

# 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 180 miles away.

c Look at the highlighted words and phrases in the text and try to figure 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 usual 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 usual 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 canceled in southern India because there was no one to fly the plane. <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_ 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. <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_ 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 vacation 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's Beauvais Airport. <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_ 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 buses that would take them to Paris.



### The great escape

In December 2009, a Continental Airlines flight was delayed in Houston, in the US, because two animals had gotten out of their box in the hold. The animals were sea otters, a marine mammal with dense fur that lives in the northern and eastern parts of the Pacific Ocean. <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_ 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 p.m., but they did not take off until 9:15 p.m.

