four *-ing* forms in the paragraph, but only one of them is a gerund. Which one is it?

Now write six sentences which begin with a prepositional gerund phrase such as *after dressing*. Look carefully at the models below and note the comma at the end of the phrase. For sentences 1 and 4 you can check the reading for the correct verb; for the others you can use your own imagination.

MODELS After dressing, Dick goes to the kitchen.

Before eating breakfast, Dick shaves in the bathroom.

1. After _____ the company's offices in Chicago, Dick dictates letters into a recording machine.
2. After _____, I do my homework.
3. After _____,
4. Before _____ other departments, Dick reads the mail.
5. Before _____, I read the newspaper.
6. Before _____,

4. Here are some of the common adverbs (or adverbial phrases) used to express time:

soon	at times	(a week) ago
later	every (day, month)	last (week)
next	again	
then		

Among the most common frequency adverbs are the following:

always	never	sometimes
ever	often	still
frequently	rarely	usually
	seldom	

Go through the reading and see how many of them you can find.

5. Now write a story of your own typical day, making liberal use of the time expressions that occur in the reading and in the preceding lists. You might begin your story with one of the following phrases:

In a typical working day ...

In a typical school day ...

GRAMMAR

Clauses with *when* and *while*

1.1 Combine the paired sentences by using *when* or *while*. Remember that *when* means something like "at that moment," and *while* means something like "during that time." Follow the appropriate model below.

SITUATION One day Dick drove his car to work.

MODELS He got in the car.

He put the key in the ignition.

When he got in the car, he put the key in the ignition.

The motor was warming up.

He checked the gas gauge.

While the motor was warming up, he checked the gas gauge.

1. He turned the corner.

He saw a traffic light ahead.

When he turned the corner, he saw

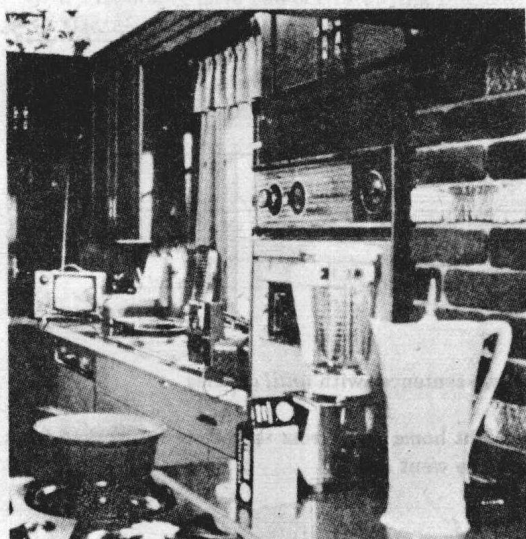
2. He got to the traffic light.

It turned red.

3. He saw the red light.

He stopped the car.

4. He was waiting for the light to change.
He turned on the car radio.
5. He was driving to work.
He listened to the news.
6. He was two blocks away from his office.
He got caught in a traffic jam.
7. He finally arrived at his office.
He was two hours late.
8. He was eating his lunch.
He began to wonder what the traffic would be like after work.
9. He went to get his car.
He saw that it had a flat tire.
10. The tire was being fixed.
He read the evening paper.
11. He got home.
He was tired.
12. His wife was getting dinner.
He watched television.



National Wildlife Magazine

A kitchen with many electric appliances