

PROGRESSIVE LISTENING

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Contents

	page		page
Notes to the Student	6	Unit 7 Telling a Story	
Unit 1 People		7.1 Ransacked!	39
1.1 In a twist	10	7.2 Who killed Evelyn?	40
1.2 Figure it out	12	7.3 There are many roads ...	42
1.3 Please, Sir	12	7.4 Wish away!	43
1.4 Sorry, Miss	14	Unit 8 What People Think	
Unit 2 Buildings and Dwellings		8.1 Any comment?	45
2.1 The bare necessities	15	8.2 Float like a butterfly	47
2.2 All mod cons	16	8.3 Wit and wisdom	48
2.3 Neither here nor there	17	8.4 Out of the mouths ...	49
2.4 Island of dreams	18	Unit 9 What's in the News?	
Unit 3 The World of Work		9.1 Game, set and match	50
3.1 Just the job!	19	9.2 The world we live in	52
3.2 What's my line?	20	9.3 No news is good news	53
3.3 What's going on?	21	9.4 Flex those brain cells!	55
3.4 All the world's a stage	22	Unit 10 Odds and Ends	
Unit 4 Travel		10.1 Nice day, isn't it?	58
4.1 Shining sun and shimmering sea	24	10.2 You must be joking!	60
4.2 Bus to El Kef	25	10.3 Killing time	60
4.3 Better safe than sorry	26	10.4 You're driving me crazy!	62
4.4 Fly me to the moon	27	Unit 11 Feelings	
Unit 5 Leisure Activities		11.1 From joy to sorrow	64
5.1 A night at the movies	29	11.2 That is the question	65
5.2 While away the hours	30	11.3 I got rhythm	66
5.3 Alaskan adventure	32	11.4 Overheard	67
5.4 Hobby horse	34	Unit 12 Knowing Ourselves	
Unit 6 Things, Gadgets and Systems		12.1 Left? Right!	68
6.1 Click!	35	12.2 Once upon a time	69
6.2 Just press the button	36	12.3 In public, in private	70
6.3 Red tape	37	Index of Lexical Items	71
6.4 What on earth is it?	38		

Notes to the Student

This book contains 12 Units, each with four listening exercises of different types and varying levels of difficulty. Below are some brief notes that will help you to use it.

Twelve listening tips

- 1 Never expect to understand every word.
- 2 Never worry when you don't understand; just carry on listening.
- 3 Always remember the context in which the people you are listening to are talking, because the context will often give you clues to words or expressions that you don't understand.
- 4 As soon as you 'tune in' to the context, give your mind the chance to associate that context with anything you personally may know or feel about it; in other words, ask yourself the question, 'On this topic, or in this situation, what do I expect to hear?'
- 5 But at the same time remember that there will inevitably be differences between what you expect to hear and what you *actually* hear. 'Expecting' is mainly useful as a fine-tuning strategy.
- 6 Listen carefully to the speakers' voices, and build up an impression of their age, appearance, personality etc.
- 7 Listen to the speakers' intonation (the 'music' of their speech) and learn to recognise any feelings they may be expressing.
- 8 Forget that you are listening to a tape, and imagine that you are actually listening to people in real life.
- 9 Whenever you have problems understanding something, develop your own techniques for working out possible meanings; that is, don't ask for help unless you have to.
- 10 Remember that cassette-recorders have both volume and tone controls; if voices are not clear, adjust *both* controls until

you can hear properly. The controls are there to be used!

- 11 If ever in class you have difficulty because you quite simply can't hear the tape properly, because of traffic noise, for example, don't hesitate to tell your teacher.
- 12 Try to enjoy the exercise; practice may not make absolutely perfect, but it helps enormously!

Using the students' book for private study purpose

- A Look at the list of contents. You will see that all the units except one centre on a particular theme or area of language. The themes can of course be taken in any order. So can the four separate exercises within each unit.
- B Each exercise has been graded according to its level of difficulty, using a scale of 1 to 6 which is shown by these symbols.



- 1 = appropriate to students *beginning* a course equivalent to a Cambridge First Certificate preparation class.
- 6 = appropriate to students at or beyond the level of the Cambridge First Certificate examination.

Each grade covers approximately 30 study hours. That implies that if you are in a two-year, six-term Cambridge FCE preparatory course, you should expect to advance one level per term, whereas if you are in a one-year, more intensive course, you should expect to advance two. However, the grading levels are merely guidelines for typical students, and therefore to be ignored by the adventurous!

