

## Classroom activity 4 – Preparing for the Listening phase

**Grade:** GESE Grade 12 (CEFR C2)

**Focus:** The Listening phase

**Time:** 65 minutes

**Aims:**

- ▶ To review the exam format
- ▶ To raise students' awareness of listening task types
- ▶ To practise listening and completing the tasks
- ▶ To read about the listening phase
- ▶ To match sentence halves to form sentences about the listening phase
- ▶ To listen to and complete some listening tasks for GESE Grade 12

**Materials needed:**

- ▶ One copy of Worksheet 1, 2 & 3a/b for each student

### Preparation

Make copies of Worksheets 1, 2 and 3a/3b for all students.

### In class

#### What do you know about the Listening phase? (5 minutes)

1. Tell the students you are going to focus on how to prepare for the Listening phase. Give them 2 minutes to discuss in pairs or small groups what they know about this phase.
2. When they finish talking, take a few suggestions from the group and put them on the board. Don't confirm if their ideas are right or wrong at this point.

#### Making sentences about the Listening phase (10 minutes)

1. Give the students Worksheet 1 and ask them to work on it for about 4 minutes alone. They match the information in columns A and B to make sentences about the Listening phase.
2. When they've finished, get them to check their answers in pairs, and then elicit and confirm the answers on the board as a group. Confirm which of their ideas from the first task were true too if they haven't been covered in the task. If they have questions about the type of tasks, reassure them that this will be covered in the next task.
3. Make sure they have understood key facts, such as the fact that the listening task cannot be repeated, there is no writing (eg note-taking) etc.

#### Identifying question types (up to 10 minutes)

1. Write the following information on the board:
  - ▶ There are three listening tasks in total
  - ▶ Two type 1 – provide a suitable ending
  - ▶ One type 2 – identify participants, contexts or settings.
2. Give them a copy of Worksheet 2 and give them about 3 minutes to read the tasks and to decide if each one is an example of Type 1 or Type 2.
3. After, get them to check their answers in pairs and explain their choice.
4. Finally, confirm the answers on the board. If the students ask for reasons for the answers, explain this will be focussed on in the next task.

### How to work out the answers? (10 minutes)

1. Give the students about 4 minutes to read through the text and underline anything which helps them to work out the answer. Support them by underlining '*found*' and '*thought*' as examples, and elicit from the group why they help (because they are in the past tense not the present, there is a possibility it might not be true now).
2. After, encourage them to compare their answers in pairs. Monitor and offer support where needed.
3. Finally, go through each text, eliciting ideas from each group and asking them to explain their choices. See the highlighted texts in the answers section for guidance on this. Make sure you draw students' attention to the word '*was*' and the fact that this suggests that the answer might be a past participle.

### Practise as a group (15 minutes)

1. Explain to the students that that you're going to push them to focus on their listening skills now. Tell them you're going to read out an example of a Listening task type 1 and that when you finish, you want them to write down what they think the answer is (tell them not to worry about spelling/written accuracy). Make sure they don't shout out the answer. Read the following prompt:

Some fascinating research was carried out about the effects that birth order among brothers and sisters has on our lives. According to statistics, the oldest child is the most conscientious, has a higher IQ and even higher earnings than his or her siblings. Whereas the youngest child supposedly ends up having greater wit, charm and the ability to get on with people. This seems to hold true for a number of people I know, but I suppose these sorts of statistics should always be taken with a pinch of salt. For example, in my family it's the youngest whose salary is...

Expected response: higher/the best/the largest (or equivalent).

2. After, get the students to compare their answers in pairs. Encourage them to explain why they gave that answer (if they can remember).
3. When they've finished discussing their idea, elicit some suggestions from the groups and write them on the board. Don't confirm which answer is correct at this point.
4. Tell them you're going to read the text again, and this time you want them to raise their hand every time they hear something which makes them think their answer is correct. Each time a student raises their hand, pause and ask them why they think the information is relevant.
5. When you've finished, give them another minute to compare their answers and perhaps change their mind. Finally, confirm the correct answer and then point out any clues in the text. See the answers below for highlighted key points.

