CAMBRIDGE English

Cambridge English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary for Schools

Developing listening skills for Cambridge English Qualifications: A guide for teachers



Contents

Who this guide is for 3

How to use this guide 4

Key terminology 6

The challenges of listening in a second language 11

Top tips for developing learners' listening skills 12

Preparing learners for the B1 Preliminary for Schools Listening paper 15

Activity 1 18

Activity 2 22

Activity 3 26

Activity 4 30

Appendix 34

Extra resources and further reading 46

Who this guide is for

Just like examiners, teachers also spend many hours evaluating learners' language skills. This guide is for you. With lots of practical tips and real examples, it will help you to develop your learners' listening skills in preparation for our B1 Preliminary for Schools qualification.

About B1 Preliminary for Schools	
✔ One of the official Cambridge English Qualifications	✔ Comes after A2 Key for Schools and before B2 First for Schools
✔ Tests reading, writing, speaking and listening skills	✔ Like B1 Preliminary, tests learners at **CEFR Level B1**
✔ Shows that learners have mastered the basics in English, including: • reading simple textbooks and articles • writing letters and emails on everyday subjects • understanding factual information • showing awareness of opinions and mood	✔ Unlike B1 Preliminary, is aimed at school-age learners rather than adults ✔ Can be taken on paper or on a computer

You can find out more about our B1 Preliminary for Schools qualification and other exams on our website. See **cambridgeenglish.org/schools**.

How to use this guide

To get the most from this guide:

- Try the practical ideas and reflect on how these techniques affect the processes of learning and teaching in your classroom.
- Discuss different approaches with learners in order to understand their preferences and needs, and to find out what approaches are most helpful to them.
- Reflect on your own listening skills, both in your first language and in any other languages that you speak. What do you find challenging? How do you overcome these challenges? Can you share any top tips with the learners in your own classroom?

You can navigate the document by using the hyperlinks in the text and the buttons on each spread:

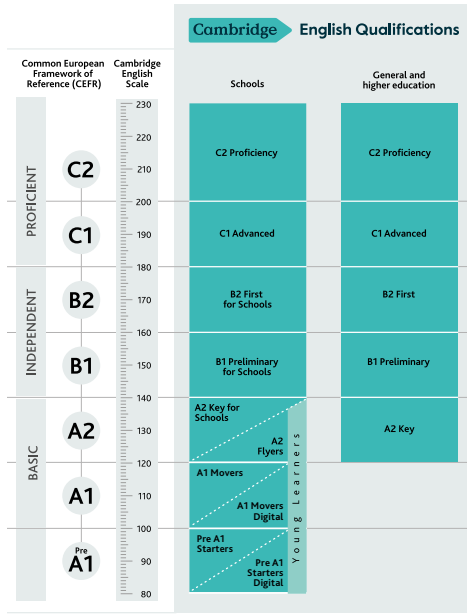
Previous page Next page First page Previous view

There are some terms in this guide which are widely used in the field of assessment. When these terms appear in this guide, you'll find an explanation nearby in a glossary box like this:

Key terminology

The **Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)** is an international standard for describing language ability. It uses a six-point scale, from **A1** for beginners up to **C2** for those who have mastered a language. This makes it easy for anyone involved in language teaching and testing, such as teachers or learners, to see the level of different qualifications.

CEFR scale





Key terminology

The study of listening is a specialist field and, like all specialist fields, there is some common terminology which might be unfamiliar or confusing. Learning to recognise these terms will help you to understand this guide, which will help you to develop your learners' listening skills.

What does effective listening involve?

When we achieve a very good level of listening in a particular language, we often forget how sophisticated this skill really is! The terms we use to describe the processes of listening are called sub-skills and they include:

Sub-skill	Definition	Example from everyday life	Which parts of the exam test this sub-skill?
Predicting	Thinking about what you are going to hear, based on what you know about the speaker, the topic and the context.	Your friend sends you a video from social media of an interview with an actor you both like. You immediately think about other interviews you've seen with this actor, what you already know about his latest film and **what he might say about it** in this interview.	Prediction skills help learners in Parts 1, 2, 3 and 4
Listening for gist	Understanding just the general topic of what you hear.	You are walking in a park and you overhear friends talking. One of them is talking about a recent family event. You **don't notice or remember all the details or words,** but it sounded like it was a very happy event.	Part 2
Listening for key information	Identifying specific words or phrases in what you hear.	You are waiting at the train station, listening to the announcement with information about which platform to go to. You **listen carefully because you don't want to go to the wrong platform** and miss your train.	Parts 1 and 3
Listening for detailed understanding	Understanding the content of what you hear in depth, especially the opinions and attitudes of the speaker(s).	It's your birthday soon and you want to go to the cinema with your friends. You ask your friends which films they would like to see and **listen carefully to what they say** before you decide.	Part 4

Expert listeners can bring these four sub-skills together when they listen, so they can **recognise** what they hear and **understand** the meaning.

For example, imagine we are listening to someone describing a recent experience and we recognise the word *Unbelievable!* Our ability to match the sounds to the word is called **bottom-up processing**.

But the word *unbelievable* doesn't tell us much about the person's recent experience. Why were they so shocked? How did they feel? Angry? Amused? Disappointed? To understand what the speaker *means* when they use this word, we need to listen for more information, we need to know the **context** and **co-text**. This is called **top-down processing**.

Process	Definition	Example from everyday life
Bottom-up processing = recognising what you hear	Recognising small units (sounds), building them up into bigger units (words) and then bigger ones (phrases). Sometimes called 'decoding'.	You ask someone for an address and they tell you it's number 60. **You accurately identify the sounds and stress of the word** *sixty* and don't mishear it as *sixteen*.
Top-down processing = understanding what it means	Using **context** (knowledge of the world) and **co-text** (what the speaker has said so far) to help you understand words that are not clear.	You're watching a fashion programme on TV. You think you hear someone talking about *string*, *summer*, *autumn* and *winter*. You doubt that you heard the first word correctly – you're not sure if *string* is a word in English, but you know that *spring* is a word. And you know that it makes sense when talking about other seasons. You also know that in the world of fashion, clothing is often categorised by season. **You use this knowledge to make an educated guess:** the person probably said *spring*, not *string*.

Listening strategies learners can use to help them understand

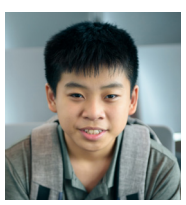
Expert listeners can automatically understand and interpret what someone is saying, but this can be very difficult for the learner, especially when their language level is low or if the context is unfamiliar. This means communication can break down so the learner might need to use different listening **strategies** to help them understand. For example:



Diego hears the key words *past*, *library*, *next* and *5 minutes* when he asks someone for directions. He **uses his knowledge of the world** and guesses that the speaker is telling him to continue walking for about 5 minutes and keep going when he passes the local library.



Mahtab knows about sports but only catches the words *team*, *lose*, *10* and *players*. She **uses her knowledge of the topic** to help her understand that the speaker is describing a football team who lost their match because they only had 10 players instead of 11.



Yinxuan isn't sure if the speaker said *a lot of fun* or *a lot of sun*. He **waits until the speaker has said a little bit more so he can check his ideas**, and one of these options suddenly makes more sense.



Jana hears a new word when her friend is talking: *I don't really like ??? but my dad says I should eat it because it's good for me!* She can **guess the meaning from the co-text** because her friend has been talking about healthy food.

Listening strategies like these help when the learner has difficulty understanding by working with what they were able to understand. Over time, the learner will become a more effective listener.

Key terminology

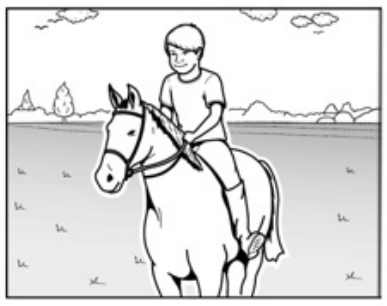
Some words have a strong form and a weak form. The **strong** form is how a word sounds when it's alone, with no other words around it. For example, the word *as* has the same vowel sound as the words *cat* and *man*. But small grammatical words like *as* are often difficult to hear in connected speech because the speaker puts more stress on words which carry more meaning, like nouns, verbs and adjectives. So words like *as* become **weak**, which means the word is not stressed and the vowel sound changes. This change can make the word more difficult to hear.

