

## Unit I: What Makes Us Human?

Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.

**Margaret Mead** (1901 -1987)  
 Anthropologist

On the whole human beings want to be good, but not too good, and not quite all the time.

**Georges Orwell** (1903 - 1950)  
 Author

### TENSE REVIEW

#### Check Your Tenses

Complete each sentence with a correct form of the verb above, simple or continuous, active or passive, positive or negative

#### Think

1. What are you thinking about? You look depressed.
2. Sorry, I shouldn't have said that. I \_\_\_\_\_ it would upset you so much.
3. Tom, I \_\_\_\_\_ maybe we should move house. What \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_?
4. He told me he couldn't give me an answer now. He said \_\_\_\_\_ about it.

#### See

1. Hi, Paula! How are you? I \_\_\_\_\_ for ages.
2. I can't make the meeting tomorrow - I \_\_\_\_\_ the doctor for a check-up.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ that? That guy nearly knocked the girl off her bike!
4. The police said the suspect \_\_\_\_\_ trying to board a plane at Birmingham airport.

#### Feel

1. How \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ about going to live in Australia? Are you still excited about it?
2. I'm not sure what's wrong with me. I \_\_\_\_\_ myself recently.
3. I'm sorry Mrs. Jones, but it \_\_\_\_\_ by the teacher that we have no option but to expel Tom.
4. Jack's exam is about to start. I can just imagine how he \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Spend

1. We \_\_\_\_\_ the whole holiday looking out at this rain. It's miserable.
2. How long \_\_\_\_\_ deciding which dress to wear? We have to leave in ten minutes.
3. Do you have any idea how much the government \_\_\_\_\_ so far on the new high-speed rail link?
4. I just wonder how much \_\_\_\_\_ by the time it's finally finished?

#### Find

1. How \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ the film? Was it as funny as the critics said?
2. She told me that she \_\_\_\_\_ it very difficult not to laugh in all wrong places.
3. He \_\_\_\_\_ have to lied time and time again to the police.
4. I think you \_\_\_\_\_ that it's too hot for you in Dubai in August.

#### Say

1. Well, as I \_\_\_\_\_ when I was so rudely interrupted, I think you're mistaken.
2. It \_\_\_\_\_ that no one will ever know the truth about what happen.
3. I \_\_\_\_\_ it again, Just as I \_\_\_\_\_ it many times before, you're not going to an all-night party.
4. There's something \_\_\_\_\_ for answering your emails immediately.

## Correcting Mistakes

There is one mistake in each of the sentences below. Find it and correct it.

1. Humans are unique among primates in that they are walking upright.
2. It's great to hear from you, Jill. What have you been doing since I've last seen you?
3. I hated school. Perhaps I'd have liked it if I was more popular.
4. Why haven't you told me that you don't like fruit cake?
5. I was going to go to the theatre last night but then I heard that the performance will be cancelled.
6. The forecast said unsettled, so take your umbrella in case it's raining.
7. His mother was putting him to bed early because he was being naughty.
8. I won't make your party I'm afraid – I'll visit my grandmother in Scotland.
9. If you're seeing Jane at the weekend, are you inviting her to my party please?
10. He wasn't thinking of celebrating his retirement but he's now deciding it's good idea.

## Active or Passive? Which sounds better?

The **passive** is used when:

- The subject is unknown.

*No one knows when music **was invented**.*

*My phone's **been stolen**!*

- We want to focus on the object of the sentence rather than the subject.

*Calls and songs **are used** by birds to communicate.*

*Hamlet **was written** by Shakespeare between 1599 and 1601.*

- We want to sound more impersonal and distance ourselves from the facts.

*500 workers **will have to be made** redundant.*

Most of the sentences below (but not all) would sound better in the passive. Decide which ones and rewrite them.

1. Someone built this bridge in 1897.

- 
2. A secretary has invited my grandfather to a garden party at Buckingham Palace.

- 
3. The invention of fire gave humans the ability to cook.

- 
4. Nobody must take reverence books from the library.

- 
5. Alexander Graham Bell was a scientist. He invented the telephone in 1876.

- 
6. They say a Bulgarian scientist has discovered a drug which prevents ageing.

- 
7. Someone wants you in reception immediately. They'll tell you what it's about.