### Practise in pairs (15 minutes)

1. Give the students Worksheet 3a or 3b get the students to take it in turns being the examiner or the candidate, reading the texts or answering the questions.
2. Alternatively, you could record yourself or a colleague reading out the texts and questions if you prefer to give your students a more accurate model.

### Extension activity

In the 'Practise as a group' task, more advanced students could have a go at writing their own listening tasks.

### Further support activity

Weaker students could be given three options to choose from instead of having to completely guess the answer. For example, for the 'Practise as a group' task they could choose between accidents, friendships, and phone calls.

### After class

Students could make a recording of themselves reading out the text to help them focus on improving their pronunciation and listening skills.

## Answers

### Worksheet 1

1. The purpose of the Listening phase is for candidates to demonstrate high level listening skills such as prediction, deduction and inference.
2. Candidates are expected to respond with very short, precise responses and should not give long replies.
3. The listening tasks are not related to any of the given subject areas for the Conversation phase to provide an unknown element to the exam.
4. Candidates are not required to read or write anything in this phase, and there is no note-taking.
5. Please note that the listening texts will not be repeated by the examiner even if they are requested to do so.

### Worksheet 2

1. Type 1
2. Type 2

### Suggested words to highlight in the 'How to work out the answers' task

1. I **made up my mind I wanted** to be an astronomer when I **was very young**. I **found** the night sky and the idea of space fascinating. I **read** as much as I could about it – I **thought** 'This is it!' It **was** mind-blowing. **But** when I went to university this **was turned upside-down**. I **couldn't bear listening to the lecturers droning on and on**. And above all, I **hated** having to **memorise all those facts** for exams. It **put paid to my enthusiasm**. Before long, **all the wonder I'd felt in astronomy was...**

Expected response: gone/lost/dead (or equivalent).

2. I **keep hearing new theories** which support the idea that music can help you to study more efficiently. For example, **some research claims** that listening to the right kind of music when you study can help relax your mind, cut down on other distractions and enable you to concentrate better. **Some people even say** that listening to music with 60 beats per minute puts you in an alert state of mind, which can help you focus easily. I **suppose this is possible, but surely anything that competes for your attention when you're trying to concentrate is a distraction**.

Q. What is the speaker's attitude to the idea that listening to music helps you study?

A: Sceptical/questioning/dubious (or equivalent).

### Key points to highlight in the 'Practise as a group' task

Some fascinating research was carried out about the effects that birth order among brothers and sisters has on our lives. **According to statistics, the oldest child is the most conscientious, has a higher IQ and even higher earnings** than his or her siblings. Whereas the **youngest child supposedly** ends up having **greater wit, charm** and the ability to **get on with people**. This **seems to hold true** for a number of people I know, **but** I suppose these sorts of statistics should always be **taken with a pinch of salt**. **For example, in my family it's the youngest whose salary is...**

Expected response: higher/the best/the largest (or equivalent).

## Worksheet 1 – The Listening phase

Match the sentence halves to make sentences about the Listening phase.

The purpose of the Listening phase is...	...related to any of the given subject areas for the Conversation phase.
Candidates are expected to...	...or write anything in this phase, and there is no note-taking.
The listening tasks are not...	...for candidates to demonstrate high level listening skills, eg prediction, deduction and inference.
Candidates are not required to read...	...repeated by the examiner even if they are requested to do so.
Please note that the listening texts will not be...	...respond with very short, precise responses, and should not give long replies.

## Worksheet 2 – Type 1 or 2?

Read the task and decide if it is type 1 or 2

1. I made up my mind I wanted to be an astronomer when I was very young. I found the night sky and the idea of space fascinating. I read as much as I could about it – I thought 'This is it!' It was mind-blowing. But when I went to university this was turned upside-down. I couldn't bear listening to the lecturers droning on and on. And above all, I hated having to memorise all those facts for exams. It put paid to my enthusiasm. Before long, all the wonder I'd felt in astronomy was...

Expected response: gone/lost/dead (or equivalent).

2. I keep hearing new theories which support the idea that music can help you to study more efficiently. For example, some research claims that listening to the right kind of music when you study can help relax your mind, cut down on other distractions and enable you to concentrate better. Some people even say that listening to music with 60 beats per minute puts you in an alert state of mind, which can help you focus easily. I suppose this is possible, but surely anything that competes for your attention when you're trying to concentrate is a distraction.

