

# YOSHI

— goes to —

# NEW YORK

John Battaglia and Marilyn Fisher





# **YOSHI GOES TO NEW YORK**

Authentic discourse  
for listening comprehension

**John Battaglia** and **Marilyn Fisher**

*Language Institute of Japan*

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# About the materials

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*Yoshi Goes to New York* has been designed to improve listening comprehension through listening to natural, spontaneous speech. The materials comprise twelve taped conversations and an accompanying workbook. The conversations are based on situations chosen to generate what we consider primary language functions. Many of these functions are recycled throughout the series. Conversations have been thematically linked for high interest. The workbook contains exercises that require the student to listen repeatedly to the conversations while leading him/her gradually to a deeper understanding.

Unlike most recorded materials, the conversations represent authentic discourse. To insure that specific language functions were generated, scenarios were prepared in advance, though the conversations themselves were unrehearsed. No prepared transcripts were used, no lines memorized. All participants were native speakers who spoke spontaneously at normal speed. As a result, the conversations contain all the elements that make up everyday speech: hesitations, reductions, false starts, grammatical errors and a full range of speaking speeds and intonation patterns. Variety in social register naturally occurs through the interaction of the characters.

The situations chosen represent those that students are likely to encounter travelling or living abroad. Factual information concerning hotels, restaurants, locations, and New York City in general, is accurate. Every effort has been made to make the conversations as authentic as possible.

The written exercises for each conversation have been carefully designed to focus students' attention on key functions, important grammatical concepts and vocabulary. They require the student to listen carefully and repeatedly. Only through listening will the student be able to develop listening proficiency.

# Suggestions for use

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*Yoshi Goes to New York* is designed for use as a primary text in a listening comprehension program for intermediate students, or for use at home by the self-study student. However, it can be readily used as a supplementary text and in upper basic as well as lower advanced classes. It can be used in the language laboratory or in the classroom with students working in small groups, collaborating on the exercises. Although the series of conversations tell a story (a young Japanese businessman's stay in New York City), it is not necessary for the units to be done in order, nor is it necessary to complete the entire book. A higher class might complete all the units in one term, while a lower class might complete only six or seven. As the units are functionally based, teachers should feel free to choose those that are most important to their classes.

The conversations on the tape vary in length from two to four minutes, the average being around two and a half minutes. The level of difficulty, however, does not necessarily correspond to tape length. The speaking speed in the earlier conversations is generally slower due to the nature of the situations and the social register used by the characters. As the characters become better acquainted, their language register shifts and they begin to speak more quickly. Nevertheless, students in field tests did very well throughout the series. They found the conversations challenging, but not too difficult.

The primary goal of the exercises is to get the students to listen carefully, and as many times as necessary, in order to arrive at a thorough understanding of the conversations. Students should be allowed to listen repeatedly when completing the exercises. Although it is recommended that all the exercises within a unit be completed, it is not necessary. However, those selected should be done in order.

The questions within each exercise have been sequenced to correspond to the sequence of information given in the conversation. After an exercise is completed, the students should check the answers against those in the *Answer Key* **before** going on to the next exercise. After checking the answers, students should go back and listen to those portions of the conversation which they have misunderstood. In this way, they can come to understand their listening mistakes. This is an important step as the exercises are structured to lead the students from a general to a full understanding of the conversation. Only when an exercise has been checked and the listening errors

understood, should the student move on. Below is the recommended procedure for using the workbook and an explanation of the exercises it contains.

## *Pre-listening*

Although there is no section in the workbook entitled Pre-listening, it is recommended that each unit begin with a pre-listening discussion. Teachers can introduce difficult vocabulary not dealt with in Exercise B (Focus on words and expressions), and discuss the situation which the unit presents to enable students to become familiar with the kinds of language that are likely to occur in the conversation. This provides them with a reference point from which to begin their listening. In lower classes, this pre-listening discussion becomes especially important.

### *A General comprehension*

This exercise contains both multiple choice and true/false questions which lead the student to a general understanding of the conversation. The questions are not difficult, but do require the student to listen repeatedly. Because the true/false questions and the answers to the multiple choice questions are written in language actually taken from the conversation, students are required to listen carefully in order to make a correct answer choice.