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8. An avalanche buried eight people in Austria.
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9. People know him to be a very good judge of character.

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10. The police have finally recaptured the violent robber who has been on the run for a week.

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## READING

### Robots versus Humans

1. Read the article about the latest robot experiments. Choose the best summary of the text.

- a) A robot will one day be superior to humans.
- b) Humans have started to create robots that are more like humans.
- c) Robots are now developing human emotions.
- d) Robots are particularly good at competing with humans in the arts.

2. Read the text again. Answer the questions.

a) According to the writer, why did humans invent robots?

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b) Who or what is Emily Howell?

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c) What does EMI stand for? Why did it anger composers?

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d) How does the software program “The Painting Fool” choose its mood?

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e) Who is Simon Colton? What does he want?

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f) Has Adam won the Nobel Prize? Who is Eve?

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g) Why does the writer say we are fascinated by robots?

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3. Read these statements. There is one for each paragraph. Replace the words in *italics* with how they are expressed in the text.

a) Humans *readily acknowledge* \_\_\_\_\_ that robots *function* \_\_\_\_\_ better in some areas than they do.

b) Emily Howell *launched herself onto* \_\_\_\_\_ the music scene. Her only *failing* \_\_\_\_\_ was that she was a computer.

c) Professor David Cope *supplied unprocessed facts and figures to* \_\_\_\_\_ the computer about composers in history.

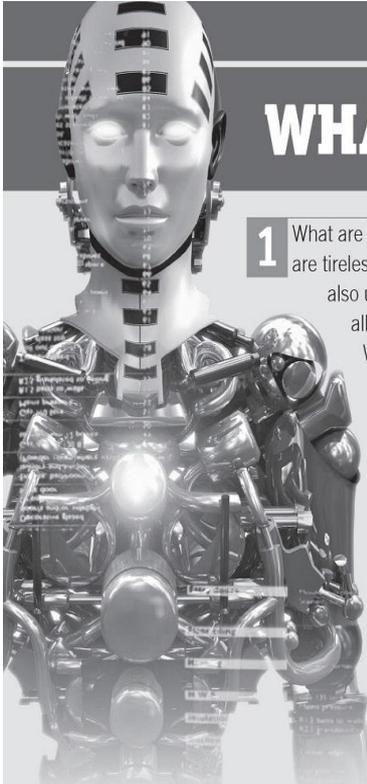
d) Emily Howell’s music is *modern* \_\_\_\_\_ and *causes arguments* \_\_\_\_\_ because she is competing against humans.

e) “The Painting Fool” software program *refuses to* \_\_\_\_\_ paint if it is *feeling fed up* \_\_\_\_\_.

f) Computer creativity is not just *limited* \_\_\_\_\_ to the arts. Scientists have *worked together* \_\_\_\_\_ and created Adam, the world’s first computer scientist.

g) What will happen if the robot experiment gets out of control?  
Can scientists close down these machines?

# WHAT MAKES A ROBOT HUMAN?



**1** What are the traits of a robot? Robots are tireless, reliable, unemotional, and also unquestioning. That is, after all, how they are programmed. We invented robots and computers to be our faithful servants, to do the things that we couldn't or didn't want to do ourselves. In so many areas robots perform better than humans, and we accept this with good grace because they are only robots and we are the superior ones. The one thing they can't do is be human. They can't feel, emote, create, or love.

**2** However, our notion of what it is to be a human versus a robot is currently being challenged by the latest experiments in computer programming. Take, for instance, the area of creativity. A little while ago, a new and exciting composer called **Emily Howell** broke onto the music scene. Her music was original, beautiful, and contemporary and two albums were released. Emily's only flaw? She was someone's computer.

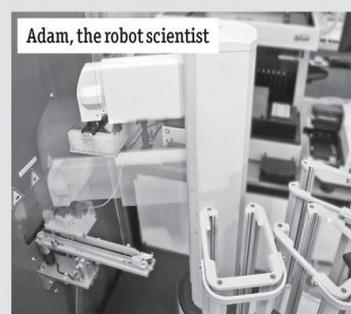
**3** The human responsible for Emily, American professor David Cope, has worked on robot creativity for many years. He had originally attempted to code a computer program which wrote music. The results were predictably terrible. So he gave up writing rules for the computer and instead just fed raw data into it for the computer to analyse itself. Cope eventually produced a computer that could analyse any composer in history and then write an entirely new work that sounded just like how that composer would have written it himself. He called it EMI – Experiments in Musical Intelligence.

