Cambridge English Qualifications

C2 Proficiency: Listening Part 1

Description

In this activity students identify the focuses of questions in Part 1 Listening. This encourages students to read the questions carefully and it also helps them concentrate on finding the answer to the question, rather than being tempted by the distractors.

Time required:	45 minutes
Materials required:	▪ Student's worksheet (one copy per student) ▪ Sample recording or (if a pre-recorded version is not available, you may record your own, or read out the extracts to the class) ▪ Sample task (for follow-up activity, optional)
Aims:	▪ to raise awareness of the test focuses of multiple-choice questions ▪ to help student concentrate on listening for the answer to the question ▪ to practise a Part 1 task

Procedure

1. Elicit from the students what they know about Listening Part 1. Make sure the following key points are covered
    - Part 1 is a **multiple choice task**
    - There are **six questions** relating to **three separate texts (two questions per text**)
    - Texts are a mixture of **monologues** and **texts with interacting speakers**
    - **There is an introductory sentence** to **contextualize** the texts
    - **Each question focuses on a different aspect of each text**
    - Each correct answer in Part 1 (also Parts 2, 3 and 4) receives **1 mark**.
2. We cannot assume that students understand the terminology of testing therefore it's a good idea to check some of the less familiar test focuses.

    Write the test focuses on the board:

feeling	purpose	agreement	opinion
attitude	course of action	gist	detail

    Elicit from the whole class what these are (*test focuses for Part 1 questions, i.e. what they need to identify in order to answer a question*). Explain that if students understand what the question is asking them to listen out for (the *test focus*), it makes answering the questions easier.

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Discuss together what a test focus of *feeling* means. (*the feeling/emotion that the speaker has about the topic*). Elicit which other test focuses are similar (*opinion and attitude*).

Discuss what is meant by *detail* (*a detailed piece of information given by the speaker*).

3. Give out the **Student's worksheet**. In pairs, students discuss **Exercise 1.** If necessary, prompt:

- **purpose –** do people speak only to give information? (*no*) What other reasons do people have for speaking? (*to persuade; express opinion; encourage, etc.*)
- **agreement (or disagreement)** – When there are two speakers (or one speaker refers to another person or organisation), do they always have the same opinion? *(no; you may need to listen whether they have the same opinions or not)*
- **course of action** – is this something the speaker (or someone else) has done or is going to do? ((*it is about people's future intentions)*
- **gist** – Is this a minor detail? (*no, it is a summary of the main point)*

Go through the answers together (see **Key**).

4. Ask students to read the instructions for **Exercise 2**. Stress the importance of reading the context sentences and then carefully reading the questions. The context sentence usually tells you who is speaking and where they are speaking. From this you can usually understand who the audience is.

Focus on Extract 1. Ask students to choose what is being tested from the list of test focuses in the box. Check the answers and ask the students to highlight the key words in questions 1 and 2 which helped them find the answers (see **Key** below).

Go through each extract in the same way one by one, checking the answers after each text.

5. Ask students to listen to the texts/recording and to answer questions 1–6. Questions 4 and 6 are known as sentence-completion items. Don't show the option: the aim of this stage is to focus on what they are being asked, rather than to sort out the answer from the distractors.

6. Check answers together, using the key to the sample task and the correct option from the **Sample task**. Do not focus on the distractors as this is the activity for the follow-up task.

7. Finally, show students the **Sample task**. Remind students that in the actual task, they need to select the correct answer from the three options, and that you will look at how to approach this another time. Briefly review Part 1 by asking:

- How many texts are there? (*three*)
- How many questions? (*six – two per text*)
- Are the texts on the same theme? (*no*)
- What are some of the different test focuses that might be used? (*feeling, attitude, opinion, purpose, agreement, gist, detail, course of action*)

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Suggested follow-up

Ask students to look at the **Sample task**. Play the recording and ask the students to do questions 1–6. This time students will see all the options, as in the exam.

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Answer keys

Student's Worksheet Exercise 1

Purpose: we want to understand why the speaker (or a person or organisation the speaker refers to) is doing something or saying something

Agreement: we want to understand if the speaker agrees or disagrees with the second speaker or someone the speaker refers to.

Course of action: we want to understand what the speaker (or a person or organisation the speaker refers to) is planning to do.

Gist: we want to understand the general meaning/main point of part of a text or the whole text.

Student's Worksheet Exercise 2

1 **purpose**; What is the main objective of the project …

2 **opinion**; What is the speaker's opinion of the new project?

3 **opinion;** What is the art critic's opinion of Fitzgerald's latest work?

4 **gist**; The art critic says that Fitzgerald's pictures in the current show ..

5 **feeling**; How does the speaker say she feels when listening to her favourite piece of music?

6 **(dis)agreement**; The speaker believes that critics of her favourite music are wrong to ….

Sample Task

1. C **2.** B **3.** A **4.** B

5. A **6.** C

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Student's Worksheet

Exercise 1

In the box is a list of the possible test focuses of the multiple-choice questions in Part 1.

feeling	purpose	agreement	opinion
attitude	course of action	gist	detail

If we say the focus is *feeling,* it means that we are listening and trying to understand what the speaker's feeling is: is he excited, upset, annoyed, etc.?