Activity idea: Connected speech. How many words?

You can help learners **recognise words in connected speech** by practising **bottom-up processing skills** in class. This is useful for all parts of the Listening paper and for listening in general! Here's a simple activity idea to use after completing a normal listening practice task:

1. Find a specific phrase in a listening recording where the speaker uses **weak forms**.
   Here's an **example** from Part 1:

Task instructions:



B

Notes:

At the very end of this recording, the male speaker uses a comparative structure (*as … as*). In this structure, the word *as* is not usually stressed and it can be difficult to hear.

Accept learners' answers if they count seven or eight words – it's possible to consider *I'm* as one word (a contraction, so seven words in total) or two (*I am*, so eight words in total). Remind learners that in the exam, contractions are counted as **two** words, except for *can't* (which is a contraction of *cannot*, so is counted as one word).

Audioscript 'Yeah, with my sister. She loves it but **I'm not as keen as she is**.'

2. In class, tell the learners you're going to focus on pronunciation and connected speech in the recording that they just heard.
3. Tell learners you want them to count the number of words they hear. Prepare to press *play*.
4. **Press play**. The learners will probably be surprised at how fast it was! They might not be ready to give an answer yet. That's OK – play it again. Play it several more times if necessary. Let learners focus and use their fingers to count while they think.
5. When learners feel ready, tell them to write down what they heard and count how many words there were.
6. Ask learners to compare answers in pairs. While they compare, monitor their discussions carefully so you have an idea of how well they understood and who has the correct answer. If they disagree, that's OK – let them hear it once or twice more before you confirm answers.
7. Take a range of answers from the class. You should know from monitoring in Step 6 who has the correct answer. Encourage students who don't contribute very often to share their answers. Praise their success to boost their confidence before confirming the correct answer, then write the final correct phrase on the board.
8. Drill the phrase with the class to practise the stress and rhythm. It can help learners to think of this as practising the 'music' of the language.

Top tips

1. There may not be a pause before or after the phrase you choose, which could confuse learners, so it can help to give them the first and last word, but nothing in between. For example:
   I'm _____ is.

2. Repeating connected speech after hearing it is useful because it helps learners develop an awareness of sounds, and become aware of stressed and unstressed words, which can help them become better listeners.

Optional follow-up

Invite learners to highlight on the whiteboard which words are stressed (answer for this example: *not*, *keen*, *she*) and what type of words these are (answer for this example: negative words, adjectives and subject pronouns) and why they think these words are stressed (answer: *because these words provide key information*). Ask learners to think why we don't hear the other words very clearly (answer: *because they are not the information words, so they are not stressed*).



The challenges of listening in a second language

Listening can be difficult, even in our first language. It can be difficult to understand if someone is speaking quickly, or if they are using words we don't know, on an unfamiliar topic. Physical and environmental factors also make a difference: if we have hearing problems, if we can't see the speaker's face, if several people are speaking at the same time, or if there is a lot of background noise – all these things make it harder to understand what you hear. Listening in a different language can be even more difficult.

Challenges for the learner

In addition to the general challenges of listening, there are other factors which can affect learners' listening in a second language. Here are some of the challenges your learners are likely to face:

1. **Language level.** Do your learners have a wide knowledge of vocabulary, grammar or idioms?
2. **Awareness of pronunciation.** Can they recognise the words and structures they know when they hear them? Can they understand words and phrases in fast and fluent, connected speech?
3. **Experience and exposure to the language.** Are learners familiar with the speaker's accent? Have they heard it before? How is it similar to or different from their own accent?
4. **Knowledge of the topic.** Are learners listening to somebody talking about a specialist subject?
5. **Learner motivation.** Are learners interested in developing their skills in the second language? How confident are they about listening? Are they aware of their own strengths and weaknesses?

Challenges for the teacher

Teachers also have several practical challenges to manage:

1. **Time and space in the syllabus.** How much time do you have to develop learners' listening skills? How long is the course, and will the learners be able to see their progress over time? What are the learners' expectations?

2. **Access to resources.** What materials do you have? Do you have audio recordings with accompanying exercises? Are these suitable for the learners' level, the exam they're preparing for, improving their particular weaknesses, etc.?
3. **Giving feedback.** How can you give feedback to individual learners in a large class? What's the best way to give feedback? How can you make sure you're developing learners' ability to listen, and not just checking correct/incorrect answers?
4. **Technology.** What audio equipment do you have? Is the sound quality good enough for a large classroom? Are learners studying on their own devices? Are they using headphones? Are they studying online from home, perhaps with background noise, distractions or technology problems, which you can't control?

These are not complete lists, of course. Many teachers will be very familiar with the challenges mentioned here and can probably add a few more from their own experience!

The rest of this guide is designed to help you and your learners overcome these challenges and improve their listening skills. There are several practical activities, illustrated with examples from the Cambridge English B1 Preliminary for Schools exam.

★ Top tips for developing learners' listening skills

The long-term goal of a learner is to become so comfortable with the different listening **sub-skills** in their second language that these become automatic, just like in their first language. This is a bigger challenge than just preparing for an exam, but the exam can provide structure and focus which will help both learners and their teachers. Developing listening skills is about helping learners to notice and practise all the small things which effective listeners do, and to use strategies to help them while their general listening abilities are improving.

General advice

✔ **Do ...** practise **bottom-up decoding skills** frequently. The best way to make these processes easier and more automatic is to practise little and often over a long time. You can do this by checking and drilling pronunciation every time you teach new words or grammar, or through techniques like dictation and focused listening. See the **activity idea on page 9** for one way to do this.

✔ **Do ...** raise learners' awareness of how top-down strategies can help them understand more. You can practise these through techniques like using context to guess the meaning of unclear words. See **Activity 1**, below, for more ideas.

✘ **Don't ...** focus *only* on meaning and language. It's also important to build learners' confidence in listening by praising their success and improving their self-awareness.

★ Top tips for developing learners' listening skills

✔ **Do ...** encourage learners to listen for pleasure. Listening doesn't always have to mean listening *practice*. It could mean learners sharing songs or podcasts that they enjoy, for example.

✔ **Do ...** take a healthy approach to exam practice. It's important to practise exam tasks formally sometimes, but don't make exam practice the only listening work you do. Treat listening lessons as an opportunity to help learners understand their own strengths and weaknesses and how to use strategies to improve their understanding.

✔ **Do ...** check learners' understanding thoroughly. In particular, ask them why wrong answers were wrong. Think about the pronunciation of the words they heard, discuss the distractors in the multiple-choice questions and work with the audioscript. See **Activity 2** and **Activity 4** for practical ideas about how to do this.

Before listening: preparing for the task

✔ **Do ...** make sure learners understand what they have to do in the exam task and how to avoid silly mistakes. For example, teach them how to prepare for a specific question, to underline or highlight key words, to read multiple-choice options carefully and to be aware of distractors, which are designed to make them really listen and think. See **Activity 3** for an example of how to analyse the questions carefully before listening.

✘ **Don't ...** just press *play* with no time to prepare. It's important to spend some time on pre-listening tasks so that learners are ready to listen.

✔ **Do ...** check the technology works before class. It's also helpful to have equipment which allows you to rewind just a few seconds so you can easily find and re-play the same very short section several times in a row.

While listening: how to conduct listening tasks

✔ **Do ...** stay quiet while learners listen. Make sure they aren't distracted by your voice, by other learners or by background noise (if possible). After you press *play*, just let them listen and concentrate on the task.

✔ **Do ...** wait a moment for learners to finish thinking and writing after you stop the recording. Don't press stop and then immediately begin speaking – this will quickly make learners forget what they just heard and focus on what you're saying instead.

✘ **Don't ...** forget to **check** learners' predictions! When practising this sub-skill, it's important that learners have the chance to compare their first ideas with what they hear the next time they listen. This will help reveal any problems learners have with understanding, and help to identify what they need to practise to improve.

★ Top tips for developing learners' listening skills

✘ **Don't ...** interrupt a listening to check learners' pre-listening predictions. After the whole recording is finished, you can ask learners to compare and explain their predictions before you confirm if they were right.

After listening: how to check understanding

✔ **Do ...** allow enough time for feedback, especially when deeper understanding is needed. It's especially important for learners to understand why wrong answers are wrong, and sometimes discussion about just one answer can take several minutes or require several opportunities to listen again.

