

CHAPTER 1

THE LIFE OF A BIKE MESSENGER



Preview Questions

- **Do you ride a bike to work or school? If yes, do you feel safe on the roads?**
- **Do you know what a bike messenger does?**
- **What kind of messengers are there in your city?**

It **is** 5 a.m. on a chilly November morning. Mike Zello **is drinking** his second cup of coffee of the morning. Then, he **stretches** his legs and **straps** on a bright orange bag. He **jumps** on his bike and **rides** into the sunrise. Zello's workday **is beginning**.

Zello **is** one of hundreds of bike messengers around the world. They **work** in downtown areas of large cities and **deliver** everything from documents to gifts. Messenger bags **measure** up to 3,000 cubic inches. (Picture ten large pizza boxes.) But messengers **say** that the size of the delivery **isn't** the hardest part of the job. It's the journey. "I **am** always **looking** out for busses and skateboarders," Zello **says**. "Danger **exists** everywhere."

E-competition also **exists** everywhere. In fact, some people **say** that because of the Internet, there **is** no need for bike messengers. Downtown attorney Ruth Martin **disagrees**. “I almost always **use** messengers,” she says. “I rarely **send** documents by email. Why? Bike messengers **don’t get** lost in cyberspace.”

Reading Comprehension

1. What are two things Mike Zello does before he goes to work?

He drinks 2 cups of coffee and stretches.

2. What do bike messengers do?

They deliver everything from documents to gifts.

Reading Comprehension

3. What is difficult about a bike messenger's job? Explain.

It's dangerous. You have to look out for things that might hit you like cars, busses, and skateboarders.

4. Why do some people say that the job of the bike messenger is ending?

Email and the internet are easier.

GRAMMAR PRACTICE

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Use the simple present or the present progressive form. Use each verb only once.

begin ride disagree say look out wear

1. Rachel is a bike messenger in Chicago. Her workday **begins** at 7:30am.
2. She **is wearing** a shirt and shorts today.
3. She always **rides** her bike to work.
4. Her boyfriend **says** that riding a bike in the city is dangerous.
5. Rachel **disagrees**. She says it's safe.
6. "I always **look out** for cars and busses," she says.

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