

Classroom implementation

Listening focuses on developing the key skills of:

- listening for general understanding, and
- listening for specific details

It also aims to widen students' range of vocabulary and awareness of clear usage and grammar in line with A2 expectations.

There are twenty units divided across four sections:

1. *Who are you?* dealing with personal topics and self-description.
2. *Where do you live?* about home and other topics in the immediate environment.
3. *What do you do?* dealing with work and study.
4. *What do you enjoy?* about hobbies and free time.

All the units in *Listening* have a broadly similar structure and similar features and below you can find explanations of how these features can be implemented in the classroom.

❖ GETTING STARTED

What is it?


Each unit begins with three to five simple *Getting started* questions directed at the student. The *Getting started* questions are the same, or similar, as those to which the speakers are responding throughout the unit. The aim of the questions is to introduce the topic and prepare for the recordings.

Suggested implementation:

1. Ask the questions, personalizing the theme for students and getting them thinking about the topic – which you can then discuss or brainstorm for vocabulary.
2. Get students to ask the questions of each other.
3. Highlight/clarify key basic vocabulary for the unit.
4. Write the questions on card, cut the sentences up into individual words and have students reassemble them.
5. Write model answers (perhaps your own) on card and get the students to match them with the questions.
6. Use the picture in the *Getting started* section to initiate the conversation.

❖ PART A

What is it?

The units are organized into several parts (A, B, C, and sometimes D), each with their own audio track number  to identify the recording. Each part has between one and four exercises. The recordings in Part A are unscripted responses to prompt questions which are explained in the bold rubric text for each part.

Part A usually consists of a series of short audios, and one or two exercises. Students will normally be listening for a specific piece of information to match the audio with a photo or to make a note in a table.

Suggested implementation:

1. Students will be listening for key words/phrases in each question, so you may want to identify the sorts of key words (numbers, comparatives, adjectives, place names, job titles, etc.) in advance, and elicit those in isolation before playing the recordings.
2. The exercises sometimes have examples. Take advantage of them where they appear, and play and pause after the example so that students are sure what they are doing.
3. Where there are pictures/photos, ask the students to identify their content prior to playing the recording.
4. Ask students to predict the language that the speakers might use in response to the question.

❖ PARTS B, C, D

What are they?

The later parts consist of longer monologues, or sometimes dialogues, and the exercises which follow will test both listening for general understanding, and listening for specific details. As with all the recordings in *Listening*, they are unscripted and likely to contain vocabulary and usage which is not tested. For this reason, pre-listening activities are all the more important.

Suggested implementation of pre-listening:

- 1 Think of pre-listening activities that will activate students' latent knowledge and vocabulary, and will allow them to grasp the context.
2. Use the bold rubric and make sure the class understands as much as possible of the context. For example, the rubric might explain that someone is going to talk about their job; and that they are going to talk specifically about the working atmosphere, rather than something else like their career history, or their day-to-day routine.
3. Does the rubric tell you anything else? The age, nationality, gender or interests of the speaker? While these may not always be relevant to the actual content of the recording, they may fire the students' imaginations in predicting answers and producing language.
4. Motivate students with stimuli like pictures. Dramatic or contrastive pictures are best for generating discussion, and therefore eliciting target vocabulary and acclimatising students to additional language in the recording. Other stimuli could be a reading text, quiz or realia.

5. Use the students' own experiences: if the recording is about somebody's journey to Argentina and one of your students has been there, get them to talk about their trip to the other students. If the student alights upon any target vocabulary, you can note this on the board.
6. You can take a more direct approach to eliciting the target vocabulary by:
 - asking students to brainstorm the type of vocabulary/language that the speaker might use.
 - allowing students to pre-read the listening tasks. This may expose them to some of the vocabulary/language used.
 - picking keywords from the transcript before the listening and using them as the basis of a quiz or a crossword.
7. Consider whether the exercises which follow the listening are testing listening for general understanding or listening for specific details and direct your students appropriately before playing the recording. Play it two or three times if necessary.

Suggested implementation for post-listening:

1. The actual work of listening will be done by students independently, so try to allow a healthy amount of pairwork/groupwork in the surrounding activity to provide balance to the lesson. Some of the exercises in the unit will work better as individual activities and some as pair/group activities.
2. The following types of exercises lend themselves well to pairwork or groupwork:
 - inferring meaning
 - paraphrasing
 - discussion questions
3. The following types of exercises are more suited to individual work:
 - inserting missing words/phrases into the transcript
 - summarising
 - finding evidence to back up claims
4. If students are working individually, allow them time to check their answers with a partner before feeding back to the class.

Listening (A2 Pre-intermediate)

❖ FEATURES

What are they?

All the units contain feature boxes providing extra information and support for the content of the recordings. These serve well as fillers if you have a few spare minutes during the lesson or for providing independent homework ideas.

Suggested implementation:

1. *Clear usage:* These boxes appear at varying points through the book and highlight words, phrases and grammar important for understanding the recording. You may therefore want to highlight this usage during pre- or post-listening.
2. *Useful vocabulary and phrases:* These boxes identify, clarify and extend vocabulary from the unit. They can be used pre- or post-listening as a starting point for discussion, or to elicit further examples of the vocabulary group.
3. *Listening tips:* These boxes appear at varying points in the unit and contain ideas for improving the students' listening skills either in a general sense or specifically in relation to an exercise type.
4. *Speech bubbles:* Speech bubbles appear at varying points through the book and highlight phrases that may have a peculiar meaning in the context of the recording. You may want to look at these pre- or post-listening. Ask students if they have heard these phrases outside the classroom.
5. *COBUILD CHECK:* This feature provides real-world examples of the use of target vocabulary from the Collins COBUILD dictionaries and English corpus. Ask your students to extend this list if they have heard its use elsewhere, or get students to start building their own corpus, noting down the use of certain words and phrases they hear outside the classroom. The key to this section is that all of the language is real and authentic.
6. *My review:* *My review* gives a list of can-do statements for the unit. This should be used first and foremost as a way of checking that the students feel comfortable that they have made progress in the class and can make these statements with some confidence. You can use these can-do statements as the targets of your learning programme. Ask students to challenge each other on the statements: *Hey Xian, can you understand people talking about regular activities? – Yes, I can, they might say ...* Alternatively you could ask students to talk to each other about which of the can-do skills they think will be most useful for them and why.