

**IELTS™**

# Teacher Training Workshop

**IELTS Listening**



[www.takeielts.org/teachielts](http://www.takeielts.org/teachielts)

## Programme

1. The listening test
  - survey of 4 different sections
  - survey of question types
2. Tactics for dealing with the 4 sections
3. Marking / answer sheets
4. Review

## The Listening Test

- the test takes about 30 minutes
- there is a further 10 minutes at the end of the text to transfer answers
- 4 sections increasing in difficulty
- there is a 30 second break between sections
- texts include conversations, monologues, lectures and speeches
- recordings only heard **once**
- 40 questions of various types

### **Skills tested:**

- listening for specific information
- listening for main idea and supporting information
- understanding the speaker's opinion

## Section One

A **social** or **transactional** dialogue between **two** speakers.  
You are listening for specific, factual information.

Examples of typical scenarios:

- booking conference facilities
- finding out about specific courses
- finding out about travel services

## Section Two

A talk or short speech (monologue or prompted monologue) on a topic of general interest with a transactional purpose.

You are listening for specific, factual information.

Examples of typical scenarios :

- information about a public event
- talks about different tourist attractions
- information about facilities e.g. a library

## Section Three

A discussion between 2 and 4 people set in an educational context such as a tutorial or seminar.

You are listening for specific information, attitudes and opinions.

Examples of typical scenarios :

- discussion about a research project
- a talk and questions about a specific topic
- an interview with an expert on a topic

## Section Four

A monologue in an academic-style lecture or presentation. You are listening for main ideas, specific information, attitudes and opinions.

Examples of typical scenarios :

- talks about scientific research
- a lecture on environmental problems
- a talk about how to develop in a specific career

## Question types

There are a variety of question types including:

- multiple choice
- short-answer questions
- sentence completion
- labelling a diagram, map or plan
- matching
- completion tasks (forms, notes, summary completion etc).
- classifying



## Tactics

Identify the situation

Predict the answers

Get instructions right

Anticipate next question

## Section 1

### Identify the situation

- where is the conversation taking place?
- who are the speakers?
- what is/are the general topics?

## Section 1

### Predict the answers

- what type of information are you listening for?
- what form will the information be in?
- what are the key words in each question/answer?
- what is a likely/possible answer?

## Section 1

### Getting the instructions right

There is a variety of question types so making sure the instructions are understood is very important especially in short answer questions.

Examples:

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

Write **ONE WORD AND/OR NUMBER** for each answer.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

## Things to remember

- ✓ There is a reason for listening – identify it
- ✓ Use the time wisely – look at the pictures and questions carefully
- ✓ Listen to and read the instructions carefully
- ✓ Don't worry about understanding every word – concentrate on picking out the information you need
- ✓ Don't panic!

## Sections Two to Four

Prediction, preparation and anticipation

As in Section One, survey and skim the questions, tables, pictures.

Practise anticipating the next question while listening/writing the answer to the previous one.

Don't over-worry about correct spelling/grammar now, wait until the 10 minute answer-transfer time to check your answers.

## **Multiple choice question**



### **Example**

**11 On the holiday, you will be walking for**

**A 6 days**

**B 8 days**

**C 10 days**

## Multiple choice tips

- Look at the possible answers so you know what to listen for.
- Be aware that all the answers might be mentioned to distract.
- Information may be corrected or changed so don't stop listening even if you think you've got the answer.
  
- Be aware of 'qualifying' words and phrases, and of negatives  
e.g. some/none/all
  
- Look for key words in rubric e.g.  
Q14 When you start the trek . . .  
Q16 The Semira region has a long tradition of . . .



## Sentence completion

Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

Dog ancestors date back .....years.

Scientists think that dogs were originally in the same family as.....

### TIPS

Must **not** write more than the given number of words.

Answers must be grammatically correct.

Spelling must be accurate.

## Labelling

For example:

- a diagram (e.g. a piece of equipment)
- a plan (e.g. of a building)
- a map (e.g. of part of a town)
- a chart (e.g. a pie-chart or graph)
- a process (e.g. how rain is formed)

## Labelling tips

Look carefully at organisation or layout

- e.g. north, south, east and west on a map.
- probable starting point of description of a building e.g. entrance on a floor plan
- what the axes of charts and graphs show

Make sure you know where the questions are on the diagram / map etc. as often not in a linear order

## Matching

What does the Tour Operator say about each Hotel?

Choose your answers from the box and write the correct letter **A-G** next to questions 1-4.

**A** expensive

**B** good value

**C** a bit outdated

**D** excellent service

**E** needs renovating

**F** has an excellent bar

**G** very child-friendly

1 The Golden Sand Hotel .....

2 The Silver Duck Hotel .....

3 The Flitz Hotel .....

4 Silverfall River Hotel .....

## Matching tips

The answers may be mentioned in a different order than they are listed

Think of synonyms e.g. *expensive = costly, exorbitant, dear,*  
*outdated = old-fashioned, stuffy*

Be careful of negative sentences. e.g. *It won't cost you a great deal.*

Be careful of precise meanings and ambiguity

e.g. *a small children's play area*

*He left the receptionist laughing.*

## Classifying question

When did the following take place?

- A. in the early 15th century
- B. in the late 16th century
- C. in the early 17th century

*Write the correct letter, **A**, **B**, or **C** next to questions 1-4.*

- 1. improved working conditions .....
- 2. improvement in education .....
- 3. social unrest .....
- 4. the formation of trade unions .....

## Classifying tips

- You can use each answer more than once.
- Lots of extra information may be given within the talk, so focus on the information you need.
- Synonyms may be used so think about these while listening.

## Marking

1 mark per correct answer. To be considered correct, the answer must be the right information, spelt correctly and grammatically correct.

There is no *negative* marking so test takers should not leave blank answers but should try to write something.

Raw scores are given in full and half bands.



## Listening Band Scores

### Band Score

- 9
- 8
- 7
- 6
- 5
- 4
- 3
- 2
- 1

### Score

- 40
- 38 to 39
- 33 to 37
- 25 to 32
- 17 to 24
- 10 to 16
- 4 to 9
- 2 to 3
- 1

## Summary

### Test-takers should:

1. **Work out the situation/ place/ people involved in Section 1.**
2. **Identify/ predict the information they must listen for.**
3. **Use the time wisely: survey, skim, read the questions so that they are prepared.**
4. **For diagrams, always check where the numbered questions are.**
5. **Always read the instructions carefully so that they know the extent of the expected answer (2 words / 3 words etc.)**
6. **Realise that they don't have to understand every word.**
7. **Try not to panic if they miss an answer, but to listen for the next piece of information they need.**
8. **Be told (many times) not to forget to transfer their answers to the answer sheet!**

## Final words

Students improve their listening by listening, so practise, practise, practise!

Encourage students to listen outside the classroom

- films in English
- [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice)
- get readers with CDs
- watch YouTube

In class, try to 'tweak' classroom listening activities to practise the skills needed for IELTS