READING AND SPEAKING

Jobs for the boys ... or girls?

1 In pairs, list jobs that are typically done by men or women. Which are typically done by both? Share ideas as a class.

2 Look at the titles of the two texts. What do you think they mean? Read the introductions. Which text(s) do you think these phrases come from?

flight deck	turbulent weather	air traffic controller
domestic issues	steep learning curve	career path
had to pull my weight	lost in admiration	tank-like buggy
slightly taken aback	swap the boardroom	exhibited prejudice
household chores	the breadwinner	hostile to the idea

3 Work in two groups.

Group A Read about house husband **Hugo Carey**.

Group B Read about **Cliodhna** /kliːənə/ and **Aoife** /iːfə/ **Duggan**, the female pilots.

Which words from exercise 2 are in your article? Were your ideas correct? What is their context?

4 Read your article again. Answer the questions about Hugo or the pilots, Cliodhna and Aoife.

1 In what ways is what they do not typical of their sex? What are the statistics concerning this?
2 What is the background to their current jobs or situation? Was it their choice?
3 Did they approach their roles confidently?
4 What problems did they face when they started?
5 What has been the attitude of people of the opposite sex?
6 What evidence is there of changing attitudes?
7 Which of these people are mentioned in your article? What do you learn about them?

a six-year-old girl	Susie	Yvonne Sintes	a technician
Dave Thomas	job centre officials		their mother or father

In your own words

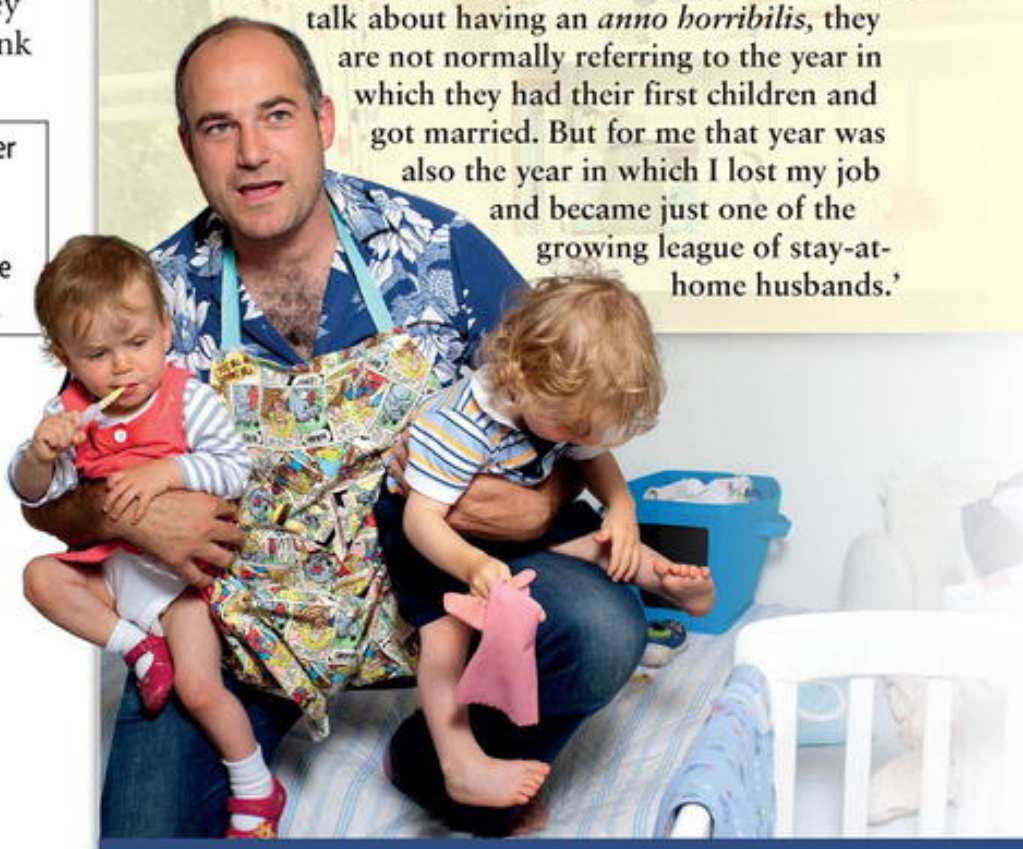
5 Work with someone from the other group. Ask each other the questions in exercise 4 to find out about the people in the other article. Explain any new vocabulary.

What do you think?

- How would you feel if the pilot on your flight was a woman?
- Whose lifestyle, the sisters' or Hugo's, do you think is most enviable? Why?
- Are there any jobs that you feel are best done by one of the sexes? Which? Why?
- In what ways is your lifestyle typical for your sex? In what ways not?
- How much have attitudes changed to gender roles over the years?

DESPERATE HUSBANDS

'It's a dirty job,' warns Hugo Carey. 'When people talk about having an *anno horribilis*, they are not normally referring to the year in which they had their first children and got married. But for me that year was also the year in which I lost my job and became just one of the growing league of stay-at-home husbands.'



A **slow take-off** for **female pilots**

When two children, a six-year-old girl and an older boy, visited her flight deck last week, British Airways pilot **Aoife Duggan** asked if they would like to fly planes, too. The boy said yes but the girl demurred, saying: 'I think I'd like to be an air hostess – boys are pilots.' A surprised Duggan says: 'I was like, "No! Come and sit in my seat, wear my hat".'



