

A business built on the fear of bridges

Are you afraid of heights?

Vocabulary

1. proving 2. suffer 3. collapse 4. anxious 5. existing 6. profitable

True Story

The _____ of Baltimore's Francis Scott Key Bridge shocked people around the world. For some travellers, it made an _____ fear even worse. Many people _____ from 'gephyrophobia' — a fear of bridges. They may shake, sweat, or panic when driving high above water. Experts say this fear is usually linked to heights, water, and feeling unable to escape.

One man has built an unusual business helping these _____ drivers. Steven Eskew, owner of Kent Island Express, drives people across Maryland's Chesapeake Bay Bridge in their own cars. The bridge is over four miles long and nearly 200 feet high. Eskew charges around \$45–\$55 per trip. He gives 6,000 rides a year, _____ that fear can be a very _____ business.

Quiz

1. What happened to the Francis Scott Key Bridge?
2. What is 'gephyrophobia'?
3. Who is Steven Eskew?
4. How long is the Chesapeake Bay Bridge?

True or False

- | | | | |
|--|------|--|-------|
| 1. Steven Eskew drives people across the Francis Scott Key Bridge. | True | | False |
| 2. The Chesapeake Bay Bridge is nearly 200 feet high. | True | | False |
| 3. Steven shakes, sweats and panics when driving high above water. | True | | False |

Conversation

- A: Hey Steven, how's business on the bridge today?
 B: Busy as usual! People really don't like driving over it.
 A: I bet! The Bay Bridge is so high.
 B: Yeah, but it's great for my wallet!
 A: True, you must be the richest bridge driver around.
 B: Haha, yeah. Let's just hope this one doesn't collapse!

Discussion

1. Would you pay Steven to drive you across the Chesapeake Bay Bridge?
2. Would you like to have Steven's job?
3. What things are you afraid of?
4. If you could start a small business helping people with a simple problem, what would it be?