What do you do if you have a boring job in a restaurant, serving fast food to people who have no time to eat? Smile, and do your best? Perhaps it's better to find a place where time doesn't matter so much.

What if you dream of travelling to other countries, but your friends just laugh? Do you stay at home with them? Or do you decide to be more adventurous?

Perhaps you hear that someone has bought the last bag of salt in town. Do you buy a bag from him at a high price? Or try to make him give you a bag?

Our world is full of these kinds of problems. They make life interesting, and sometimes very funny. These five short plays show people trying to decide what to do in unexpected or difficult situations.

Cover Illustration by Rob Davis

Stage 1 Playscripts

Oxford Bookworms Playscripts are designed both for reading and performing. Each play offers the opportunity to learn and practise language in an imaginative and dynamic way.
FIVE SHORT PLAYS

Stage 1

It's not always easy to know the right thing to do. For the people in these five short plays, life can be difficult and sometimes very funny.

Harry and his friends are fed up because they haven't got any money. But Harry has a plan to change all this. It's a good plan, but even the best plans can go badly wrong...

'Listen,' says Ron, 'My friend over there has got a gun. Give me the money! Give it to me now!'

'What money?' the woman answers. 'I'm sorry, this is not a bank. This is a library.'

Sid and Ron must steal something, but it isn't easy to rob a library. The woman happily gives them library cards so they can borrow books, and not steal them. In fact, she's very pleased to help...

Things are often more difficult than they seem. But as in all these plays, people are often more interesting, and much funnier, when they're trying to do the right thing.

Martyn Ford, the author of these plays, is a writer, teacher, actor and illustrator, who lives and works in Brighton, on the south coast of England.

OXFORD BOOKWORMS PLAYSSCRIPTS
Series Editor: Clare West
OXFORD BOOKWORMS

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Bill Bolder (retold by Clare West)
A Ghost in Love and Other Plays
Michael Dean
The Murder of Mary Jane
Tom Vicary
Sherlock Holmes: Two Plays
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (retold by John Escott)

Stage 2
The Importance of Being Earnest
Oscar Wilde (retold by Susan Kingseley)
Much Ado About Nothing
William Shakespeare (retold by Alistair McCallum)
One Thousand Dollars and Other Plays
O. Henry (retold by John Escott)
Romeo and Juliet
William Shakespeare (retold by Alistair McCallum)

MARTYN FORD

Five Short Plays

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
INTRODUCTION

This play is about a group of five friends. They are fed up because they haven’t got any money. But this is all going to change soon. One of the group, Harry, has a plan – a very good plan.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

Harry
Sid
Wilf
Gladys
Ron

Three people reading in a library
Woman working in a library

PERFORMANCE NOTES

Scene 1: A room in the friends’ home. There are chairs and a table. Everything looks very old and dirty. Wilf and Gladys are drinking tea. Ron is looking out of the window. Sid is watching the television, but it is not working.

Scene 2: Inside a library. There is a woman sitting at a table. She works in the library. Three other people are standing or sitting, holding books in their hands and reading.

You will need a table, chairs, an old television, two library cards and some books.

The Robbery

SCENE 1
The plan

Harry comes into the room. His friends look up at him.

Harry Hello, everyone. What are you doing?
Sid Nothing, Harry, nothing! What can we do? We haven’t got any money.
Harry I know, I know. But it’s OK. I have some work for us. We can make a lot of money.
Wilf Work? But you don’t like work, Harry.
Harry Ah, but this work is different.
Gladys How, Harry? What are we going to do?
Harry We’re going to rob a bank.
Gladys Rob a bank? But how can we?
Harry I have a plan, a very good plan.
Wilf Which bank are we going to rob?
Harry The Capital Bank.
Wilf Which one is that?
Harry The one next to the library in the High Street.
Sid That’s a very big bank!
Harry Be quiet and listen. Now, I want Wilf to drive the car, and Gladys to stand outside the bank and watch the street.
The Robbery

HARRY Good. Now, Ron, I want you to go with Sid—
RON Yes, Harry, and then what?
HARRY Go to one of the bank workers and say, 'My friend has a gun. Give me the money!'
GLADYS What are you going to do, Harry?
HARRY I'm going to wait in the car with Wilf. Do you have any questions?
ALL No.
HARRY OK. So let's look at the plan again . . .