✘ **Don't ...** simply accept the first answer that somebody offers in class. Often the strongest learner will answer, which can mean the class moves at the pace of the most able learner.

✔ **Do ...** take a range of answers from different learners before confirming which is correct. Ask several learners for their ideas, ask if they agree with each other, then play the recording again so they can listen and check their ideas. Finally, ask them if anyone wants to change their original answer before you confirm which is correct.

✘ **Don't ...** ask pupils to report how many answers they got right in the exercise. This doesn't tell you what specifically they are finding difficult and it can be very demotivating. It can also be embarrassing for a learner who found a task much harder than their peers.

✔ **Do ...** give learners the chance to compare their answers in pairs before you ask them what they wrote or chose. This can help learners who may not be very strong at listening, or if they are less confident. They won't feel so shy about sharing their ideas with the rest of the class.

✔ **Do ...** ask learners to justify their choices before you confirm which is correct. For example, ask what they heard that helped them to decide on the correct answer, or ask them to explain why one option is possible and another is impossible.

✔ **Do ...** experiment with tech tools like **Kahoot!** in order to get a whole-class view of the choices that learners made. This also avoids making learners who made an incorrect choice feel uncomfortable. An offline and tech-free alternative is for students to hold up a card or mini-whiteboard showing their answer while they close their eyes so they can't see the other learners' answers! Some learners find this adds an element of fun and mystery.

Preparing learners for the B1 Preliminary for Schools Listening paper

The texts and tasks in Cambridge English Qualifications are designed to reflect real-world communication and to test learners' true abilities in English, so preparing learners for the Listening paper for our qualification shouldn't be very different from developing and assessing their listening skills in general. But of course, the tasks, assessment focus and timings for an exam are very specific and learners should have plenty of practice before they take the real exam.

To prepare for the B1 Preliminary for Schools exam, learners will benefit from:

- plenty of practice, in class and at home, of listening to the kinds of texts they will hear in the exam. If they have friends or family who are learning or who speak English, encourage them to practise together outside class
- chances to practise exam tasks under timed conditions, just like in the real exam
- making sure they can write clearly on the answer sheet so that examiners can read their answers easily.

They also need to understand:

- what they need to do in each task in the Listening paper
- the role of distractors in the exam and how these can lead to wrong answers
- their own strengths and weaknesses when listening
- how they can improve any areas of weakness
- what strategies they can use to overcome doubts or make intelligent guesses if they don't understand certain words or phrases that they hear.

★ Top tips

After doing practice tasks, get learners to record their results and their feelings in a personal learning diary. They should say what they did well and what they found more difficult. Then they can refer back to these notes later in their course in order to see their improvement and consider anything which they still find challenging.

How the exam is assessed

The B1 Preliminary for Schools Listening paper has four parts and lasts for about 30 minutes in total, plus 6 minutes for candidates to transfer their answers to the answer sheet (if they're taking the paper-based test). Every audio recording in the exam is played twice.

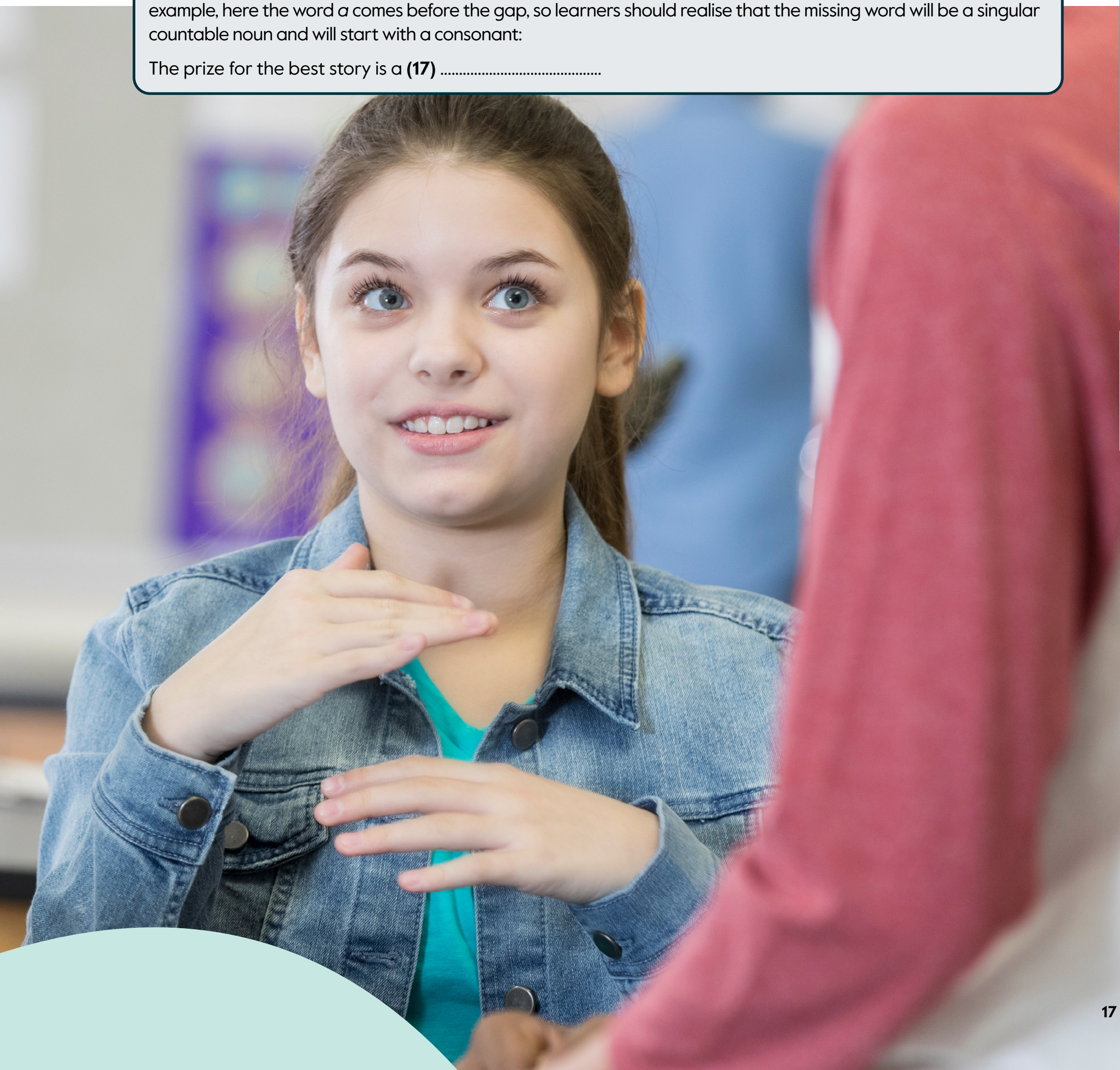
	Task format	What the learner has to do	Which listening skills are being tested
Part 1	7 questions, each with 3 multiple-choice options	Identify key information in seven short monologues or dialogues and choose the correct visual.	Listening for specific information
Part 2	6 questions, each with 3 multiple-choice options	Listen to six short dialogues and understand the gist of each.	Listening for gist
Part 3	A gap-fill with 6 gaps	Listen to a monologue and complete six gaps.	Listening for specific information
Part 4	6 questions, each with 3 multiple-choice options	Listen to an interview for a detailed understanding of meaning and to identify attitudes and opinions.	Listening for detailed understanding

Important note: The example exam tasks used in this guide are provided to give you and your learners an idea of the format of the exam and what is being tested in each part. The tasks have not been fully pretested and calibrated like our published exams. To assess your learners' readiness for a live exam use one of the official sample tests on **cambridgeenglish.org**, or one of our official **practice tests**. Go to our **Mock Test Toolkit** for tips on using sample tests.

Top tips

Part 3 is the only part which requires learners to do more than choose an option from the multiple-choice list. In Part 3, they must write something in a gap. This gives them something extra to think about so it can be a little more difficult to do. When practising Part 3, make sure learners check each question carefully by highlighting key words. They should think about the grammar to help them have an idea about the type of word to listen for. For example, here the word *a* comes before the gap, so learners should realise that the missing word will be a singular countable noun and will start with a consonant:

The prize for the best story is a **(17)** .....