Notes to the Student

- C Listen to the tape and work on the exercises *as if the Teacher's Book, with its transcripts and answers, did not exist*. Use it only when you have finished working. If you do that, you will progress more rapidly, develop a far more effective listening skill, get a far clearer impression of the progress you are making, and gain far more personal satisfaction.
- D Before you attempt any exercise, read through the instructions carefully so that you understand what information you are listening for, and what the task consists of. You may be tempted to 'skip' any exercises which are not part of the listening, but do try to resist that temptation, as each activity has been designed as a whole, and you won't get the full benefit from the practice unless you work through all the stages.
- E Listen at least once to the whole text, without interrupting it. Try to get as much information as you can during that first hearing; use subsequent hearings for checking your first impressions and for clearing up any doubts. Bear in mind that in real life, people rarely get (or give!) more than one opportunity to hear anything.
- F Use this book as a 'listening library' of material. If you get bored with any exercise, leave it and look for another. In forty-seven exercises, there should be something to suit all tastes, moods, and interests!
- G The author hopes that you will get as much enjoyment from using the book as he did in writing it.

Questionnaire

Before you attempt any exercises in this book, answer this questionnaire.

It is about spoken language, and listening.

Part One: spoken language

Answer the questions in note form, as fully as you can/like. When you have finished your own answers, compare notes with a partner and discuss the results.

- 1 What is/are the official language(s) spoken in your country?
- 2 How many languages do you normally hear, including on the radio, in the course of a day in your area?
- 3 Do many people in your country have to be bilingual?
- 4 On TV or in cinemas in your country, are films dubbed into the official language(s) or projected in the original language with sub-titles? Which system do you prefer, and why?
- 5 Is foreign pop-music popular in your country? Why? What kind of people like it? In general, do they understand the words of the songs?
- 6 Which is the first foreign language people normally learn in your country?
- 7 Is the attitude to that foreign language normally positive or negative?
- 8 Have many words from that foreign language been incorporated into normal spoken language(s)? How do you feel about this?
- 9 Are there many different regional dialects/accents in your country? Can you recognise from his/her accent where a person comes from? How?
- 10 Is any one of these accents considered to be 'better' than others? Why?
- 11 Do comedians/joke-tellers in your country make use of accents for comic purposes? Which accents are used, and for what purpose? Do many people get offended by such jokes? Why?
- 12 Can you recognise and/or imitate (a) a British accent, (b) an American accent, in English or your own language?

Notes to the Student

Part Two: listening and speaking

Here are two lists. The first contains eight possible characteristics of a 'good listener'. Mentally put them in order of relative importance, and then write against each its number in that order, from 1 to 8. Then compare notes with a partner.

A good listener should . . .

- concentrate on what the speaker is saying
- never question anything till the speaker has finished
- interrupt occasionally to show he/she is interested
- maintain eye-contact with the speaker at all times
- ask questions to encourage the speaker
- ask questions immediately if anything is not understood
- not expect a speaker always to make sense
- be interested in what the speaker is trying to say

The second list contains possible characteristics of a 'good speaker'. Follow the same procedure as you did for the first.

A good speaker should . . .

- have something interesting to say
- have an interesting way of saying things
- be brief
- never forget he/she has a listener
- never use pretentious language or technical jargon
- use language he/she is sure the listener can understand
- use as little colloquial language as possible
- invite the listener's participation as often as possible

Part Three: your own difficulties

Finally, answer the following questions, which are designed to help you think about your own difficulties with listening comprehension in English.

Give yourself in each case a score from 1 to 4, as follows:

- 1 = you have a lot of difficulty
- 2 = you have some difficulty

- 3 = you find your standard more or less satisfactory but still have trouble sometimes
- 4 = you have very little difficulty in understanding

Questions

How much of your difficulty is caused by the speakers' speed?

How much by difficult vocabulary?

How much by the clarity of the speakers or the recording?

How much by problems with the meaning/context/topic? (e.g. you 'understand the words' but not the meaning)

When you have written down your four scores, add them up to make a total, and divide that total by 4 to get a general average.

Write the average here

Then compare notes with a partner. Keep your scores and your average for future reference; they represent your own general evaluation of your standard of listening comprehension in English *at this moment*. The author hopes that your self-evaluation scores will get consistently higher as you work your way through this book.

For students working alone

If you want to keep some kind of chart of your personal progress with the exercises in this book, try the following.