Scene 2
The robbery

Sid and Ron run into the library. The people there look up from their books.

SID Listen to me, all of you. This is a robbery. Don't move. I've got a gun in my pocket.
PEOPLE Oh, don't shoot! Please don't shoot! We don't want to die.
SID Nobody's going to die, but you must do what I say. (To Ron) Go on, Ron. What are you waiting for? Get the money! Quick!
Ron goes over to the woman who works there.
RON Listen, my friend over there has got a gun. Give me the money! Give it to me now!
WOMAN What money?
RON What do you mean, 'What money?' The money in
this bank, of course!
WOMAN I'm sorry, this is not a bank. This is a library.
RON What did you say -- a library?
WOMAN That's right. People come here to borrow books.
We don't have any money here.
RON Er, you don't have any money . . . Oh dear! . . .
Sid! Sid!
SID What? Have you got the money?
RON There isn't any money. It's not a bank, Sid. We're
not in a bank. This is a library!
SID A library?
RON That's right. They've only got books -- lots and
lots of books!
SID Books? Well, get some of those, then. We must
take something, or Harry's going to be angry.
RON (To the woman) Give me lots of books!
WOMAN Have you got a library card?
RON A card? No, I haven't.
WOMAN I'm sorry, you can't borrow books without a
library card.
RON Look, you don't understand, we're not borrowing
books, we're stealing them!
WOMAN I'm sorry, but you can't do that.
RON Sid, we can't steal books, she says.

SID I've got a gun. Tell her that!
RON My friend's got a gun and he knows how to shoot!
WOMAN Look, it's not a problem. I can give you and your
friend a library card. Then you can borrow the
books and not steal them. What are your names?
RON Oh, all right. I'm Ronald Savage, and he's Sidney
Dupree.
WOMAN (Writing) Ronald Savage . . . Sidney Dupree. And
what's your address?
Five Short Plays

RON  27 Dunfore Road, Hamley.

WOMAN  (Writing) 27 Dunfore Road, Hamley. Good, here you are. *(She gives Ron two library cards.)* Now you can borrow some books.

RON  But I don't know anything about reading. You must help me. Which books are best?

SID  Quick, Ron! I can't stand here much longer.

WOMAN  Here are some good books for you. *(She takes three books from the shelves.)* The Great Train Robbery, The Return of Sherlock Holmes, and The Adventures of Robin Hood. They're all very famous books.

RON  Oh, that's nice. They look interesting. Thanks.

SID  Ron, come on! Quick!

RON  It's OK, Sid, I've got the books.

SID  All right. *(To the people in the library)* We're going now, but don't move. Don't move or talk for five minutes.

PERSON 1  Can we read?

SID  Er, all right. But you must read quietly, OK?

RON  Come on, Sid! Let's go. Harry and the others are waiting.

WOMAN  Goodbye, and happy reading!

RON  Oh yes, thank you. All right, Sid. I'm coming.

They run out of the library.

PERSON 2  Oh dear! I was so afraid!

The Robbery

WOMAN  Oh, they weren't so bad. The one called Sid - he didn't really have a gun, you know.

PERSON 3  Perhaps. But they were robbers. They wanted to rob the bank!

WOMAN  *(Laughing)* Yes, but they came into the wrong building!

PERSON 1  Why do you look so pleased?

WOMAN  Well, it's important for everybody to read books - not just you and me, but everybody . . . even bank robbers!

PERSON 2  But you aren't going to get those books back, are you?

WOMAN  Oh yes, I am. Remember, I've got their names and their address!

'Remember, I've got their names and their address!'
INTRODUCTION

In this play a man is lying in the street. Three different people stop and look. Perhaps the man needs help. But they don't know him, so it's not their problem, is it? Then a woman in blue arrives and suddenly things are different.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY

Patrick
Rebecca
David
Woman in blue
Michael Scott, a man lying in the street
Doctor
Nurse

PERFORMANCE NOTES

For this play you will need a small bottle of pills, a glass of water, blue clothes for the woman, a white coat for the doctor, and perhaps special clothes for the nurse.

