

GA LEVEL 3 CERTIFICATE IN ESOL INTERNATIONAL LISTENING RECORDING TRANSCRIPTS

Listening Task 1:

SPEAKER	MALE / FEMALE	ACCENT
Simon	Male	Standard English
Katie	Female	Standard English

Simon: So, did you follow that link I sent you last night? You know, the one about climate change?

Katie: Erm, no, I haven't checked my emails today. Why would you send it to me anyway, you know I'm quite sceptical about global warming and all this stuff....

S: Well, that's exactly why I sent it to you! I can't believe that you still say such things when there is so much evidence out there to prove it's a fact...

K: Such as?

S: OK, just listen to this,,, one sec, let me find this link...Here's the introduction: 'As scientific knowledge has grown, this debate is moving away from whether humans are causing warming and toward questions of how best to respond'

K: Do you really believe that, Simon? Honestly?

S: Of course I do! Signs that the Earth is warming are recorded all over the globe. And it's not even difficult to prove, you just need to look at the records kept over the past century and a half. Around the world, the Earth's average temperature has risen more than 1 degree Fahrenheit over the last century, and about twice that in parts of the Arctic.

K: 1 degree isn't very much though, is it?

S: No Katie, it's not, but if you look at the data you will see that the temperature has been steadily creeping up over many decades... it's a trend... you can't argue with science.

K: OK then, so it's now 1 degree warmer than it used to be. What exactly do you want me to do about it? I still think it is way too cold in winter where I live... don't you think?

S: Katie, whether I agree with you that it's too cold in the winter or not is totally beside the point. Look at the effect this is having on the environment. The ice is melting all over the world. We are losing different kinds of animal species. Thirty years ago there were over 30,000 breeding pairs of one species of penguin, the Adélie* penguin, in Antarctica, do you know how many there are left now?

K: 20 thousand?

S: Nope. 11 thousand breeding pairs. We lost over 60% of the population in thirty years!

K: I guess it sounds quite bad when you look at the numbers. What about other animals?

S: Because of the rising temperatures, some butterflies, foxes, and alpine plants have moved further north or to higher, cooler areas. At the same time, invasive species are thriving. For example, the population of spruce bark beetles has exploded in Alaska thanks to 20 years of warm summers. The insects have chewed up 4 million acres of spruce trees!

K: Are you saying that we're losing Christmas trees because of global warming? I guess you've got my attention now!

S: Good. And listen to the effect it's predicted to have on humans: hurricanes and other storms are likely to become stronger. Floods and droughts will become more common. Less fresh water will be available.

K: OK Steve, it doesn't sound good, you are right. But what are we supposed to do about it? Surely it is up to our governments to make some changes...

S: Well, sure it is. But it won't happen overnight. There's loads of things we can do ourselves in the meantime. You can start saving electricity and water, plant trees, recycle, and most importantly, stop buying the stuff you don't need. It won't solve the issue, but it'll help.

K: I've been doing that. I have some energy saving lightbulbs in my bedroom.

S: That's a good start. Perhaps you should also reconsider that shopping trip you've planned with your friend Suzie this weekend?

K: No, I think that might be a step too far... *(laughing)*

*pronunciation – 'a daily'

Listening Task 2:

SPEAKER	MALE / FEMALE	ACCENT
Animal Expert	Female	Standard English

I've been asked whether hedgehogs can be kept as pets quite a lot in the last few months, so I've decided to devote today's programme to answering this very question. Wild hedgehogs have been living in Africa forever but only in recent years have they been kept as pets. Most pet hedgehogs, typically called African pygmy hedgehogs, were bred from African species and are considered domesticated. These little animals can make terrific companions if you feed them well and keep them in the right conditions, and they are becoming more and more popular as pets. But hedgehogs are not meant for everyone. So before you set off to your local pet shop to get one, you need to think about several things

Firstly, the skin over a hedgehog's back is covered with sharp spines, also known as quills. Quills protect hedgehogs from predators. When caught in the mouth of a predator, hedgehogs will twitch and jump so that their sharp quills poke into the skin and lips of the aggressor, making things generally unpleasant until they are released. Handling a nervous hedgehog can be tricky for an owner, and you may need to hold your little friend in a small towel until he relaxes.