After any exercise,

- 1 ask yourself the question 'How difficult did I find it?' Score from 1 to 4 (1 = very difficult, 4 = very easy), as you did for the questionnaire above, in these categories:
 - (a) the speakers' speed
 - (b) vocabulary
 - (c) clarity
 - (d) general meaning
- 2 add up your scores for those 4 categories, to get a total out of 16
- 3 add in the Level of Difficulty (1 to 6)
- 4 divide the result by 5; this gives you an average

Example 1:

- 1 suppose your scores for an exercise are 4,4,4,4; the total would be 16
- 2 the Level of Difficulty is 1, so the total is 17
- 3 divide by 5
- 4 the resulting average is 3.4

Example 2:

- 1 suppose your scores for an exercise are 1,1,1,1 (!) but the Level of Difficulty is 6
- 2 the total is 10
- 3 divide by 5
- 4 the average is 2.0 (Not so bad after all!)

Example 3:

- 1 the highest total possible would be 4,4,4,4 plus the Level of Difficulty – 6 = 22
- 2 divide by 5
- 3 the highest average possible would be 4.4

By comparing your average performance after each exercise with the highest possible average of 4.4, you will get some idea of how well (or how badly!) you have done.

Unit 1 People

1.1 In a twist

Pre-listening task

First read the paragraph. Then fit the twelve words in the list into the twelve gaps. Work alone at first, and then compare notes with the student next to you.

exercise	spent	thing	rest
breakfast	top	alternatively	supple
time	advantages	meal	stiff

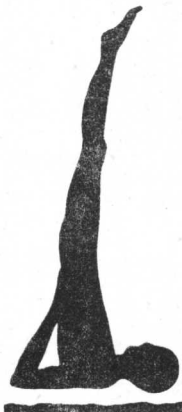
The best (1) for sessions of yoga exercises is in the morning after washing and before (2) (3), you might (4) in the evening before your (5) or last (6) before going to bed. Both times have (7); in the evening you will find your body more (8), because you have not just (9) a long time lying in bed, but in the morning, even if you do feel a bit (10), the exercises will put you in (11) form for the (12) of the day.

Listening task

Below are drawings representing a series of nine Hatha Yoga exercises (called Asanas). The names of the exercises, in the left-hand column of the table are in the same order as they are mentioned in the taped dialogue.



A



B



C

Before you listen:

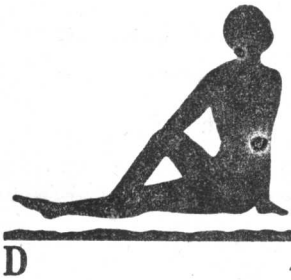
Look at the drawings, and in the column of the table marked 'your guess', note down the letter of the drawing which you think corresponds to the name of the exercise. For example: 1 Candle = C (not true, by the way!)

While you listen:

- 1 Write the letter corresponding to each drawing against its number/ name in the actual order column.
- 2 Identify the duration recommended for each exercise, and write the time in the third column, (e.g. if you think exercise 1 should be done for 1 minute, write *1 min.* in the column marked 'Time').

Unit 1 People

Exercise	Your guess	Actual order	Time
1 Candle SARVĀNGĀSANA			
2 Plough HALĀSANA			
3 Fish MATSYĀSANA			
4 Forward bend PASHCHIMOTTĀNĀSANA			
5 Cobra BHUJĀNGĀSANA			
6 Locust SHALABHĀSANA			
7 Bow DHANURĀSANA			
8 Spinal twist ARDHA-MATSYENDRĀSANA			
9 Headstand SHĪRSĀSANA			



Listening task

You are going to hear someone describing a teacher he remembers very well. In each of the questions, choose the correct answer, A, B or C, according to what you hear, and explain why you eliminate the other two.

- 1 The speaker studied with the teacher he describes
 - A from the age of eight to thirteen.
 - B from the age of thirteen to eighteen.
 - C for thirteen years.
- 2 The speaker
 - A didn't learn to speak a word of Latin.
 - B studied Latin but only spoke a little.
 - C could count in Latin but nothing else.
- 3 The speaker
 - A was enthusiastic about the French teacher's varied methods.
 - B wouldn't have learned any French if the teacher hadn't been so strict.
 - C felt the French teacher did very little to make his pupils like him.
- 4 At school, the speaker
 - A only spoke French when he met the music teacher's French wife.
 - B practised spoken French only during the weekly conversation class.
 - C only practised his French once a week with his French music teacher.
- 5 From the French teacher, the speaker learned
 - A to look at his own country from a different perspective.
 - B to think that France was superior to a lot of other countries.
 - C that you can't understand another country unless you know its language.
- 6 According to the speaker, the French teacher
 - A looked like some kind of foreigner.
 - B had the looks of a typical Frenchman.
 - C had a very menacing way of looking at people.
- 7 The pupils nicknamed the French teacher 'Tommy the Commie' because
 - A he had communist political views.
 - B he expressed moderately left-wing opinions.
 - C he made them read French communist literature.
- 8 The speaker
 - A last saw the French teacher when he was thirty.
 - B thinks the French teacher was thirty or so when he had taught him.
 - C last saw the French teacher when the teacher was thirty.