The Right Thing to Do

A man is lying in the street. Rebecca is walking past. She stops and looks at him, then she looks around her - there is nobody there. She starts to walk away, stops, and goes back to look at the man again. Patrick walks past and stops to look at the man.

PATRICK What's the matter with him?
REBECCA I don't know.
PATRICK Is he dead?
REBECCA No, he's alive, I think.
PATRICK Are you going to help him?

"Is he dead?"
Five Short Plays

REBECCA Me? Why me?
PATRICK You were here first.
REBECCA Yes, I was, but—

**David comes in.**

DAVID What's the matter with him?
PATRICK We don't know.
DAVID He looks ill.
REBECCA His eyes are closed. Look!
DAVID Perhaps he's asleep.
REBECCA Asleep? In the street?
PATRICK Wake him up then.
DAVID Why me? You do it.
PATRICK (To Rebecca) What about you?
REBECCA Me?
PATRICK Yes. You were here first.
REBECCA Yes, but it's not my problem.
DAVID And it's not my problem!

*A woman in blue comes in. She kneels down at once to help the man.*

REBECCA Hey, what are you doing?
WOMAN I'm helping this man, of course!
DAVID Are you a doctor?
WOMAN No, I'm not, but he needs help.
REBECCA Do you know him?
WOMAN No, I don't.
REBECCA Then he's not your problem.

'Go and call an ambulance.'

WOMAN Oh, be quiet!
REBECCA (To the others) Did you hear that? She said, 'Be quiet!'
WOMAN Be quiet and help.
REBECCA She said it again!
WOMAN (To David) Go and call an ambulance.
DAVID Me?
WOMAN Yes, you. And be quick.
DAVID But—
WOMAN Be quick! (David goes away.) Now you— (turning to Rebecca) go and get some water.
REBECCA Where from?
WOMAN From that house over there. Don't look at me like that. Go!
REBECCA I'm going. (Rebecca goes away.)
woman (To Patrick) Feel his pulse.
patrick But I—
woman Go on! Feel his pulse.
patrick (Kneeling down and taking the man’s pulse) Well,
    he’s still alive. He’s saying something!
woman What is he saying?
patrick He said, ‘Pills,’ I think.
woman (To Patrick) Pills? Look in his pocket.
patrick I can’t do that!
woman Look in his pocket!
Patrick looks in the man’s coat pocket.
patrick There’s a bottle with some writing on it.
woman What does it say? Read it!
patrick It says, ‘For the heart. If you feel ill, take one of
    these pills.’
rebecca comes back with a glass of water.
rebecca I’ve got the water.
woman Good. (To Patrick) Give him one of the pills with
    some water.
Patrick helps the man to sit up. He gives him a pill and
    some water.
man  (Very quietly) Thank you, thank you!
patrick How do you feel?
man   A little better now.
The woman in blue goes away. The others do not see
    this. David comes running back.

david The ambulance is coming.
patrick Good.
david How is he?
rebecca He’s feeling a little better.

* A doctor and a nurse come in. Patrick stands up.
* doctor (Kneeling down by the man) What’s the matter?
* man   I was ill. It was my heart. That man gave me one
    of my pills. I’m all right now.

* The doctor and the nurse help him to stand up.
nurse  What’s your name?
man    Scott. Michael Scott.
doctor  Michael Scott, the famous TV chef?

‘What’s the matter?’
MAN Yes, that's right.
NURSE Come with us, Mr Scott. We'd like to take you to hospital.
MAN But I feel better now.
NURSE Perhaps, but you must go to hospital.
MAN All right. *(Turning to the others)* Well, thank you very much, everybody.
DAVID That's all right.
REBECCA We're happy to help.
PATRICK Get well soon.
MAN Thank you again. Goodbye!
*The doctor and the nurse help Scott to walk away.*
REBECCA He's alive, and he's going to be OK.
PATRICK He's alive because we were here.
DAVID Michael Scott—
REBECCA The famous TV chef!
PATRICK We can all feel very pleased, I think.
REBECCA Oh yes, we can.
DAVID What about the woman?
REBECCA Which woman?
DAVID The woman who helped. Where is she?
PATRICK Oh, her! I remember. She didn't help us.
DAVID 'Do this, do that,' she said. 'Be quick!'
REBECCA She said, 'Be quiet,' to me.
PATRICK That's right. I didn't like her. Did you?
REBECCA No, I didn't. Where is she now?