What does it mean when we say a question is focussing on:

- purpose
- agreement
- course of action
- gist?

Exercise 2

For each extract, read the first sentence, the context sentence, and the questions below and choose what is being tested from the list of test focuses in the box above. Then underline the words in the question which helped you decide.

Extract One

You hear a man talking about a new project being launched in a group of small Atlantic islands.

1 What is the main objective of the project?

2 What is the speaker's opinion of the new project?

Extract Two

You hear part of an interview with an art critic, in which an exhibition featuring the work of photographer Tim Fitzgerald is discussed.

3 What is the art critic's opinion of Fitzgerald's latest work?

4 The art critic says that Fitzgerald's pictures in the current show …

Extract Three

You hear a woman talking on the radio about her favourite piece of music.

5 How does the speaker say she feels when listening to her favourite piece of music?

6 The speaker believes that critics of her favourite music are wrong to …

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Tape script

You'll hear three different extracts. For questions 1–6, choose the answer (A, B, or C) which fits best according to what you hear. There are two questions for each extract.

Extract one.

You hear a man talking about a new project being launched in a group of small Atlantic islands.

Strolling along a deserted beach, I saw a bottle dusted with sand and found a message curled inside. An exciting moment! But messages in bottles are not new here. The earliest dates back to eighteen sixty when ships used them to keep those on land informed of their progress. None too reliable when your ship is sinking!

But the local museum is launching a project using bottled messages, not just to promote the whereabouts of the islands and attract tourism. Islanders are being invited to include maps and information about the islands themselves. Bottles have been collected from local beaches and are, though not in the traditional sense, being recycled. Primarily and more ambitiously, the project is set to identify tidal movements. Not by science or satellite systems, but by hurling these bottles back into the sea.

The hope is that people will reply to those messages through the more traditional postal system. Islanders will gain pen pals and new visitors, and the final whereabouts of the bottles will enable scientists to track their paths.

And all this from bottles discarded on a beach!

Extract two.

You hear part of an interview with an art critic, in which an exhibition featuring the work of photographer Tim Fitzgerald is discussed.

Presenter:

Last year, Tim Fitzgerald exhibited photographs of his family, but in the current exhibition, which he shares with two other visual artists, he focuses solely on landscapes. What's your impression of them?

Critic:

I'm not sure he has what it takes to move beyond his family. Last year's images of his nearest and dearest were very moving, weren't they – there was a wonderful close-up of his sister's face, almost like an abstract. But these landscapes … they're not impressive or particularly articulate.

Presenter:

I know he invokes the influence of several famous painters. You didn't find any of that in his landscapes?

Critic:

No. I think he **has** produced a couple of strong images, but there's no sign of them in the current show and I'm at a loss to know why. It's a very random choice. And also, four small photos in a large gallery feel very sparse. You can see it was an attempt to draw you in, but for me it backfired. You need more impact to raise the curtain on the exhibition – it's not as if it's the last room, it's the first, and you move on to the other artists' work

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Extract three.

You hear a woman talking on the radio about her favourite piece of music.

One of my own thoughts about this piece is the idea that you're letting yourself go. For me, that's certainly what happens to me. When you're really immersed in it, you're no longer self-conscious, you're absolutely the recipient of the sound. For me it's not even as if it conjures up a specific event. At one point, I was playing it all the time – in supermarket queues, walking into work – having that sound in my ears gave me a world and a space that was very different. My family got pretty fed up. Certainly my husband winces at my corny tastes. I don't know if corny's the right word, but a colleague once said to me she would have expected something less banal. I find that rather sad. OK, so it's a piece that obviously works for many other people too, but that doesn't mean to say it should be denigrated, just because you don't have to have great sophistication in music to appreciate it.

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Sample Task

Now look at the multiple-choice questions for this text. Listen to the recording and answer questions 1–8.

Extract One
You hear a man talking about a new project being launched in a group of small Atlantic islands.

1 What is the main objective of the project?
- A to raise environmental awareness.
- B to encourage tourism in the islands..
- C to follow the movements of the tides.

2 What is the speaker's opinion of the new project?
- A The idea is over-ambitious.
- B The approach is innovative.
- C The experiment is unscientific.

Extract Two
You hear part of an interview with an art critic, in which an exhibition featuring the work of photographer Tim Fitzgerald is discussed.

3 What is the art critic's opinion of Fitzgerald's latest work?
- A It demonstrates his lack of artistic range.
- B It compares favourably with his previous work.
- C It shows his poor understanding of relationships.

4 The art critic says that Fitzgerald's pictures in the current show
- A are unsuitable for rounding off the exhibition.
- B do not manage to engage the visitor's interest.
- C lacks artistic originality..

Extract Three
You hear a woman talking on the radio about her favourite piece of music.

5 How does the speaker say she feels when listening to her favourite piece of music?
- A engrossed
- B nostalgic
- C inspired

6 The speaker believes that critics of her favourite music are wrong to
- A doubt the level of its popularity.
- B disregard the composer's skills.
- C underrate it for its wide appeal.

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