Part 1: Task familiarisation

It's helpful to check with learners what they know and can remember about the format of this part of the exam when you are preparing in class. You can either check with learners before you start Activity 1, or at a point in the lesson that you feel works best. Here are some helpful questions you can ask.

- How many questions are there? (*Seven*)
- How many pictures are there with each question? (*Three*)
- What should you do before you listen? (*Read the question and think about the topic. Highlight key words in the question and think about what you might hear.*)
- What should you do the first time you listen? (*Listen and choose the best picture.*)
- What should you do the second time you listen? (*Listen and check.*)

Activity: Listening Part 1

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 1 and what learners need to do to identify the correct answer. To practise using context and co-text to make predictions about what comes next (a top-down processing strategy).

Also useful for: Parts 3 and 4.

Preparation and equipment: Print out the materials for **Activity 1: Listening**. In this activity the class practise how to approach the task with one question.

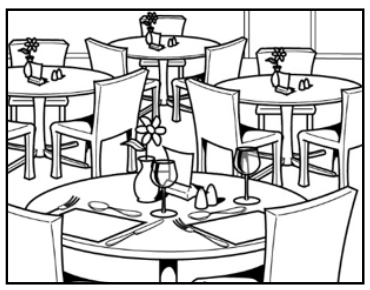
Steps: Prepare to listen

1. Tell the class they are going to learn how to approach the task with just one question to start with.

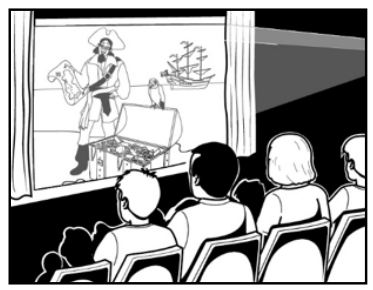
2. Give learners a moment first to read the task instructions. Ask them to highlight the key words and look at the pictures.

   Here's an example. Learners might highlight the word *birthday* in the question and suggest words like *restaurant*, *cinema* and *stadium* for the pictures.

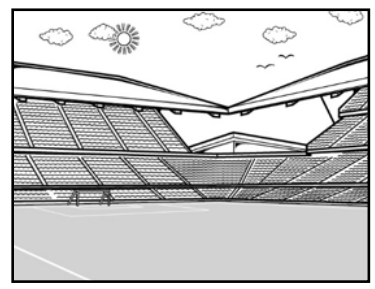
Where did the boy celebrate his birthday?



A



B



C

3. Tell learners you're going to listen and do the task together to find the right answer. Explain you will pause at key moments and ask them to predict what comes next.

Activity 1: Listening Part 1

Rubric: **Where did the boy celebrate his birthday?**

F: Did you have a nice birthday?

M: Yes, thanks – it was great.

F: And how was the film?

M: It was good, but I didn't actually see it until yesterday because **[PAUSE 1]**

I got the times wrong on my birthday. When we arrived at the cinema, the film wasn't due to start for another two hours **[PAUSE 2]**

so my dad suggested going to the big football match instead. By the time we got to the stadium, though, **[PAUSE 3]**

they'd sold all the tickets **[PAUSE 4]**

so we ended up just going for a meal. It was nice, though!

Listening 1

4. Begin playing the **recording**, following the audioscript in the activity. Pause it when you reach **[PAUSE 1]** in the script. Check briefly that learners know which picture the speaker was talking about.

Answer: Picture B, the cinema.

5. Learners now predict how the speaker will continue. In this example, what could come after the word *because*? Elicit a range of ideas from the class and encourage them to be creative. It can be fun to build a story with the class around their predictions. This will help with Listening 4.

Suggested answers: because he was ill/because all the tickets were sold out on his birthday/because he arrived at the cinema too late

Listening 2

6. Continue playing the **recording** so learners can compare their predictions with what the speaker says next. Discuss whether they think their story is better than the one in the recording.
7. Pause the recording at **[PAUSE 2]**. In pairs, learners compare what they heard and try to agree on the answer. They can write a tick (✔) or a cross (✘) above picture B if they think they already know whether this answer is right or wrong. **Don't confirm the correct answer yet!**

Listening 3

8. Check learners are ready to listen again, then continue playing the **recording**.
9. Pause the recording at **[PAUSE 3]**. Check learners know which picture the speaker was talking about.

Answer: Picture C, the football stadium.

10. Learners now predict how the speaker will continue. In this example, what could come after the word *though*?

Suggested answers: the match was over/it was raining heavily/we were really hungry.

Activity 1: Listening Part 1

Listening 4

11. Continue playing the **recording** so learners can compare their predictions with what the speaker really said.
12. Pause the recording at **[PAUSE 4]**. Learners in pairs compare what they heard and try to agree on the answer. They can write a tick (✔) or a cross (✘) above picture C if they think they already know whether this answer is right or wrong. Don't confirm the correct answer yet!
13. Check learners know which picture is left (**answer: picture A**), then continue playing the recording until the end.
14. Review the question with the class. Learners compare ideas in pairs and try to agree on the answer. They can write a tick (✔) or a cross (✘) above picture A if they think they already know whether this answer is right or wrong.

Listening 5

15. Finally, play the entire **recording** one more time **without** pausing so learners can check all their answers. Let them compare with a partner before you invite them to say which answer they think is correct for this task.

Answer key for this example:

The speaker said …	Decision about multiple-choice options	Key words from the audioscript
He arrived at the cinema too early. [between **PAUSE 1** and **PAUSE 2**]	Picture B is a wrong answer	'I got the times wrong' 'the film wasn't due to start for another two hours'
There were no more tickets available for the match. [between **PAUSE 3** and **PAUSE 4**]	Picture C is a wrong answer	'though' – this suggests a contrast
They went for a meal. [between **PAUSE 3** and the end of the recording]	Picture A is the right answer	'we ended up' 'it was nice'

Exam strategy

Remember that every recording in a Cambridge English exam is played twice. This activity shows how learners can make the most of **both** opportunities to listen. The first listening is broken down into sub-stages to help the learners develop their skills, but the idea is the same as in the real exam. They should make predictions while they listen the first time, try to identify the correct answer, and check their answer when they hear the recording for a second time.

Top tip

Don't worry that you didn't do the task exactly as it appears in the exam. Learners should have plenty of chances for exam practice under realistic exam conditions at other points in the course. The focus of the activity is to **support the development of listening** rather than to test. This means taking learners step by step through the task, from prediction to choosing the correct answer from the three options. This practises the same steps they will need in the exam, but at a slower speed, so they can concentrate on developing the right skills.



Part 2: Task familiarisation

Remember to check what learners know and can remember about the format of this part of the exam when you are preparing in class. You can either check with learners before you start Activity 2, or at a point in the lesson that you feel works best. Here are some helpful questions you can ask.

- How many questions are there? (*Six*)
- How many multiple-choice options are there with each question? (*Three*)
- What should you do before you listen? (*Read the question and think about the topic. Highlight key words in the question and the multiple-choice options, and think about what you might hear.*)
- What should you do the first time you listen? (*Listen and choose the best option.*)
- What should you do the second time you listen? (*Listen and check.*)

Activity 2: Listening Part 2

Aims: To practise understanding for gist and choosing the best multiple-choice option.

Also useful for: Parts 3 and 4.

Preparation and equipment: Print out the materials for **Activity 2: Listening Part 2**. In this activity the class practise how to approach the task with one question. They will need to see the audioscript in step 10. Have the answer key ready before class. For step 4, think about the kind of words learners might suggest, especially anything which might confuse them, so you won't be surprised in class if some of their ideas don't make sense.

Steps: Prepare to listen

1. Tell learners they're going to practise how to approach a **Part 2** question with just one question.

2. Ask them:
   - Should they listen for the main idea (gist) or for more detail?

Answer: *gist*.

- Ask: *Does this mean that you must understand every word?*

Answer: No. Learners need to understand the main ideas, which will help them to make the right choice from the multiple-choice options.

- What can you do if you don't understand all the words in the recording?

Answer: Keep listening. Remember, every recording is played twice. Learners can use the first listening to get a general idea and the second listening to choose an answer, but they might still need to guess the meaning of some words.