"Well done, everybody!"

PATRICK She walked away.
DAVID That's right — she just walked away. She didn't want to help.
REBECCA We did everything.
DAVID Yeah. Everything.
PATRICK Today was an important day for us.
DAVID It was. We helped someone famous.
REBECCA Because of us he didn't die.
DAVID We were there for him.
PATRICK It was the right thing to do.
REBECCA Yes, it was. Well done, everybody!
DAVID *(To Rebecca)* And well done to you—
PATRICK Well done to all of us!
INTRODUCTION
This play is about a young person who wants to change his life. Chris would like to see new places and learn new things, but the older people in his life don't like his plan. They can only see problems. Chris finds that he, too, is a little afraid of change.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY
Chris, a young person who wants to travel
Cox
Mills
Harris
Dean
Wright

five of Chris's friends, all older than him

PERFORMANCE NOTES
At the beginning of the play Chris's friends are in a room. Cox is reading a book, Mills and Harris are talking quietly to each other, and Wright and Dean are looking out of a window.

You will need six chairs, a book, a bag and a map.

Canada Can Wait

Cox, Mills and Harris are sitting in a room. Dean and Wright are standing by a window. Chris comes in.

CHRISS (Smiling) Well, goodbye, everyone.
COX (Putting down his book) Are you going?
CHRISS Yes, I must.
MILLS When are you going?
CHRISS Now.

"Well, goodbye, everyone."
Five Short Plays

COX  Now? So soon?
MILLS  Don’t go!
CHRIS  But I must. I need a change.
HARRIS  What are you going to do?
CHRIS  I’d like to travel for a time.
HARRIS  Travel? How wonderful!
DEAN  Yeah, think of us when you’re travelling.
COX  Yes, think of us – we have to stay here.
MILLS  It’s the same old thing, day after day—
HARRIS  The same old faces.
WRIGHT  The same old problems.
MILLS  Nothing different for us!
DEAN  But someone has to do it.
COX  Yes, that’s right. We can’t all go!
CHRIS  Why not? You can travel too.
COX  Us? (He laughs.)
MILLS  How can we travel?
HARRIS  We have things to do here.
CHRIS  What things?
WRIGHT  He says, ‘What things?’
DEAN  What a question!
COX  (To the others) He’s tired of us.
CHRIS  No, I’m not. I’m not tired of you. I’m happy here.
MILLS  Are you?
CHRIS  Well, I was happy here. It’s a good place, and I—
HARRIS  Yes?

‘Spain, perhaps, or Greece . . .’

CHRIS  Well, I like you. I’m one of you – one of the group.
WRIGHT  That’s nice.
DEAN  So where would you like to go?
CHRIS  I don’t know. Spain, perhaps, or Greece . . .
     maybe even Canada—
COX  Canada?
CHRIS  Yes. I’m very interested in Canada.
MILLS  Canada, well!
HARRIS  That’s interesting.
WRIGHT  You’re very adventurous, Chris.
COX  We’re not adventurous at all, I’m afraid.
DEAN  But then you’re young—
'The lakes and the forests...'

COX You have your life in front of you.
MILLS You want to see exciting places—
HARRIS Like Canada!
WRIGHT The lakes and the forests...
COX The great St. Lawrence River...
DEAN How wonderful!
COX Lucky Chris!
MILLS It's different for us. We have to stay here. We can't go to Canada.
HARRIS 'I'm one of you,' you said, 'one of the group.' But you're not!