1.4 Sorry, Miss

Pre-listening task

Schooldays

Work individually at first. Try to cast your mind back to a particular moment in your life at any kind of school. For example, your first day at a new school, or the moment you met your best schoolfriend, etc. Note down as many details about that memory as you can. The following questions may help.

- 1 Where did this school memory happen and when? How old were you?
- 2 What had happened before the event?
- 3 Was anyone else with you? If so, what do you remember about him/her/them? Did you/they have a nickname?
- 4 What were you/they wearing?
- 5 Was anything particular said or done?
- 6 Did it have anything to do with teachers?
- 7 What were the consequences of that event?

Listening task

You are now going to hear a speaker talking on the topic 'A teacher I remember well'. Listen and note down answers to any of the following questions that can be answered with information given by the speaker. Look through the questions first.

Physical and personality description

- 1 What was the teacher's name or nickname?
- 2 How old was the speaker at the time?
- 3 What subject(s) did the teacher teach?
- 4 What did she look like?
- 5 What kind of personality did she have?
- 6 How old was the teacher at the time?

Teaching methods and keeping order

- 7 What kind of methods did the teacher use in class? Were they successful?
- 8 What kind of atmosphere was there in the classroom? (e.g. strict?)
- 9 What did the teacher do when the pupils behaved badly?

Why she was memorable ...

- 10 Why does the speaker remember that teacher so well?
- 11 What was/were the most important thing(s) the speaker learned from her?
- 12 Have those things been useful to her since then?

Unit 2

Buildings and Dwellings

2.1 The bare necessities

Pre-listening task

First read the paragraph. It is the real case history of a child living in a poor city. The names are fictitious.

Note: PLAN is part of World Family, an aid organisation whose campaign slogan is 'Changing the World One Child at a Time'.

With a partner, imagine for a moment that the family can afford only two of the above objectives at present, and decide which two *you* would choose if you were in their place, giving reasons for your choices.

Ashraf has three sisters and three brothers and the family lives in one room with whitewashed walls and a tiled floor. His father, a building labourer, has been unable to work for more than a year because of a heart condition, and the money on which the whole family lives is earned by his eldest brother, Ahmad, who also works as a building labourer. The household furniture comprises a bed, a wardrobe, a cupboard, and some kitchen utensils. Electricity, running water, and a sewage system are not available. They have to go to the nearby public tap to get their water. A kerosene lamp is used for lighting and a kerosene stove for cooking. Through PLAN's support, the family now has greater access to many necessary services. PLAN's future objectives are:

- remedial classes for the children
- buying a bed
- the supplying of running water to the house
- buying a cheap gas stove
- buying a table

Listening task

Now listen to the tape. You are going to hear six people answering the same question. Briefly note down in the first column of the table the two choices each speaker mentions and, in the second column, the reasons given.

Part of the first speaker's answers have already been filled in as an example.

Speaker	Choices	Reasons
1	_____ gas stove	_____ cheaper, cleaner, more hygienic
2	_____ _____	_____ _____
3	_____ _____	_____ _____
4	_____ _____	_____ _____
5	_____ _____	_____ _____
6	_____ _____	_____ _____

2.2 All mod cons

Listening task

You will hear two girls discussing a flat that one of them has been to see.

Before you listen:

Look at the advertisement for the flat that appeared in the local newspaper, and note down in the table your *worst suspicions* about the features

mentioned in the advertisement, that is, suppose that what is said in the advertisement may not be exactly true.

While you listen:

Write down the *actual facts* about the flat in the second column of the table.

Immac. 1st fl. flat, Flask Ave., Hampstead; prize location; lge. hall; 2 bedrms, 1 dble; col. TV; lge. diner; newly-fitted kitchen & bathrm; 2nd W.C.; lge. balc.; lge. back gdn; 2-car gge; sun all day; gas c.h.; v. close tube buses shops; incredible rent; phone 499 2001.

Item in Advertisement	Worst Suspicions	Actual Facts
1 immac.		
2 prize location		
3 v. close tube/bus/shops		
4 lge. hall		
5 lge. diner		
6 lge. balc.		
7 lge. back gdn.		
8 2-car gge.		
9 newly-fitted kitchen & bathrm		
10 2nd W.C.		
11 2 bdrms, 1 dble.		
12 col. TV		
13 gas c.h.		
14 sun all day		
15 incredible rent		