Students should be encouraged to listen to the tape as many times as they like while they are answering the questions. After they complete the exercise, they should check their answers using the *Answer Key* while referring to the portions of the tape in which errors have been made. This should be done before moving on to Exercise B.

### *B Focus on words and expressions*

This exercise focuses on important vocabulary through an alternating multiple choice and matching format. It is designed to teach the meanings of words and expressions that students might not know. The exercise is best completed by referring to the portions of the tape which contain the selected vocabulary. Hearing a word or phrase in context can help the student decide the correct meaning from the options given. Some units contain more vocabulary requiring attention than can be dealt with in the exercise, while some vocabulary items cannot be easily defined in terms of the exercise format. It is in such cases that the pre-listening discussion becomes especially important.

### *C Focus on functions*

This exercise focuses the students' attention on one or more of the primary functions of the unit. In order to deal most effectively with the variety of functions presented in the conversations, the format varies from unit to unit. In most units, students are required to write exact sentences taken from the conversation. They must identify language



which serves a particular linguistic function within the conversation (eg suggesting, recommending, asking for advice, agreeing, disagreeing, etc). Special care should be taken to make sure that students understand the instructions for this exercise.

### *D Intensive listening*

Students must fill in the blanks in order to complete the conversation. The exercise requires students to fill in complete sentences or phrases which convey complete thoughts rather than the standard cloze-type, one-word, fill-in exercises. This is to force the students to consider units of meaning larger than the single word. Sentences and phrases to be filled in have been selected with care, not at random. The focus is on common *Wh* questions and their answers, common idioms, vocabulary from Exercise B of the present or previous units, functional material that was not dealt with in Exercise C, and recycled functional material from previous units. The difficulty and speed of the language in a given conversation, as well as the quantity of work in Exercise C, have determined the number of lines which the student must fill in. Answers may be checked against the tapescript at the end of the book.

### *E Inferring*

Owing to the difficulty students may encounter in adequately expressing their opinions in writing, the questions in this exercise are best used as in-class discussion questions. It is recommended that teachers conduct a question and answer period immediately after Exercise D in order to examine the language of the conversation closely and answer any questions students may have about grammar and usage. Once the conversation is completely understood, students are in a better position to make inferences.

### *F Optional role-play*

For those teachers wishing to tie listening comprehension exercises closely to speaking exercises, suggestions for an optional role-play have been provided for each unit. The role-plays are based on the primary functions focused on in the conversation. Only the outline of a situation has been provided in order to allow students to supply specific information appropriate to their own experience and current living situation. Students should not be encouraged to memorize lines from the conversation, but to use appropriate words and expressions which satisfy the communicative demands of the role-play situation.

### *Time allowance*

Field tests have shown that students have a tendency to spend too much time on a particular exercise or question they are having difficulty with. Therefore, it is advisable to set time limits for each exercise. These limits will of course depend on the level of the class. It is not necessary that an entire unit be completed in one class period. If the

teacher has time, a unit might be split up into a period and a half or a two-period assignment. If not, students can complete that unit as homework. Suggested time allowances for an intermediate class are listed below:

Pre-listening discussion	10-20 minutes
A General comprehension	10-20 minutes
B Focus on words and expressions	7-15 minutes
C Focus on functions	15-30 minutes
D Intensive listening	15-30 minutes
E Inferring	10-20 minutes

# To the self-study student

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*Yoshi Goes to New York* is an ideal method of improving listening comprehension through self-study. The twelve taped conversations, which tell the story of a young Japanese businessman's stay in New York City, contain authentic English, spoken by native speakers at normal speed. The exercises in the accompanying workbook require you to listen to the conversations many times while answering the questions. In order to get the most benefit from the series, please follow the recommended procedure explained below:

- 1 Listen to the conversation as many times as you like while completing the exercises.
- 2 Using a good dictionary, look up any words that appear in the exercises that you do not understand. You will not be able to answer the questions correctly unless you can understand them.
- 3 After you finish an exercise, check your answers using the *Answer Key* in the back of the workbook **before** going on to the next exercise. For example, finish and check A, *General comprehension*, before going on to B, *Focus on words and expressions*. When you check your answers, listen to the tape and identify those parts of the conversation where you made mistakes. Try to understand why you chose an incorrect answer. At the end of Exercise D you may check your answers against the tapescript at the back of the book.
- 4 After all the exercises in a unit have been completed and checked, read the tapescript in the back of the book. Look up any words that you do not understand. When you understand the conversation completely, listen to the tape again while reading the tapescript.
- 5 Finally, listen to the conversation one more time without referring to the tapescript. Now you are ready to go on to the next unit.

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## Unit one    **The flight**

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*Yoshiaki Yamamoto, a Japanese businessman, is on a flight from Tokyo to the United States.*

### **A    General comprehension**

*Complete the sentences by circling the best answer.*

- 1    Yoshi begins the conversation by asking the woman .....
  - a    if she would like to smoke.
  - b    if his smoking would bother her.
  - c    if she would stop smoking.
  - d    if she smokes.
  
- 2    Yoshi is .....
  - a    going to San Francisco on vacation.
  - b    going to San Francisco to study in graduate school.
  - c    going to New York on vacation.
  - d    going to New York to study in graduate school.
  
- 3    Yoshi .....
  - a    has read in the newspapers that New York is exciting.
  - b    is concerned about going to New York because it's an exciting place.
  - c    is excited about going to New York, but is worried because it might be dangerous.
  - d    believes New York is dangerous.
  
- 4    Yoshi is .....
  - a    originally from Tokyo and is now working there.
  - b    originally from Tokyo and is now working in Kyoto.
  - c    originally from Kyoto and is now working there.
  - d    originally from Kyoto and is now working in Tokyo.

- 5 The woman is returning from .....
- a a business trip to Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong.
  - b a vacation in Japan, Korea, and Hong Kong.
  - c an Oriental shop in Manhattan.
  - d Tokyo and Kyoto.

*Read the sentences carefully. If a sentence is true, put a **T** in the blank provided. If the sentence is false, put an **F**.*

- 6 The shop that the woman works for sells pottery and other things. ....
- 7 The woman has lived in New York for twelve years. ....
- 8 The woman's hometown is in Ohio. ....
- 9 Yoshi says that he might like to visit the woman's shop. ....
- 10 The woman gives Yoshi her business address. ....

## **B Focus on words and expressions**

*Complete the sentences by circling the best answer.*

- 1 Yoshi asks the woman if he can smoke. She replies, "No, no. Go right ahead."  
This means .....
- a he can't smoke.
  - b it's OK to smoke.
  - c the woman prefers that he didn't smoke.
  - d the woman doesn't want to smoke and doesn't want Yoshi to smoke.
- 2 The woman says that New York is an "exciting place". This means that New York .....
- a is dangerous.
  - b is expensive.
  - c is beautiful.
  - d offers many interesting things to do.
- 3 Yoshi is "originally from" Kyoto. This means .....
- a he grew up in Kyoto.
  - b he has lived in Kyoto.
  - c he lives in Kyoto now.
  - d he has just come from Kyoto.

4 Yoshi goes to New York

4 Yoshi says to the woman, "Perhaps I'll stop by your shop."

This means .....

- a he might visit the shop.
- b he might call the shop.
- c he will visit the shop.
- d he probably will visit the shop.

5 Yoshi is bilingual. This means .....

- a he has lived in two countries.
- b he has studied English in high school and college.
- c he speaks two languages fluently.
- d he has studied two languages.

**C Asking and answering questions about yourself**

*In the conversation, Yoshi and Carol get acquainted by asking and answering questions about themselves. In the columns below are some of the answers they gave. Listen to the conversation and write down the questions that fit the answers. Write the **exact** words.*

**Yoshi's questions**

1 .....  
.....  
.....

2 .....  
.....  
.....

3 .....  
.....  
.....

**Carol's answers**

"No, I'm going to New York after San Francisco."

"Yeah, Tokyo, Korea and Hong Kong."

"I liked it very much."