DEAN No, Chris, you're different from us—
CHRIS No, I'm not! Stop talking like this. I'm not different from you. Sometimes I'm happy, sometimes I'm not. I work and eat and sleep, like you.
MILLS Ah, but you are going away—
HARRIS And we are staying here.
WRIGHT And that makes you different.
CHRIS I'm not different!
COX But what about Canada?
CHRIS Stop talking about Canada! I'm not going to Canada—I'd like to go there, that's all!
COX So you aren't going there now?
CHRIS I don't know. Perhaps. I need some time to think about my life.
WRIGHT Oh, yes.
DEAN Everyone does.
MILLS It's usual for people to do that.
HARRIS And there's lots of time. You're young.
CHRIS That's right. I have my life in front of me.
HARRIS So, take your time.
CHRIS Right.
WRIGHT You can stay here as long as you like—
DEAN And think about it.
CHRIS Yeah. (He sits down.)
ALL Mmm...

Everyone is quiet for a moment.
Five Short Plays

cox So what are you going to do?
chris Sorry?
mills Are you leaving today?
chris Leaving? Er, not today. I want to think about it first.
mills Of course.
harris When are you going, then?
chris Well, not now. Later, perhaps. I can stay here a bit longer. There’s lots of time. (Laughing) Canada can wait, can’t it?
wright Yes, it can. It certainly can!
dean You’re one of us really, aren’t you, one of the group?
chris Yes, I am, I think.
cox (Laughing) But, you know, you say—
chris Yes? Say what?
cox Well, you say some funny things sometimes!
chris Like what?
cox Well, Canada!
cox, mills, harris, dean and wright all laugh.
chris (Looking at them) What’s so funny about that?
mills (Laughing quietly) It doesn’t matter.
harris Forget it.
cox Look at the time—I must go!
mills Me too. I have a lot to do.
harris And me.

Canada Can Wait

wright Let’s all go.
dean Yes, let’s leave Chris with his dreams—
cox About Canada!
they all laugh at chris.
cox See you later, Chris.
all Bye-bye.
cox (To chris) Bye-bye, traveller!
chris’s friends laugh, and then go out. Chris stands and watches them go. He doesn’t look happy. He opens his bag and takes out a large map. He opens the map on the floor and looks at it carefully.

chris Thailand... Malaysia... Indonesia... Australia... (He looks up, smiling.) Mmm, Australia!

‘Mmm, Australia!’
INTRODUCTION
A man goes into a grocery store and buys a lot of salt. At first the other people in the store can't understand why. Then they hear his story, and they all want to buy salt too.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY
Shopkeeper, a person who owns a small grocery store
Groot
Nello
Durg
Spratly
Manra, a truck driver

four people in the grocery store

PERFORMANCE NOTES
Scene 1: In a small grocery store.
Scene 2: In a street, some hours later.

You will need ten bags of salt, and a small cart on wheels. You will need the noise of a truck stopping suddenly, but we do not see the truck.

Salt

SCENE 1
No more salt

In a small grocery store, Groot is asking the shopkeeper for something. The others are waiting behind him.

Groot I'd like ten bags of salt, please.
Shopkeeper Ten? Of course. That's ten dollars, please.
Groot Here you are.
Shopkeeper Can I help you with all that?
Groot No, thanks. I have this cart.
Shopkeeper Ten bags. That's a lot of salt.
Groot Yes. Salt is very important, you know.
Shopkeeper It is. But why do you need ten bags?
Groot Soon there isn't going to be enough salt in the world. I saw it on television.
Shopkeeper Not enough salt? Really?
Groot It's true. So I'm buying some now. Goodbye! He goes out with his cart.
Nello Did you hear that?
Durg Yeah, there isn't enough salt in the world.
Spratly Not enough salt? That isn't true.
Nello But he saw it on television. Soon there isn't going to be any in the stores.
Salt

SHOPKEEPER That’s your problem. It’s six o’clock – time to close the store. I’m going home.
NELLO But what about our salt?
SHOPKEEPER Look, there’s a lot of salt in the world – enough for everybody. Goodbye!
They all go out.

Scene 2

We want salt!

Spratly finds Groot standing in a street with his cart.

