

3A The truth about air travel

1 READING

- a Read the text once. What did the four incidents have in common?
- A They all happened before the plane took off.
 - B They all happened during the flight.
 - C They all happened during the summer.
 - D None of the above.
- b Read the text again and complete it with the missing sentences. There is one sentence you do not have to use.
- A Unfortunately, they did this incredibly slowly, and no planes could take off until they had completed their journey.
 - B Somehow, the animals managed to open the box and jump out of the hold of the plane onto the runway.
 - C The pilot spoke to the passengers, who were very angry, to try to calm them down.
 - D The cancellation announcement was made when the 169 passengers were waiting to board at the gate.
 - E However, there was thick fog at the time, and so the flight was diverted to Liege in Belgium, about 300 km away.
- c Look at the highlighted words and phrases in the text and try to work out their meaning. Then match them to definitions 1–7.
- 1 arrive _____
 - 2 the part of an aircraft where goods are stored _____
 - 3 something that you can choose to do _____
 - 4 incidents that make it difficult for something to continue in the normal way _____
 - 5 arranged to be done at a particular time _____
 - 6 a period of time worked by a group of workers who start work as another group finishes _____
 - 7 get off an aircraft _____

Why are we waiting?

The normal excuses for flight delays are bad weather, strikes, or technical faults, but sometimes problems are caused by more unexpected events. Below are some of the most unusual reasons for flight disruptions at the world's airports.

Where's the pilot?

In November 2011, an Air India flight had to be cancelled in southern India because there was no one to fly the plane. ¹ _____ The pilot who was supposed to fly the plane refused to do so because he had already completed his shift. The airline called someone to substitute for him, but the second pilot did not turn up. In the end, half of the passengers took a different Air India flight and the rest had to travel on a different airline.



Love is in the air

Last year, services were disrupted at New York's JFK Airport by a group of lovesick turtles. It seems that the turtles wanted to get from the area where they had been feeding to their breeding grounds, so they had no other option but to cross the runway. ² _____ Airport authorities say that this is not the first time that flights have been delayed by the turtles, but they can never predict exactly when the crossing will take place.



Passenger protest

In November 2010, Ryanair's flight schedule was interrupted by a protest by the people on board. Most of them were French tourists who had been on holiday in Morocco. The flight had already been delayed for three hours before it left Fez, Morocco, and so everyone was looking forward to arriving at Paris, Beauvais Airport. ³ _____ When the plane landed, about 100 passengers demanded to be flown to Paris and refused to disembark. About four hours later, they were finally persuaded to leave the plane and board the coaches that would take them to Paris.



