

20 Focus on listening skills

A Warm-up

- 1 Write a list of all the things you listened to in the last 24 hours. For example:
 - listening to a podcast while at the gym
 - ordering a takeaway coffee at a café

Compare your list with a partner.
- 2 Decide which of your 'listening experiences':
 - a involved you speaking as well as listening, i.e. which were *interactive*, as opposed to those which were 'one-way', i.e. *non-interactive*
 - b was supported by visual information, either verbal (e.g. written text) or non-verbal (e.g. pictures)
 - c involved listening to a speaker who was physically present
 - d involved listening for specific information
 - e required you to listen closely and attentively
 - f allowed a less attentive style of listening
- 3 What difficulties might learners have with each of these listening events?
 - watching a live lecture
 - watching a recorded version of the lecture
 - listening to a podcast of the lecture on headphones
 - listening to a recording of the lecture in a classroom
 - discussing the lecture with a colleague, face-to-face
 - talking about the lecture with colleagues in a live-streamed conference call

B Comprehension

- 1 Listen to your trainer reading two (unrelated) texts. After you have listened, answer these questions.
 - 1 Did you understand all the words in the text?
 - 2 Did you understand the overall meaning of the text?
- 2 Now listen again, and answer these questions.
 - 1 What was different about each text, the second time you heard it? Were the texts easier to understand?
 - 2 What factors make comprehension easier or more difficult?
 - 3 What are the implications of this activity on listening and reading in the classroom?

C Listening texts and tasks

- 1 Match each listening text type (1–9) with appropriate tasks (a–l). There may be several tasks that are suitable for each text type.

Listening text types	Listening tasks
1 a news broadcast	a answering <i>wh</i> -questions (<i>where, who, what, why?</i> etc.)
2 an exercise routine	b putting a series of pictures in order
3 the directions to a local landmark	c ticking off items on a list of names of people and places
4 the description of a missing person	d drawing on a map
5 an embarrassing personal anecdote	e filling in a grid or table
6 a shopping dialogue (sales assistant and customer)	f choosing one of several pictures
7 a pop song	g taking notes
8 recorded timetable information	h choosing one of several adjectives
9 a weather forecast	i writing the exact words
	j drawing a picture
	k filling in gaps in a transcript
	l performing actions

- 2 Compare ideas with a partner. Explain your criteria for choosing tasks.

D A listening lesson

- 1 Read the coursebook extract and identify the purpose of each of the activities marked with an arrow (→).

10B Changing trends

QUICK REVIEW ●●●
Think of five famous buildings, paintings or books from your country. Work in pairs. Tell your partner when these things were built/painted/written and who by.

Listening and Grammar

→ **1** Work in pairs. Discuss these questions.

- 1 What type of things do you like (and hate) shopping for?
- 2 Who goes shopping more often in your country, men or women? What do they buy?
- 3 Is it a good idea for men and women to go shopping together? Why?/Why not?
- 4 What was the last thing you bought (not food or drink)?

→ **2** a) **R10.3** Listen to an interview with Sam Bennett about his radio programme, *Real Men Shop!*. Put the things he talks about in order.

- a) skincare products for men
- b) a department store
- c) a men's clothes shop
- d) food shopping in the 1970s

→ b) Listen again. Fill in the gaps in these sentences.

- 1 Selfridges opened in
- 2 Selfridges used to have a special room only for
- 3 In the 1970s most married men never used to do the shopping.
- 4 'Shopping girlfriends' used to help men choose
- 5 years ago you didn't use to see skincare products for men.

→ c) Work in pairs. How have shopping trends changed in your country?




Vocabulary *anything, someone, no one, everywhere, etc.*
Grammar *used to*
Help with Listening *used to*
Review Past Simple

Help with Grammar *used to*

→ **3** a) Look at sentences 2–4 in 2b). Then choose the correct words in the rules.

- We use *used to* to talk about *present/past* habits and repeated actions.
- We *can/can't* use *used to* with state verbs (*be, like, have, want, etc.*).
- After *used to* we use *the infinitive/verb+ing*.

b) Look at sentence 1 in 2b). Why can't we use *used to* in this sentence, do you think?

c) Look at sentence 5 in 2b). How do we make the negative of *used to*?

d) Make questions with these words. What are the positive and negative short answers for question 2?

- 1 single men / do / did / What / use to ?
- 2 men / buy / use to / skincare products / Did ?

e) Check in **G10.2** p140.

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3 – Language skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing

- 2 How could you adapt this sequence:
 - 1 to make it easier for students with less developed listening skills?
 - 2 for an online class?
- 3 Put these stages of a listening task into a logical order.
 - a The teacher focuses on features of grammar or vocabulary that occur in the recording, e.g. by asking students to complete the gaps in a transcript.
 - b The teacher sets a task that requires listening for specific details. She plays the complete recording, checks the task, and replays sections if necessary, addressing issues (such as barely audible words) that may be causing problems in understanding.
 - c Learners read the transcript of the recording and listen at the same time.
 - d The teacher generates interest in the topic by, for example, asking the class about their experience of, feelings about, or knowledge of, the topic.
 - e The teacher presents some key vocabulary in the listening text, e.g. by giving, or eliciting, a definition or an example.
 - f Learners are invited to respond to the text, e.g. based on their own experience of the topic.
 - g The teacher sets a gist listening task, e.g. *Who is talking to whom, about what, and why?* She then plays a short section of the recorded extract, and checks the answers.
- 4 Explain the principles underlying your choice of order. For example:
 - Learners will listen with more attention if their interest has been aroused (d).

E Classroom application

- 1 Put the stages in activity D3 in the correct column.

Pre-listening tasks	While-listening tasks	Post-listening tasks

- 2 Work in groups. Design a sequence of tasks for the following recorded text (in which people are talking about their jobs) that you could use with a group of pre-intermediate students. Include at least one pre-listening task, one or more while-listening tasks, and one post-listening task.

NIGEL:	I became a pilot about 20 years ago. I had to do 72 weeks' basic training, but I didn't have to pay for it – the company did. I was lucky, I suppose, and now I have a job that I love. But these days most pilots have to pay a lot of money to do their training.
GARY:	You don't have to go to university, but you probably learn more facts than a university student – at least that's what people say! A London taxi driver has to know 25,000 streets and all the important places in the city.
MELISSA:	It's not easy to become a vet. You have to have a degree and the training takes five years. And you don't have much free time when you're a student vet – you have to work very hard.

face2face Pre-intermediate

KEY WORDS FOR TEACHERS

Check you know the meanings of these terms.

- *interactive/non-interactive listening*
- *(listening for) gist*
- *intensive listening*
- *pre-/while-/post-listening tasks*

REFLECTION

Read the questions and suggest some answers.

Questions about listening, posted by teachers on an online discussion forum.

- Q1:** How important IS listening? My students just want to speak.
- Q2:** My students hate listening to recordings. Is there an acceptable alternative, such as reading the transcripts to them aloud?
- Q3:** When I do a listening activity in class, the students get frustrated if they can't understand every word. How can I discourage them from trying to do this?
- Q4:** My students say that they like listening to songs, but I'm not sure that this is a good idea. Should I let them, and, if so, is there an effective way of using songs?
- Q5:** Many coursebook listening texts sound a bit stilted and unnatural. Is there a good reason for this, and is there a viable alternative?
- Q6:** My students complain that they can understand recordings in the classroom, but that they have problems understanding real people when they talk to them. How can I help them with this?