SPRATLY Excuse me, I want to buy some salt.
GROOT Sorry? What did you say?
SPRATLY I know about the problem.
GROOT What problem? What are you talking about?
SPRATLY Soon there isn’t going to be enough salt.
GROOT Oh, you heard about that?
SPRATLY Yes, and I want some salt.
GROOT Then go to a grocery store and buy some.
SPRATLY I can’t find any. Every time I ask, the shopkeeper says, ‘Sorry, no more salt.’
GROOT Oh dear!
SPRATLY But you have some. You bought ten large bags – I saw you.
GROOT I’m sorry, but I’m not selling my salt.
GROOT There's a problem.
DURG I know. It was on television. Everybody is talking about it. Listen, I must have some salt.
GROOT Sorry, I can't help you.
DURG But I need it for my family. Please!
GROOT All right, all right, but it's . . . er . . . a hundred dollars a bag.
DURG Oh no!
GROOT I told you—everybody wants salt. Well?
DURG Oh, all right, then. Give me four bags.
GROOT Four? Good! You understand the world, my friend. I see it in your face.
DURG Here's the money.
GROOT And here's your salt! Goodbye.

Durg goes out. Nello comes in.

NELLO Hey, you, stop!
GROOT Are you talking to me?
NELLO Yes, you were in the grocery store—
GROOT Was I? Perhaps. I go into a lot of grocery stores.
NELLO You bought all the salt in the store!
GROOT Well, there's a problem, you know.
NELLO Yes, there is—and it's all because of you!
GROOT That's not true!
NELLO I met Spratly just now. He tried to sell me a bag of salt for five hundred dollars!
GROOT That's too much.
Five Short Plays

NELLO  Of course it is— I know your plan! You go from store to store. You buy all the salt, and sell it for a lot more money!

GROOT  OK, it's true— I buy and sell salt— that's not wrong.

NELLO  Then sell some to me.

GROOT  No, I don't want to.

NELLO  *(Holding him, angrily)* Listen, I'm going to buy, and you're going to sell. *(Shouting)* Do you understand?

GROOT  But I've only got one bag left.

NELLO  *(Angrily)* Give it to me, then!

GROOT  It's two hundred dollars. Well, OK, you can have it for a hundred and fifty. But let me go!

NELLO  *(Shouting)* Give it to me!

GROOT  No, give me the money first. Now let me go! Oh, help! Help!

Groot runs out. We hear a truck stop suddenly, and Groot cries out. The driver, Manra, comes in, helping Groot to walk.

MANRA  He ran in front of my truck. I didn't see—

NELLO  You didn't do anything wrong. It was an accident.

MANRA  But why did he run across the street without looking?

NELLO  I was angry with him. So he ran away.

MANRA  *(To Groot)* How do you feel?

GROOT  *(Holding his leg)* Oh, my leg! My leg hurts. I think it's—

NELLO  He's OK, I think.

MANRA  Wait a minute, what's this in the street?

NELLO  It's salt. He had a bag of salt and I wanted it.

MANRA  Salt? Well, that's interesting! I'm carrying salt on my truck— bags and bags of it!

NELLO  Salt? Oh no! *(He laughs.)*

MANRA  Why are you laughing?

NELLO  It doesn't matter. I can't tell you now.

MANRA  Then you can tell that policeman. Look, he's coming across the street now. He saw the accident, I think!
INTRODUCTION
Maggie works in a fast-food restaurant. People come here to buy food when they haven’t got much time. The restaurant sells ‘fast food’—things like pizza, burgers, chicken and sandwiches. Five angry people are waiting for their food.

CHARACTERS IN THE PLAY
Maggie, a young woman who works in a fast-food restaurant
Two men   } people who want to buy some food to eat
Three women

PERFORMANCE NOTES
In the window there is a sign saying, ‘Fast Food’. There are some tables and chairs, and a large high counter. Maggie is standing behind this counter. The people in the restaurant are standing in front of it. They are wearing outdoor clothes. Maggie is wearing work clothes. She also needs a bag.