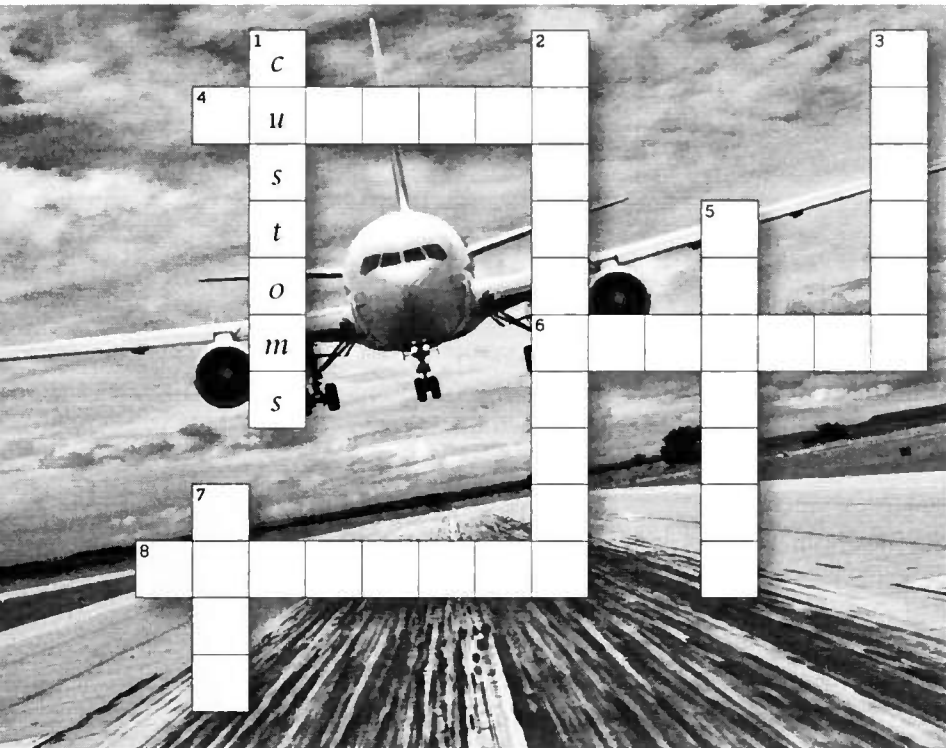
The great escape

In December 2009, a Continental Airlines flight was delayed in Houston, USA, because two animals had got out of their box in the hold. The animals were sea otters, a marine mammal with dense fur that lives in the North and East Pacific ocean. ⁴ _____ Passengers had to wait 80 minutes for the sea otters to be caught before their plane could take off. Their flight was scheduled to leave for Columbus, Ohio, at 7.55 pm, but they did not take off until 9.15 pm.



2 VOCABULARY air travel

a Complete the crossword.



- All of the passengers on our flight were stopped at... for their bags to be checked.
- After we'd checked in, we went through to...to find the right gate.
- We could see our plane on the...while we were waiting to board.
- When I went to pick up my..., I found that one bag hadn't arrived.
- My first flight was...for two hours so I missed my connecting flight.
- Our suitcases were really heavy, so we went to find a... to put them on.
- The cabin...were very efficient when we had to make an emergency landing.
- When I got to the airport, I went straight to...to see if my mother's flight had landed yet.

b Complete the text with suitable words.

The worst journey I ever had was when I flew to New York last year. I arrived at the ¹terminal _____ in plenty of time, but when I got to the ²ch_____ - _____ desk, there was an enormous queue. By the time it was my turn, there were no ³a_____ seats left, so I had to sit in the middle of a row. I showed my ID card to the man at passport control and then I went to ⁴s_____ where I had my scissors confiscated. My ⁵fl_____ was already boarding as soon as I arrived at the departure lounge, and I had to run to reach the gate in time. I sat next to a small child who screamed loudly when we ⁶t_____ _____, and didn't stop screaming for the next two hours. The weather over the Atlantic was terrible and we experienced a lot of ⁷t_____. I was so relieved when we finally landed in New York. The worst thing was that when I went to baggage reclaim to ⁸p_____ _____ my luggage, I was told that my suitcase hadn't arrived. I spent my first two days in New York with no clothes!

3 MINI GRAMMAR so / such...that

Circle the correct answer.



- 1 Her suitcase was so / such heavy that she couldn't pick it up.



- 2 I've never had such / such a bumpy flight – there was a lot of turbulence.



- 3 This is the first time we've had a so long / such a long delay at the airport.



- 4 The terminal was so / such crowded that we couldn't find a trolley for our cases.



- 5 There was so much / so many traffic that we nearly missed our flight.



- 6 There were so / such a lot of people at the airport because it was the first day of the summer holidays.

4 GRAMMAR past perfect continuous, narrative tenses

a Circle the correct verb form. Tick (✓) if both are correct.

- Tim's suitcase was really heavy because he had packed / had been packing all of his camera equipment.
- Jess was fed up because she had waited / had been waiting for three hours for her flight to board.
- I had been sitting / had sat in departures for 20 minutes when I realized my flight was already boarding.
- After I had picked up / had been picking up my luggage, I took a taxi to my hotel.
- The kids were bored because we had stood / had been standing in line at check-in for over an hour.
- My flight arrived late because it hadn't taken off / hadn't been taking off on time.