PART 2   *You'll hear a woman called Rita O'Farrell, who works as a vet, giving a talk about her job in a zoo. For questions 9–18, complete the sentences with a word or short phrase.*

You now have forty-five seconds to look at Part Two.

[pause]

tone

Rita: Hello, I'm Rita O'Farrell. I trained as a vet and now I work at Eastmore Zoo, where I'm responsible for animal health care.

People often ask me why I became a vet. Well, my family always went on camping holidays when I was young. We stayed in interesting places like a beach where there were lots of crabs and a lake that was full of fish. But then one year we camped on the edge of a forest with deer in it. They were beautiful, and I can trace my love of nature right back to that holiday.

To qualify as a vet, you have to study at university, then you normally spend a few years in general practice, treating pets. So that's what I did, right up until I became a zoo vet. It obviously helps if you have other experience too. I looked after some horses part time when I was at school, and worked on a conservation project for turtles before going to university.

I'm one of five vets at Eastmore Zoo responsible for the two thousand animals overall that we have here ranging from big cats to tiny insects. We all have areas of particular interest – one person knows more about fish, for example; there are over fifty species of them. In fact, we have four hundred and fifty species altogether if you count them all up, and we have to be prepared to deal with any of them.

Eastmore's a very dynamic zoo. A wonderful education centre for visitors has just opened and we're in the process of replacing our old laboratory with one with very up-to-date resources. It's going to be situated right next to the animal clinic and it'll help us improve our medical care.

I sometimes get asked what my average day is like. Well, it varies, but, for example, yesterday kicked off with a brief meeting to discuss treatment for a bear that has a bad cut. Then I went to look at a camel. It had hurt its leg, and we decided to operate immediately, which took up the rest of the morning and most of the afternoon, and only left time for a brief check-up on a parrot recovering from a broken wing.

To treat wild animals, it's often necessary to put them to sleep for a little while. Even with an animal that wouldn't harm you in any way, it's difficult to do something as basic as examining a skin condition while it's awake and struggling. One of my jobs for tomorrow is to investigate the breathing of one of our antelopes and I can't do that without using a general anaesthetic.

Zoo vets deal with all sorts of health problems – anything from a wolf whose ears are infected to a sea lion with a virus. Eyesight is something I'm not very knowledgeable about, so I leave that to someone from outside the zoo, but I've even learnt how to treat diseases that affect the teeth of larger animals.

We still know very little about the health of wild animals, so vets tend to do research as well as treat animals, and that often means travelling. A colleague of mine's currently visiting different centres in South America to help out with research on lizards. I'm involved with gorilla studies in Africa and go there fairly regularly. There's also a tiger project in Asia I'm hoping to be able to contribute to.

It's important to keep up to date with what vets elsewhere are doing and I've been attending some courses about elephants at a zoo in Canada. The most recent was about their feeding habits. There's actually one tomorrow on their family relationships, which I can't get to, but I'm attending one next week on what's known about their body language. It's all really useful stuff.

Students often ask me about the personal qualities a zoo vet needs. Besides the obvious, like being hard-working, I used to highlight the need to keep calm when you're dealing with animals so they don't become anxious. Lately, though, I've come to the conclusion that you can't do the job properly unless you're confident – because you've got to make difficult decisions quickly.

Well, that's all for now. I'd be happy to answer any questions.

[pause]

Now you'll hear Part Two again.

[Teacher, repeat the track now.]

[pause]

That's the end of Part Two.

Now turn to Part Three.

[pause]