Activity 2: Listening Part 2

3. Ask learners to look more closely at an example question like the one shown.

> You will hear two friends talking about a song.
>
> The girl thinks that
>
> **A** the music is old-fashioned.
>
> **B** the singers sound unusual.
>
> **C** the words are interesting.

Ask them to identify:

- the topic of the conversation they're going to hear.
- **Answer for this example:** a song.
- who they're going to hear.
- **Answer:** two friends.

4. Now ask learners to read the multiple-choice options and to write two words that they think they might hear for each idea. Explain that this preparation will help them to understand the recording because it will remove some of the surprise when they listen!

Suggested answers: *parents*, *modern*, *recent* for option A; *strange*, *voices*, *weird* for option B; *lyrics*, *sing about*, *verses* for option C.

Listening 1

5. Play the **recording**. Tell learners that as they listen they should think about the multiple-choice options, and just try to exclude one, marking it with a cross (✘). It doesn't matter if they still aren't sure about the other two options.

Rubric: **You will hear two friends talking about a song.**

M: Have you heard the new song by that band I told you about?

F: Yeah, it's OK actually. When I first heard it, I thought it was by one of the bands my mum likes, from about twenty years ago. The guitars are quite similar to them and so are their voices.

M: Yeah, I know what you mean.

F: I've listened to it a few times now but I still can't understand what they're singing about. That's a bit of a shame, cos I thought they wrote songs about some pretty amazing things.

M: That's true.

Activity 2: Listening Part 2

6. Pause to let learners compare their answers. Confirm with the class which option is definitely **wrong**. The purpose is to make them think more about the distractors and to be careful not to choose the first answer based on the first words that they hear.

Answer: B. Learners might have predicted and heard the word *voices* but the speaker didn't say anything about the voices being unusual, so B is not a possible answer. You could also ask the class if they heard what the speaker says about the voices – that they are similar to a band her mother liked twenty years ago.

7. Now invite learners to discuss which of the remaining two answers (A and C) they think is the **right** one and **why**. (Don't worry if they're not sure yet – thinking about this now will just help them focus more when they listen again.) This stage provides an additional layer of support as they prepare to listen again. They only have to decide between two options.

Listening 2

8. Play the **recording** again. This time, learners decide which they think is the correct option and mark it with a tick (✔).

9. Invite learners to compare their answers in pairs. Together, they must decide and agree on which answer is correct and prepare to explain to their classmates **why** this answer is correct. For fast finishers, ask them to prepare to explain why the **other** answer is **wrong**.

Listening 3

10. **Listen**, check and confirm the correct answer. If learners aren't sure why it's correct, show them the audioscript and ask them to identify key words related to the correct option (*my mum*, *twenty years ago*).

Answer: A is correct. Learners might have predicted *amazing* as a synonym for *interesting* in option C – but this is not a true synonym, as *amazing* has a much stronger meaning. Learners might also have predicted or heard the phrase *singing about* and recognised that this refers to the words of the song. *Words* appears in option C (*The girl thinks that the words are interesting*), but this is not possible because the same part of the audioscript shows that the speaker *didn't understand* the words.

Top tips

It can help to build a story with the class around the two friends before listening. Encourage them to be creative with their ideas. This can also be an opportunity to explore and review vocabulary and will make learners more interested in the topic and better prepared for the kinds of things they might hear. For example, ask learners: *Where do you think the friends are? What kind of music do you think they like? Do you talk about music with your friends?*

Before listening, check the class understand the words given in the multiple-choice options; it will help them complete the task. For example, ask learners: *Do you like the same music as older people? Do you like the same music as your parents or grandparents? What about clothes – do you like the same clothes as your grandparents? Why not?* (Hint: Because fashion has changed. You like new fashion but maybe your grandparents like music and clothes which are *old-fashioned.)*

There are various ways you can collect learners' suggestions anonymously during feedback stages like these:

1. If you're teaching face to face, write the answer options (A, B, C) on the board. Ask learners to write their answer on a piece of paper which they hold up for you to check. They could close their eyes while you count all the answers. In this way, learners won't know which answers their classmates chose. When you have counted the answers, write on the board how many answered A, B or C.
2. If you're teaching online, you could use a tool like **Kahoot!** for students to vote on their answers.
3. If you're teaching online, you could simply type the letters and number of votes into the chat box or type them into a document and then share your screen.

Remember that our goal here is to **develop** and **practise** learners' listening skills so that they know how to listen in the exam. So it doesn't matter if you have to tell them the correct answer or show them the audioscript at the end – the aim is to help learners understand why this is the correct answer and **why** the other options are wrong.

Part 3: Task familiarisation

Make time in class to check what learners know and can remember about the format of this part of the exam. You can either check with learners before you start Activity 3, or at a point in the lesson that you feel works best. Here are some helpful questions you can ask.

- How many questions are there? (*Six*)
- What do you have to do? (*Listen and write the correct word, short phrase or number in the gap.*)
- What should you do before you listen? (*Read the title and the information carefully, highlight key information, think about the language and information you might hear.*)
- What should you do the first time you listen? (*Make a note of the words you hear for each gap.*)
- What should you do the second time you listen? (*Listen, read and check your answers.*)

Activity 3: Listening Part 3

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 3 and help learners analyse the questions so they are better prepared to hear and write correct answers.

Also useful for: Grammar and vocabulary revision.

Preparation and equipment: Print out the materials for **Activity 3: Listening Part3**.
Think about any items that could confuse learners. For example, you might need to check they understand that some nouns are countable so can be singular or plural (like a *drink* and *drinks*) and some nouns are uncountable (like *tea*). Similarly, a noun could be one word (like *television*) or two words (like *television show*).

Steps: Prepare to listen

1. Write the opening line of the Part 3 task on the board: *You will hear an announcement about a story*. *writing competition*.

2. Ask learners questions that will connect the topic to them personally. Talk about different genres of writing, e.g. they could write a letter, email, postcard, write a social media post, write a story. *Which kind of writing do they do most often? How many of the class write for pleasure, in their free time? Would they ever enter a story-writing competition? Why/why not?*

Activity 3: Listening Part 3

3. On the board, write the **words given in bold in the bullet points below**. Ask the learners to work in pairs and discuss their ideas for the story-writing competition. Take whole-class feedback, and write their ideas onto the board.
   - **Topic** (For a short story.)
   - **Number of words** (Discuss how many words learners think they could write for a good short story. It may help to hold up an exercise book, and say: *How many words do you think you can write on one page?* (Suggest 250 words.) *So how many pages could your story be? One page? Two pages? More pages? How many words is that?*)
   - **Prizes** (*Do they think everyone should receive something for entering the competition? Should there be one winner or more than one? What prizes do the winners get?*)
   - **Announcing the winners** (*How would this happen? With a letter? A phone call? Social media? A radio show?* etc.)

4. Tell the class that they are now going to listen and find out more about the story-writing competition.

Listening 1

5. Now learners **listen** and compare what they heard in the recording with their own ideas. After playing the recording ask them what they thought. Would they like to enter this competition?

6. Share the Part 3 task with the class which is all about the competition, but they don't have all the information they need. Tell the class that before they listen for the first time, they need to think carefully about the information they are going to hear. Remind learners that in the exam they have time before listening to read the questions. This is an opportunity for them to practise preparing to listen for the exam.

You will hear an announcement about a story-writing competition.

Story-writing competition

Your story must be on the topic of **(1)** …… .

Tell your story in a maximum of **(2)** …… words.

All story writers will get a **(3)** …… .

The prize for the best story is a **(4)** …… .

Send your story by email to the website editor, Stephanie **(5)** …… .

Winners will visit the **(6)** …… to receive their prizes.

Activity 3: Listening Part 3

7. Take a close look at the task. Explain that each gap can be filled by one or two words, a number, a date or a time.

8. Ask them to read and highlight key words in the question that will help them identify the correct answers when they hear them.

9. Ask learners to look at the words around each gap and think about the grammar of the missing word. For example, *Is it a word or a number? If it's a word, how many words? Could it be a noun/verb/adjective etc.? Will it begin with a consonant or a vowel? If it's a number, could it be a date or a time?* Thinking about each gap like this will help learners get an idea about the type of word to listen for. Check the Teacher Tips on **page 12**.

Listening 2

10. Now play the **recording** again. Learners listen and fill in the gaps.

11. Before checking the answers, remind learners that after listening, it's important that they check their spelling and grammar. This is because they must write the answers accurately in the exam. Now ask learners to check their own work and make any corrections if they spot a mistake.