Cliodhna and Aoife Duggan

According to figures from the Office of National Statistics, Hugo is one of over 220,000 house husbands – a figure that has leapt from fewer than 120,000 16 years ago. Although one of many, it still came as a shock for him to swap the boardroom for the baby-changing mat. But he was used to bombshells – he'd faced one just two years earlier when he and his wife Susie went for their first baby scan.

'Is this your first scan?', asked the ultrasound technician. Hugo and Susie answered eagerly, 'Yes, it is.' 'Well, it's two, twins.' Stony silence was followed by convulsive laughter. They all started to giggle. Poppy and Thomas – now 18 months old – probably did, too. It was the start of a journey of discovery for Hugo. He was made redundant when the twins were ten months old, and with Susie, a fashion consultant, now the breadwinner, there wasn't much choice. 'I was just going to have to pull my weight and become a hands-on, full-time dad.' He was unfazed, convinced he had a way with children. He now says, 'Perhaps I wouldn't have been so confident if I had known just how steep the learning curve was going to be.'

For a start, their two-bedroom flat, which has no garden, felt terribly poky. His daily routine was exhausting at first. The twins woke each other up, so he had to be up and out of bed at 6 a.m. to let Susie sleep. And of course, the housework fell to Hugo. He had always been the chef in the family, so cooking wasn't a problem, but other household chores – cleaning, ironing, and shopping – and looking after two small children, proved something of a challenge. He's now convinced that men don't have the same patience as women, but he's managed to raise his own level of patience. At first, when out with the twins in their large, tank-like buggy, he would march them everywhere at an angry pace, but now he has learnt to stop and give way to other pavement users.

The humiliation of going down to the job centre has also been somewhat diminished by the hilarity of signing on accompanied by a couple of loud, hysterical children. Officials now hurry him through what is normally a long and tedious procedure.

After the twins' first birthday, he decided it was time to locate the nearest playgroup. 'I think the mums were quite excited to see a man and I was asked if I wanted to attend their pub session on the first Thursday of the month – they were probably just as bored as I was. I politely declined.'

As the twins now approach their second birthday, Hugo can look back and admit that his role as a house husband took quite a bit of adjustment. At first, he yearned for office life, but now the rewards for his efforts have become much clearer. He says, 'In fact, I am just grateful to have spent these crucial months with my children. I've seen them grow up, take their first steps, discover, and learn. I see lots of dads who obviously don't get to spend much time with their kids and they don't seem to have a strong bond. I feel sorry for them.'

One problem that's emerged is that because Hugo is now used to doing things for the kids, his methods don't always coincide with Susie's. However, his relationship with his mother has improved immeasurably – she had five children, and Hugo is lost in admiration for her.





Yvonne Pope Sintes

Four decades after the first female pilot started work for a commercial airline, there are still relatively few women sitting in Duggan's seat. Of the 3,500 pilots employed by British Airways, just 200 are women, yet the airline still employs the highest proportion of female pilots of any UK airline. Globally, around 4,000 of the 130,000 airline pilots are women.

How much has changed since Yvonne Pope Sintes became Britain's first commercial airline captain in 1972? She says, 'Women are just as good as men, but they seem to have more domestic issues. I actually met someone, just a few months ago, who said he didn't know that there were any women pilots. I couldn't believe it.'

When Sintes, now 83, started her career, airlines actively barred women. Inspired by watching the planes while growing up near Croydon airport, she tried to join the RAF after school but they wouldn't take women. So she became a flight attendant and gained her private pilot licence with the Airways Aero Club. Then she became an air traffic controller and eventually, in 1965, a pilot. She says her male colleagues 'didn't like me at all'. Around half of them were hostile to the idea of a female pilot, 'Someone actually said they'd resign if a woman joined. Unfortunately, he didn't.' Later, it was the passengers who exhibited prejudice. 'The men always looked slightly taken aback.'

According to Aoife Duggan and her older sister Cliodhna, who is also a pilot, reactions to their gender are more likely to come from passengers than colleagues. Only a couple of years ago, at her previous job for an airline in Asia, says Aoife, one man took one look at her and her female co-pilot and got off the plane. Cliodhna says she still sees some passengers' surprise.

'We've had pretty awful weather recently. My last landing was in Gatwick and it was particularly turbulent ... one of the passengers said, "Oh my goodness, you look so small, I can't believe you just landed this giant plane." '

For both women, flying was a part of their childhood – their mother was a flight attendant, and their father an airline pilot. They grew up around a flying club. 'There were some women at the club,' says Cliodhna. 'I was aware that there were women flying and I didn't see my gender as a bar.' Aoife, seven years younger, grew up seeing her older sister's career path and decided to follow.

Why do they think so few women go into flying? 'A lot of the time it's a matter of younger girls not being made aware that it's a career option open to them,' says Aoife. 'It's not the kind of thing people talk about in schools. You get young boys who say they want to be a pilot or an astronaut, whereas girls are not encouraged that way.'

For the past couple of years, British Airways has been trying to increase its recruitment of women. 'What we're after is the best person for the job,' says Captain Dave Thomas, BA's chief pilot and head of training. They are having some success – the number of female candidates for jobs has gone from 5% to 15%. Thomas thinks the lack of women is mainly a cultural problem which needs to be tackled at an early age. 'We did a little bit of research, surveying children between the ages of six and 12, and I think it came out as number two on the boys' list of top jobs, but I don't think girls think of it as an option.'