**4** Composers were outraged, and musicians refused to perform EMI's works. Undaunted, Cope tried a less controversial approach. He formed a new database of only the new work that EMI had created. This he fed into his new computer program, Emily Howell, and from that point she began working on her own musical style. What is interesting is that her music is contemporary. Like other modern composers, she has learned from the past to create music for our time. Emily is unfortunately even more controversial, as she is now competing with humans in their own creative field.

**5** It is not only in the world of music that computers are making creative waves. Similarly, the art world is coming to terms with a program called **'The Painting Fool'** – a laptop software program which has learned how different artistic styles and colours can represent moods and emotions. Again, the program absorbed many years of art history and, like Emily Howell, came up with its own contemporary style. The computer first reads the newspaper in order to set its 'mood' for the day. Then it chooses an adjective to reflect that mood, and does a portrait of a real person with that adjective in mind. After that, it looks at its own work to see if it has achieved the objectives it set out for itself, and if it thinks the work isn't good enough, it tries again. And sometimes, if it's in a very bad mood, it won't paint at all! Because the program operates in different 'moods' and has the ability to analyse its own abilities as a human might, co-creator Simon Colton wants it to be recognized as an artist in its own right.



**6** Computer creativity is not just confined to the arts, however. British scientists have collaborated on a big project to come up with a laboratory machine that can think for itself. **Adam** is the world's first robot scientist. Adam acts in the same way as a human scientist: he comes up with a hypothesis, he devises experiments to test this hypothesis, conducts his experiments, analyses the findings, and then retests accordingly – all without the need for human intervention. Although not yet a Nobel Prize winner, Adam has already produced some original research into genetics. The same scientists are now developing another robot called Eve, and she will be twice as clever!



**7** So are these robots becoming like us? Part of our fascination with robots is that it makes us actually question what it means to be human. And ultimately, we are their creators. If the whole experiment gets out of hand, we can just pull the plug on these machines, can't we? Unless – as in scary science fiction movies – our robots decide that they no longer need us ...

# Vocabulary

## Describing People

Choose the two adjectives that can best complete each sentence

SNOBBISH

SMUG

CONCEITED

He never shuts up about himself. He's *smug/ conceited* and arrogant.

1. SUPPORTIVE

INCOMPETENT

ENCOURAGING

My co-workers were really \_\_\_\_\_ when I started my new job. I was so grateful for their help.

2. BUBBLY

DETERMINED

ENERGETIC

She's such a/an \_\_\_\_\_ character and great company. She cheers me up.

3. PATRONIZING

CONDESCENDING

INDIFFERENT

He's so \_\_\_\_\_ - he always makes me feel silly and self-confident.

4. OUTRAGED

UNDAUNTED

INDIGNANT

Rose was \_\_\_\_\_ about his comments on her work. She found him unnecessarily rude.

5. OFFEND

DISTRAUGHT

ANXIOUS

I was really \_\_\_\_\_ when Sarah said that. She's forever hurting my feelings.

## Idioms of Extreme Emotion

Replace the words in *italics* with an idiom from the box. Change the form where necessary.

Totally lose – be beside yourself – be completely blown away – be absolutely gutted – be bored rigid – be thrilled to bits – make such a fuss

1. I had flu and I couldn't get to my best friend's birthday party! I *was terribly disappointed* \_\_\_\_\_.
2. I *was overwhelmed* \_\_\_\_\_ by his performance. I never knew he could sing like that!
3. They *were distraught* \_\_\_\_\_ with grief when their dog died.
4. I tried to watch the documentary about Ancient Greece but I *wasn't remotely interested in it* \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Guess what? Remember that job I applied for? I got it! I'm *absolutely delighted* \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Look, you only split a little bit on your suit. And it's only water. *Stop complaining – it's a nothing* \_\_\_\_\_.
7. He was so late we missed the movie. And not for the first time! I *exploded with anger* \_\_\_\_\_.