12. Learners now compare their answer with a partner. They should try to agree on the answers and also check each other's spelling and grammar.

Listening 3

13. Now **listen**, check and confirm the correct answers by playing the recording again. After each answer occurs, pause the recording and select one pair of learners to say what the correct answer was. As you confirm each answer, write it on the board so learners can check their spelling.

Answer key:

Question	Answer	Note
1	adventure	Sometimes there are different ways to write the correct answer. Here, you can see that Questions 2 and 3 can be written in different ways. All of these would be marked as correct in the real exam.
2	500 / five hundred	
3	t shirt / t-shirt / tee shirt / tee-shirt	
4	printer	
5	Hislop	
6	radio station	

Optional follow-up

Ask the class to work in pairs and pick one of their ideas for a short story from step 3. Pairs agree on: the storyline; the people in the story; what happened; when and where it happened; and how the story ends. Ask them to write down their ideas and the useful words they can include. Encourage them to use the grammar you have been working on in class. This is similar to Writing Part 2, so they need to write 100 words. Pairs can write the story together, or work with the ideas they generated and write their story on their own.

Top tips

Most things are easier if you do them slowly! Activity 3 practises the same steps learners should follow in the real exam, but it gives learners **more time** to build their interest and to practise different **listening sub-skills**. Before they listen (steps 1 and 2), they're practising prediction. The first time they listen (step 5), they're practising listening for **gist**. The second time they listen (step 10), they're practising listening for **key information**.

If you have a strong class, ask them if they can remember any of the answers before they listen for the final time. It's possible that they understood quite a lot from just the first listening, and it will help them feel more confident about their listening.

Don't forget to check the Teacher Tips on **page 12** the word resources for steps 8 and 9 for Activity 3. The tips look like this for each question.

Your story must be on the topic of **(1)** …… .	**Tip (1):** after of there must be a noun. The noun could be singular or plural.

Part 4: Task familiarisation

Make time in class to check what learners know and can remember about the format of this part of the exam. You can either check with learners before you start Activity 4, or at a point in the lesson that you feel works best. Here are some helpful questions you can ask

- How many questions are there? (*Six*)
- How many multiple-choice options are there with each question? (*Three*)
- What should you do before you listen? (*Read the question and think about the topic. Highlight key words in the question and the multiple-choice options, and think about what you might hear.*)
- What should you do the first time you listen? (*Listen and choose the best option.*)
- What should you do the second time you listen? (*Listen and check.*)

Activity 4: Listening Part 4

Aims: To practise listening for detailed information in an interview and identifying a speaker's attitudes or opinions. To practise using pre-listening time as preparation for answering the questions.

Also useful for: Parts 1 and 3.

Preparation and equipment: Print out the materials for **Activity 4: Listening Part 4**. In this activity, the class practise how to approach the task with one question. Do the task yourself before looking at the answer key. This will prepare you to check that learners understand why the right answers are right and why the wrong answers are wrong. If you can, make copies of the highlighted audioscript to your computer and display on the board, or make a large copy to use to show learners in step 9.

Steps: Prepare to listen

1. Tell learners they're going to start by practising how to approach a **Part 4** question with just one question.

2. Give the learners the rubric to the Part 4 listening from the **Appendix**. Ask the learners to highlight the key words in the question to identify the type of recording they're going to hear, what they learn about the speaker and what the speaker is going to be talking about.

> **Rubric:**
>
> You will hear an interview with a woman called Elena Hatchard, who is talking about her work as a TV producer.

Answer: an interview; working as a TV producer.

Activity 4: Listening Part 4

3. Tell learners that the topics for Part 4 can include information about places and events or people's lives, interests and experiences.

4. Discuss ideas around the topic in the listening. Ask learners to share their own thoughts about the topic with a partner. For this example, you could ask them:
   - *What kind of programmes do you enjoy watching on TV? Why?*
   - *Would they like to work in TV? What kind of work would they like to do? Would they like to work in front of the camera (on screen), or behind the camera (behind the scenes)?*
   - *What do they think a TV producer does?* Reassure them that all ideas are good ideas, so if they don't know, they can guess, they might be right.

5. Tell learners you're going to listen to just the first part of the interview. You want to find out what Elena wanted to be when she was younger. Give learners the example question from the **Appendix**. Before they listen, they should highlight key words in the question and multiple-choice options, and write down a few related words or phrases which they think they might hear in the recording, like this:

1 When she was young, Elena's ambition was to
a child *always wanted*

A work as an actor in a TV drama.
character *television programme*

B operate a film camera.
use *movie*

C write for the screen.
script

Listening 1

6. Play just the first part of the **recording** and ask learners to choose which multiple-choice option is best. Remind them that they only need to listen and find out what Elena wanted to do when she was younger.

Interviewer:	Today I'm talking to Elena Hatchard, who's a TV producer – the person in charge of putting a whole television programme together. Elena, was it your ambition to work in TV?
Elena:	As a teenager, I was crazy about television. I joined a film-making group, then got an acting part in a soap opera. That was my dream, but I wasn't any good at it. I tried writing a screenplay; even worked behind the camera for a while. What I discovered was that I was good at organising things. So, in the end, I studied TV and film production at college.

Activity 4: Listening Part 4

7. Ask learners to compare their answers with a partner. They should explain their choices to each other and try to agree. Take whole-class feedback but don't confirm yet which answer is correct.

Listening 2

8. Play the first part of the **recording** again and ask learners to review their answers. Have any of them changed their minds now they have listened again?

9. Ask learners briefly to compare their answers again with their partner. Now show them the part of the audioscript for Question 1. Ask them to look for the information that helps them decide which answer is correct and why the others are wrong.

Answer key:

When she was young, Elena's ambition was to:

A work as an actor in a TV drama.

B operate a film camera.

C write for the screen.

As a teenager, I was crazy about television. I joined a film-making group, then got an acting part *in a* soap opera. That was my dream, but I wasn't any good at it. I tried writing a screenplay; even worked behind the camera for a while. What I discovered was that I was good at organising things. So, in the end, I studied TV and film production at college.

✔ **A is correct.** Elena explains that her 'dream' was to act in a soap opera (which is a type of 'TV drama').

✘ **B is incorrect.** Elena 'worked behind the camera' but she doesn't say this was her dream or ambition.

✘ **C is incorrect.** Elena mentions that she 'tried writing a screenplay' but doesn't connect this to her dream or ambition.

10. Give learners all of the questions for Part 4. Tell them they're going to listen to the rest of the recording but first they need to prepare to listen. They can do this in pairs if they like.

11. Encourage them to follow the steps they took with the first question. Give them up to 10 minutes to look at Questions 2 to 6 and the multiple-choice options. Remind them to highlight key words and to discuss any related vocabulary they think they might hear.

Activity 4: Listening Part 4

Listening 3

12. Now play the rest of the **recording** and ask learners to choose the best option for each question.

13. Ask learners to compare their answers with a partner. They should explain their choices to each other and try to agree. Take whole-class feedback but don't confirm yet which answer is correct.

Listening 4

14. Play the entire **recording** again and ask learners to check their answers to the last five questions.

15. Ask learners to compare their answers again with their partner briefly. Now share the complete audioscript and ask them to look for the information that helps them decide which are the correct answers and why the others are wrong. Check the annotated teacher answer key in the activity **Appendix**.

Top tips

Thinking about and discussing the topic before listening is always a good way to improve learners' understanding. But it's especially useful to personalise this discussion. By sharing their own attitudes and opinions, they will be better prepared to understand the attitudes and opinions of the speakers in the recording. It's also an opportunity to practise speaking in English.

In the exam, candidates have 45 seconds before the recording begins to read all six questions and the multiple-choice options. But this activity is for classroom practice, so you can spend more time on each question. It helps to break down the exam strategy into smaller, manageable pieces when working on developing skills. Over time, this approach will become quicker and more automatic for learners so they can use their time efficiently in the exam.