Slow Food

MAN 1 Excuse me, is my food ready?
MAGGIE What did you ask for?
MAN 1 I asked for chicken.
MAGGIE Er, let’s see. Another five minutes.
MAN 1 Five minutes?
MAGGIE Sorry, ten minutes.
MAN 1 Ten? That’s no good! I must go back to my office in ten minutes.
MAN 2 And what about my food? I asked for a burger and French fries fifteen minutes ago!

'I asked for a burger and French fries fifteen minutes ago!'
MAGGIE I'm sorry, but there are a lot of people eating here today.
MAN 2 But how long is it going to take? My train leaves in forty minutes.
MAGGIE Not long. I'm very sorry.
WOMAN 1 Excuse me, I was before these men. Where is my coffee?
WOMAN 2 And what about me? I asked for a sandwich and a coke half an hour ago.
WOMAN 3 Well, I'm before all of you. I asked for a pizza forty-five minutes ago.
MAN 1 Look here, in your window it says, 'Fast food'.
MAGGIE Yes, it does.
MAN 1 Then why is it so slow?
MAGGIE It isn't slow. But people today want everything faster and faster——
MAN 1 What are you talking about?
WOMAN 1 Look, I can't wait. I have to get back to work.
WOMAN 2 And I have a meeting. I'm late.
MAN 2 Time is money, you know!
WOMAN 3 Where's my pizza?
WOMAN 1 Where's my coffee?
MAN 1 What about my chicken?
PEOPLE We want our food!
MAGGIE Please, everybody! Please! Your food is coming. He's doing it now.

'We want our food!'

PEOPLE He?
MAGGIE Sorry, they. The chefs are doing it now.
MAN 2 How many chefs have you got?
MAGGIE Oh, lots.
WOMAN 2 How many?
MAGGIE Some.
WOMAN 1 How many exactly? Tell us!
MAGGIE Er, twelve.
WOMAN 3 Your restaurant has twelve chefs?
MAGGIE Well, no, not now. We had one in January, one in February, one in March — one every month for the last year. That makes twelve.
WOMAN 3 Well, where are they now?
Maggie: They all stopped working here.
Woman 1: Why did they leave?
Maggie: Because it was too fast for them.
Man 2: And how many chefs have you got now?
Maggie: Well, er... one.
People: One!
Maggie: No, sorry. That’s wrong—
Man 1: I’m happy to hear it!
Maggie: We haven’t got any.
People: What?
Maggie: That’s right. There’s only me here. Our last chef left yesterday. He was fed up with fast food.
Man 2: Fed up?

Slow Food

Maggie: Yes. He said to me, ‘That’s it! Enough! No more fast food for me! I’m going!’ And he went.
Woman 2: But what about our—
Maggie: And do you know? I’m fed up too. Yes, I’m really, really fed up. Fast chicken, fast burgers, fast French fries, fast coke, fast coffee, fast talking, fast walking, fast eating, fast sleeping, fast living, fast dying! I’m fed up with it all!
Woman 1: But who is going to—
Maggie: What’s the matter with everybody these days? Why is everything so fast? Come here. (Maggie walks to the window.) Come on! (The people all go to the window.) Look outside. Go on, look! It’s a beautiful day. Life is beautiful. We can all be happy. But first we must slow down. We must take the time to live.
Man 1: Live? But we have to work!
Woman 3: We have lots to do.
Woman 1: And we want food.
Man 2: We want fast food—
Woman 1: Not slow food!
Woman 2: We haven’t got time to—
Maggie: Time! Time! Time! Don’t talk to me about time. You don’t understand it. You — oh, it’s no good, you’re not listening to me.
She takes off her work clothes and picks up a bag.
**Five Short Plays**

**WOMAN 3** Hey, where are you going?
**MAGGIE** I’m going out. I’m going to sit in the sun. I’m going to look at the sky and listen to the sea. I’m going to do nothing ... slowly!

**WOMAN 1** But what about our food?
**MAN 2** What about my burger?
**MAGGIE** You can do it!
**MAN 2** What did you say?
**MAGGIE** I said, you can do it. Behind me is the kitchen. In the kitchen there’s a big bag of chicken and another bag of burgers. You can do your own food, and you can do it as fast as you like. Goodbye!