Q. What is the speaker's attitude to the idea that listening to music helps you study?

A: Sceptical/questioning/dubious (or equivalent).

## Worksheet 3a – Example listening prompts type 1

### Type 1

1. Some fascinating research was carried out about the effects that birth order among brothers and sisters has on our lives. According to statistics, the oldest child is the most conscientious, has a higher IQ and even higher earnings than his or her siblings. Whereas the youngest child supposedly ends up having greater wit, charm and the ability to get on with people. This seems to hold true for a number of people I know, but I suppose these sorts of statistics should always be taken with a pinch of salt. For example, in my family it's the youngest whose salary is...

Expected response: higher/the best/the largest (or equivalent).

2. I'm concerned that we're placing too much trust in experts. In a world where there is a deluge of information, we believe that experts are more up to the task of assessing it than we are. We rely on them unthinkingly, forgetting our own sense of responsibility. When we have to weigh up different courses of action, we should abandon our over-reliance on expert advice and start making our own decisions. The consequences of not doing this are alarming. A recent experiment showed that people would accept the advice of experts whether or not...

Expected response: it was right/correct/good (or equivalent).

3. I'd never done it before and was shaking like a leaf. I had to do this if I wanted to prove myself in my new job. I stayed up till late making copious notes and I practised it in front of the mirror countless times. Despite an initial wobble in my voice, it seemed to go down pretty well. I got my points across and managed to crack a joke at the end! There were a few laughs and applause. So I breathed again and realised that in future, I won't mind...

Expected response: giving a presentation/talking in public/public speaking (or equivalent).

4. The press has had a field day reporting recent experiments with drugs that appear to be unravelling the mechanisms of sleep. According to scientists, these drugs would make sleep unnecessary. Imagine a 24-hour society, one in which people would never need to sleep. They could work all day and party all night. Sound like a nightmare? But then nightmares would be a thing of the past. However, a doctor from a sleep research centre argues that sleep enables the brain to store memories and recuperate from work. He therefore believes these drugs...

Expected response: are dangerous/should be banned/are a bad idea (or equivalent).

## Worksheet 3b – Example listening prompts Type 2

### Type 2

1. One of the mysteries that perplexed zoologists for a long time is why zebras have stripes. The most common theory up to now has been that the stripes make it more difficult for predators to single out an individual zebra from the herd. But it turns out that's not it. And they're not for decoration either. Like all members of the horse family, zebras are plagued by flies, which can make their lives a misery. So experiments were devised to see whether the stripes had any effect. Results have shown that plain black and plain white horses attract far more insects than two-tone zebras.

Q: According to the passage, why do zebras have stripes?

A: To repel/keep away flies (or equivalent).

2. The hardest part of my job is at international conferences or diplomatic events when I have to do it simultaneously. I need to make sure I represent what the speaker's just said in the same tone and register, so that their exact intention and meaning is conveyed to the audience quickly and accurately. It's not just a case of communicating their message word for word as that could result in confusion. The mental acuity required in this profession is very challenging, but I take pride in the fact that others are dependent on my skills.

Q: Who is the speaker?

A: An interpreter/a translator.

3. Many governments strive to eradicate all risk from the lives of the people they serve. But this desire is counter-productive. If we never encounter danger, surely we'll never learn to cope with it. Some safety warnings are laughable. On the packaging of one brand of an electric iron appeared the caveat, 'Do not iron clothes on body'; on a child's Superman costume it stated, 'Wearing of this garment does not enable you to fly'. It's simply not possible to prevent all accidents. By definition, an accident is something unpredictable and out of our control.

Q: What is the speaker's attitude to government attempts to prevent accidents?

A: Critical/that they are ridiculous or pointless (or equivalent).

4. Our planet has always been in a state of continuous change, causing the habitats of various animal species to be altered and modified. Such natural change to animal habitats tends to occur at a gradual pace, usually having only a slight impact on individual species, which isn't a major concern. However, a greater problem is when changes occur in such a way that there is little or no time for individual species to react and adjust to new circumstances. This can have a disastrous effect and lead to habitat destruction, which in turn can result in some species becoming endangered.

Q: What kind of change to animal habitats is the speaker worried about?

A: Fast/rapid change (or equivalent).