Optional follow-up

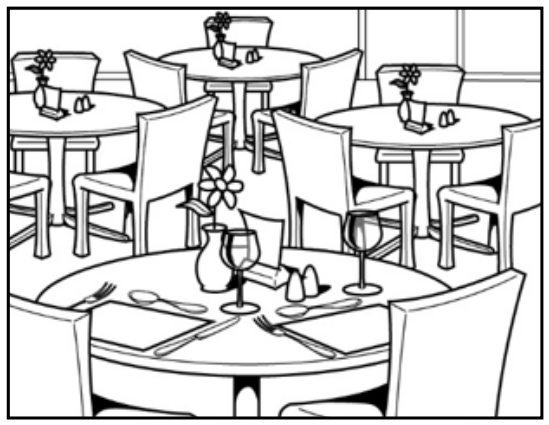
After completing this practice activity, you could introduce an activity to work on understanding weak forms in connected speech (bottom-up decoding skills). See the **activity idea on page 9**.

Appendix

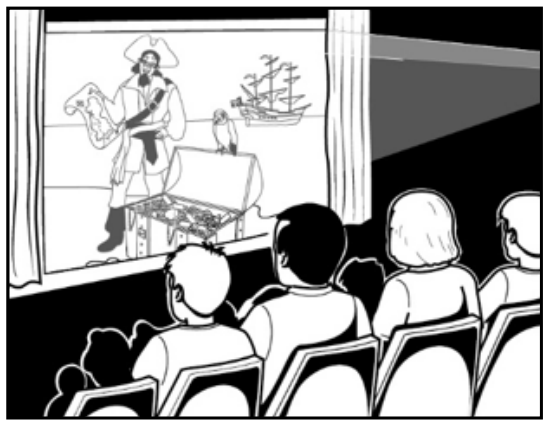
Activity 1: Listening Part 1 – Task

Here is an example of one question from Part 1.

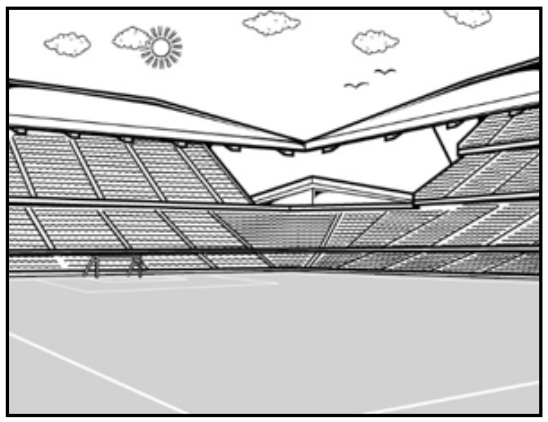
Where did the boy celebrate his birthday?



A



B



C

F: Did you have a nice birthday?

M: Yes, thanks – it was great.

F: And how was the film?

M: It was good, but I didn't actually see it until yesterday because I got the times wrong on my birthday. When we arrived at the cinema, the film wasn't due to start for another two hours so my dad suggested going to the big football match instead. By the time we got to the stadium, though, they'd sold all the tickets so we ended up just going for a meal. It was nice, though!

Activity 1: Listening Part 1 – Teacher instructions

Rubric: Where did the boy celebrate his birthday?

F: Did you have a nice birthday?

M: Yes, thanks – it was great.

F: And how was the film?

M: It was good, but I didn't actually see it until yesterday because

[PAUSE 1]

I got the times wrong on my birthday. When we arrived at the cinema, the film wasn't due to start for another two hours

[PAUSE 2]

so my dad suggested going to the big football match instead. By the time we got to the stadium, though,

[PAUSE 3]

they'd sold all the tickets

[PAUSE 4]

so we ended up just going for a meal. It was nice, though!

Answer key

The speaker said …	**Decision about multiple-choice options**	**Key words from the audioscript**
He arrived at the cinema too early. [between **PAUSE 1** and **PAUSE 2**]	Picture B is a wrong answer	'I got the times wrong' 'the film wasn't due to start for another two hours'
There were no more tickets available for the match. [between **PAUSE 3** and **PAUSE 4**]	Picture C is a wrong answer	'though' – this suggests a contrast
They went for a meal. [between **PAUSE 3** and the end of the recording]	Picture A is the right answer	'we ended up' 'it was nice'

Activity 2: Listening Part 2 – Task

Here is an example of one question from Part 2.

You will hear two friends talking about a song.

The girl thinks that

A the music is old-fashioned

B the singers sound unusual

C the words are interesting.

Activity 2: Listening Part 2 – Audioscript

Rubric: **You will hear two friends talking about a song.**

M: Have you heard the new song by that band I told you about?

F: Yeah, it's OK actually. When I first heard it, I thought it was by one of the bands my mum likes, from about twenty years ago. The guitars are quite similar to them and so are their voices.

M: Yeah, I know what you mean.

F: I've listened to it a few times now but I still can't understand what they're singing about. That's a bit of a shame, cos I thought they wrote songs about some pretty amazing things.

M: That's true.

Answer key

A is correct.

Learners might have predicted *amazing* as a synonym for *interesting* in option C – but this is not a true synonym, as *amazing* has a much stronger meaning. Learners might also have predicted or heard the phrase *singing about* and recognised that this refers to the words of the song. *Words* appears in option C (*The girl thinks that the words are interesting*), but this is not possible because the same part of the audioscript shows that the speaker *didn't understand* the words.

Activity 3: Listening Part 3 – Task

Questions 1–6

For each question, write the correct answer in the gap. Write **one** or **two** words or a **number** or a **date** or a **time**.

You will hear an announcement about a story-writing competition.

Story-writing competition

Your story must be on the topic of **(1)** …… .

Tell your story in a maximum of **(2)** …… words.

All story writers will get a **(3)** …… .

The prize for the best story is a **(4)** …… .

Send your story by email to the website editor, Stephanie **(5)** …… .

Winners will visit the **(6)** …… to receive their prizes.

Activity 3: Listening Part 3 – Audioscript

Rubric: **You will hear an announcement about a story-writing competition.**

F: If you get excited about writing then you'll love our new competition. It's open to everyone between the ages of 10 and 15, and we're hoping to find some great new writers!

This year's topic is 'adventure', and you can write about anything from a day out with your family to an exciting trip with your friends. Last year's topic, 'famous people', was very
popular, with lots of funny stories about your favourite stars.

Your story should be told in between 400 and 500 words. We also want you to write a
50-word letter saying why you like writing. You don't need to count the title in the word limit for the story – though it shouldn't be longer than five words.

Now something about the prizes! Everyone who sends in a story will get a T-shirt and the school with the most storywriters will get a special dictionary for the library.

The judges will then read all the stories and choose the best one. Last year's prize was a camera. This year the winner will receive a printer for their computer. The second and third stories will get a set of pens.

Please send your entry by email to our website editor, Stephanie Hislop – that's H-I-S-L-O-P. You'll find her email address on the website. You can also ask Stephanie any questions online.

The winners will come to the radio station on 30th November to get their prizes, before going on to a big party at a fast-food restaurant. So why not start writing now!

Activity 3: Listening Part 3 – Teacher tips for steps 8 and 9

Story-writing competition

Your story must be on the topic of
(1) …… .

Tell your story in a maximum of
(2) …… words.

All story writers will get a
(3) …… .

The prize for the best story is a
(4) …… .

Send your story by email to the website editor, Stephanie
(5) …… .

Winners will visit the
(6) …….. to receive their prizes.

Tip (1): after *of* there must be a noun. The noun could be singular or plural.

Tip (2): before *words* there must be a plural number.

Tip (3): after *a* there must be a singular noun. Because there is *a* and not *an*, this noun will start with a consonant.

Tip (4): after *a* there must be a singular noun. Because there is *a* and not *an*, this noun will start with a consonant.

Tip (5): after a name like *Stephanie* there will be another name (Stephanie's surname). In the exam, names will always be spelled out, so learners should listen carefully and write down the correct spelling.

Tip (6): after *the* there must be a noun. The noun could be singular or plural.

Activity 3: Listening Part 3 – Answer key

Question	Answer	Note:
1	adventure	Sometimes there are different ways to write the correct answer. Here, you can see that Questions 2 and 3 can be written in different ways. All of these would be marked as correct in the real exam.
2	500/five hundred	
3	t shirt/t-shirt/tee shirt/tee-shirt	
4	printer	
5	Hislop	
6	radio station	

Activity 4: Listening Part 4 – Task

Rubric:

You will hear an interview with a woman called Elena Hatchard, who is talking about her work as a TV producer.