**PEOPLE** But we don’t—
**MAGGIE** And have a nice day!

*She goes out.*

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**EXERCISES**

1. **A Checking your understanding**
   1. Choose the best question-word and answer these questions. **What** Who **Why**
   2. . . . thinks of the plan to rob the bank?
   3. . . . is the matter with Michael Scott?
   4. . . . does Chris want to travel?
   5. . . . buys four bags of salt at a hundred dollars a bag?
   6. . . . does Maggie leave the restaurant in the end?

2. **Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?**
   1. The woman working in the library is afraid of the robbers.
   2. The woman in blue wants to help the man lying in the street.
   3. The older people laugh at Chris and his dreams.
   4. In the end Chris wants to stay at home.
   5. Nello understands Groot’s plan to buy all the salt.
   6. Maggie likes fast food.

3. **Who said these words, in which play, and about what?**
   1. ‘You’re very adventurous.’
   2. ‘Oh, that’s nice. They look interesting. Thanks.’
   3. ‘But how long is it going to take? My train leaves in forty minutes.’
   4. ‘Can I help you with all that?’
   5. ‘We helped someone famous.’
   6. ‘You just put your hand in your pocket like this.’
   7. ‘Well, you say some funny things sometimes!’
   8. ‘What does it say? Read it!’

'We must take the time to live.'
B Working with language

1 Put together these beginnings and endings of sentences from the five plays.
   1 you must go into the bank
   2 I’m sorry, you can’t borrow books
   3 yeah, think of us
   4 to think about my life.
   5 if you feel ill,
   6 without a library card.
   7 I need some time
   8 take one of these pills.
   9 when you’re travelling.
  10 and you must speak to everyone there.

2 Use these words to join the sentences together.
   and because but so when
   1 The robbers didn’t steal any money. They went into the wrong building.
   2 Patrick helped the man to sit up. He gave him some water.
   3 The people in the restaurant wanted fast food. Maggie couldn’t help them.
   4 Chris began to feel happier. He looked at his map.
   5 Groot bought all the salt. He could get rich quickly.

C Activities
1 Write Nello’s conversation with the policeman about Groot’s accident.
2 Write a newspaper report to go with this headline:
   TV CHEF FOUND ILL IN STREET

D Project work
You are a student with a ‘free’ year and you can travel anywhere you like. Where do you want to go, and why?
What places do you want to see there? What are you going to do there? What must you take with you?

GLOSSARY

adventurous of someone who likes doing exciting and dangerous things
asleep of someone who is sleeping; not awake
bank a place that keeps money safe for people
borrow to take and use something that you are going to give back after a short time
buy (past tense bought) to give money to get something
counter a long high table in a shop or a restaurant that is between the people who work there and the people who want to buy things
dream a hope for something nice in the future
def fed up of someone who is not happy or who is bored because they have or do too much of something
funny of something that makes you laugh; of something that is not usual or is different
grocery store a building where people buy food and other small things for the home
group a number of people together
gun a thing that shoots out bullets to hurt or kill people
heart the thing inside the body that makes the blood go round
Glossary

kneel down (past tense knelt down) to go down on your knees
library a place where you go to borrow or read books
library card a piece of plastic from a library with your name on it; you use it to borrow books
nurse a person who helps people who are sick or hurt
pill a small, round, hard medicine that you swallow
pizza a round, flat, Italian bread
plan something that you are going to do, and how you are going to do it
problem something that is difficult
restaurant a place where people buy food and eat it
rob to take things that are not yours from a bank, train (or other places) or people
robbery taking things that are not yours from a bank, train (or other places) or people
salt white stuff that comes from sea water; we put it on food to make it taste better
sell (past tense sold) to give something to somebody who pays you money for it
shoot (past tense shot) to send a bullet from a gun to hurt or kill someone
steal (past tense stole) to take something that is not yours
take (past tense took) someone's pulse to feel the beating of the heart in the wrist (or the neck)
travel to visit other countries
TV chef a person who cooks food on television
wake up to stop sleeping
world where we all live; people live in lots of different countries in the world