Here is an example of one question from Part 4.

When she was young, Elena's ambition was to

A work as an actor in a TV drama
B operate a film camera
C write for the screen.

Interviewer: Today I'm talking to Elena Hatchard, who's a TV producer – the person in charge of putting a whole television programme together. Elena, was it your ambition to work in TV?

Elena: As a teenager, I was crazy about television. I joined a film-making group, then got an acting part in a soap opera. That was my dream, but I wasn't any good at it. I tried writing a screenplay; even worked behind the camera for a while. What I discovered was that I was good at organising things. So, in the end, I studied TV and film production at college.

Answer key

When she was young, Elena's ambition was to: **A** work as an actor in a TV drama. **B** operate a film camera. **C** write for the screen.	As a teenager, I was crazy about television. I joined a film-making group, then got an acting part in a soap opera. That was my dream, but I wasn't any good at it. I tried writing a screenplay; even worked behind the camera for a while. What I discovered was that I was good at organising things. So, in the end, I studied TV and film production at college.

✔ **A is correct.** Elena explains that her 'dream' was to act in a soap opera (which is a type of 'TV drama').

✘ **B is incorrect.** Elena 'worked behind the camera' but she doesn't say this was her dream or ambition.

✘ **C is incorrect.** Elena mentions that she 'tried writing a screenplay' but doesn't connect this to her dream or ambition.

Activity 4: Listening Part 4 – Questions 1–6

1. When she was young, Elena's ambition was to

A work as an actor in a TV drama

B operate a film camera

C write for the screen.

2. Elena particularly enjoys working on TV programmes that

A people find scary

B try to make people laugh

C show people's everyday lives.

3. Elena believes the most successful stories

A are very original

B are based on truth

C are simple and clear.

4. What does Elena say about watching TV in her free time?

A She spends too much time doing it.

B She checks what's on TV every day.

C She lets her family choose what to watch.

5. Elena thinks that most actors

A work very hard

B are very ambitious

C prefer acting on TV to doing films.

6. What is Elena's advice for young people who would like to work in TV?

A Study subjects that might be useful.

B Find out about the variety of jobs they can do.

C Think about the type of programmes they'd like to be involved in.

Activity 4: Listening Part 4 – Complete audioscript for Questions 1–6

M: Today I'm talking to Elena Hatchard, who's a TV producer – the person in charge of putting a whole television programme together. Elena, was it your ambition to work in TV?

F: As a teenager, I was crazy about television. I joined a film-making group, then got an acting part in a soap opera. That was my dream, but I wasn't any good at it. I tried writing a screenplay; even worked behind the camera for a while. What I discovered was that I was good at organising things. So, in the end, I studied TV and film production at college.

M: What programmes do you enjoy working on most?

F: Those aimed at younger people. Horror stories and thrillers are very popular – people love being frightened but I'm really keen on doing comedy. Whatever you do, unless you've got a well-known star, it's hard to attract a large audience. People seem to love reality TV – finding out how other people live, but not me.

M: What makes a successful story?

F: It's rare to find one that's totally original. All great stories have something true to say, whether they're exciting or not. Often they come from things that have really happened. For a great story, it doesn't matter how complicated it is – it's whether people connect with it somehow.

M: Do you watch much TV yourself in your free time?

F: You mean, after spending so many hours looking at screens at work? I enjoy relaxing with my family in front of the TV. It's something to do together and talk about. We avoid doing it every day though, but I always look to see what we're missing. It's interesting to see if my husband and children want to watch the same thing as me.

M: What about working with actors?

F: I deal with them all the time. I've known some famous ones and lots who are unknown. They're all different, some give more time and energy to their work than others, or have more talent, but they'd generally rather do TV work than movies – there's more chance to do a good range of things.

M: What's your advice to any young listeners hoping to work in TV one day?

F: Well, a lot of TV programmes are useful for schoolwork, so watching them's not a waste of time. Even so, whilst you're watching, keep thinking about the kind of show you'd like to work on. In life, it's often best to focus on a particular area; become an expert on something – rather than knowing a lot about all sorts of different things. The same's true in TV.

Activity 4: Listening Part 4 – Answer key for Questions 2–6

2 Elena particularly enjoys working on TV programmes that

A people find scary

B try to make people laugh

C show people's everyday lives.

Interviewer: What programmes do you enjoy working on most?

Elena: Those aimed at younger people. Horror stories and thrillers are very popular – people love being frightened but I'm really keen on doing comedy. Whatever you do, unless you've got a well-known star, it's hard to attract a large audience. People seem to love reality TV – finding out how other people live, but not me.

✘ **A is incorrect.** Elena says other people enjoy scary programmes but she is *really keen on doing comedy.*

✔ **B is correct** because Elena is *really keen* on comedy (shows that *make people laugh*).

✘ **C is incorrect.** Elena says other people enjoy *reality TV* (shows about *people's everyday lives*) – *but not me*. In other words, she doesn't like these shows.

3 Elena believes the most successful stories

A are very original

B are based on truth

C are simple and clear.

Interviewer: What makes a successful story?

Elena: It's rare to find one that's totally original. All great stories have something true to say, whether they're exciting or not. Often they come from things that have really happened. For a great story, it doesn't matter how complicated it is – it's whether people connect with it somehow.

✘ **A is incorrect.** Elena says it's *rare* for a programme to be *original*.

✔ **B is correct** because Elena says *great stories* (*successful stories* in the question) are always about *something true*.

✘ **C is incorrect.** Elena says *it doesn't matter* if a story is *complicated*. So it's not necessary for a story to be *simple and clear*.

4 What does Elena say about watching TV in her free time?

A She spends too much time doing it.

B She checks what's on TV every day.

C She lets her family choose what to watch.

Interviewer: Do you watch much TV yourself in your free time?

Elena: You mean, after spending so many hours looking at screens at work? I enjoy relaxing with my family in front of the TV. It's something to do together and talk about. We avoid doing it every day though, but I always look to see what we're missing. It's interesting to see if my husband and children want to watch the same thing as me.

✘ **A is incorrect.** *Too much time* has a negative sense, but Elena says she *enjoys* watching TV.

✔ **B is correct.** She *always looks to see* what is on TV.

✘ **C is incorrect.** Her family (her *husband and children*) are involved but she only mentions the possibility of them choosing different things, not *letting* them do so.

5 Elena thinks that most actors

A work very hard

B are very ambitious

C prefer acting on TV to doing films.

Interviewer: What about working with actors?

Elena: I deal with them all the time. I've known some famous ones and lots who are unknown. They're all different, some give more time and energy to their work than others, or have more talent, but they'd generally rather do TV work than movies – there's more chance to do a good range of things.

✘ **A is incorrect.** She says *some* (not *most*) actors *give more time and energy to their work*.

✘ **B is incorrect.** She doesn't say anything about ambition.

✔ **C is correct.** She says *generally*, referring to *most* actors. Learners should notice that she clearly expresses the idea in option C but uses synonyms for *prefer* (*rather*) and *films (movies)*.

6 What is Elena's advice for young people who would like to work in TV?

A Study subjects that might be useful.

B Find out about the variety of jobs they can do.

C Think about the type of programmes they'd like to be involved in.

Interviewer: What's your advice to any young listeners hoping to work in TV one day?

Elena: Well, a lot of TV programmes are useful for schoolwork, so watching them's not a waste of time. Even so, whilst you're watching, keep thinking about the kind of show you'd like to work on. In life, it's often best to focus on a particular area; become an expert on something – rather than knowing a lot about all sorts of different things. The same's true in TV.

✘ **A is incorrect.** Elena says that *TV programmes are useful* but not specific *subjects*.

✘ **B is incorrect.** She refers to different kinds of *show*, but not different kinds of *job*.

✔ **C is correct.** She clearly expresses this idea but uses synonyms for *type of programme* (*kind of show*) and *be involved in* (*work on*).

Extra resources

You might find the following resources helpful for the development of listening skills, both in class and as independent self-study.

Lesson plans and resources for teachers

- A variety of free resources for preparing learners for Cambridge English Qualifications
- A guide to Integrating learning and assessment

Webinar recordings about developing listening skills

- Preparing students online for Cambridge English Listening exam papers (A2 Key, B1 Preliminary and B2 First for Schools exams)
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References

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