As a defence mechanism, hedgehogs roll their bodies into a tight little ball when they feel threatened. This causes their spines to point outward, so that predators are unable to see their faces or limbs. They have very strong muscles over their backs, and it's nearly impossible to unfurl a hedgehog once he's curled up. So if you want your hedgehog to relax and uncurl, you must handle it often, and be very gentle. Otherwise, you will spend a lot of time staring at a cute but prickly little ball in your lap.

Like all other animals, hedgehogs may carry a handful of diseases that are contagious to people, including Salmonella bacteria. They can also carry fungal spores on their quills and skin that can cause ringworm in people. This fungus is also very unpleasant for the hedgehog because it may cause quill loss and make hedgehog's skin dry and flaky. So you must remember to wash your hands thoroughly each time you handle your pet!

Many people think that hedgehogs are rodents, but in fact they are classified as insectivores. Insectivore means 'insect eater'. They are not strict insectivores; however, as in the wild they eat a variety of foods, including snails, amphibians, lizards, snakes, birds' eggs, fish, carrion, mushrooms, grass roots, berries and melons. Domesticated pet hedgehogs have a slightly different diet. They typically eat a limited number of insects, and quite enjoy commercial pet food which their owners can buy at pet stores. They can also eat a small amount of vegetables, fruit and cooked meat. Remember: pet hedgehogs should not be offered large amounts of insects or they will likely eat them to the exclusion of other foods needed for a balanced diet. Hedgehogs who eat excessive numbers of insects may suffer from calcium deficiency and brittle bones.

In the wild, hedgehogs are active at night, since that is when their food is available. Domesticated pet hedgehogs have maintained this nocturnal lifestyle, sleeping a good portion of the day and emerging at night. If you're a light sleeper, go to bed early or are out a lot at night, a hedgehog may not be the best pet for you.

Hedgehogs love to eat, and if they are housed in cages with little opportunity to socialize and exercise, they tend to put on weight. Obesity is a common problem among pet hedgehogs. Overweight hedgehogs should be put on restricted amounts of food and encouraged to run around outside their cages or inside them on wheels.

Many people think hedgehogs are silent, but they can produce a variety of grunts, squeals, snorting and snuffling sounds. They commonly vocalize when exploring their environment. They may also puff, click or hiss when nervous or upset, or whistle or purr when happy. If your hedgehog is in pain, you will hear it make a sound which very much sounds like a human scream.

Hedgehogs can be adorable, loving pets if they are handled often and made less fearful of people. So if you're thinking of getting one, remember that these cute little prickly pets need time, attention and tender loving care to thrive.

SAMPLE

Listening Task 3:

SPEAKER	MALE / FEMALE	ACCENT
Speaker 1	Male	Standard English
Speaker 2	Female	Standard English
Speaker 3	Male (young, student)	Standard English
Speaker 4	Female	Standard English

Speaker 1: Do you think voting should be mandatory?

Whilst I agree that voting is an important civic duty, and even though it could be made mandatory, I don't really think that it should be. Let me tell you why: what's the point of introducing a law that can't be enforced? Wouldn't that simply make a mockery of the judicial system? Imagine that there's a law that says everyone over the age of 18 who's eligible to vote must do so. What do you do with people who don't? Do you fine them? And what would you do if they didn't pay that fine? Put them in prison? What if there wasn't anybody that they actually wanted to vote for? You can't punish an individual for the poor state of politics in their country.

Speaker 2:

I have been brought up to believe that voting is a moral obligation and a privilege. With voting rights we are given a voice. A voice that counts and matters. But it also means that we have responsibility towards our country and fellow citizens. I've voted my whole life, and have made sure that my children were brought up the same way. But I can see that people's attitudes are changing. I once heard a colleague saying that she couldn't vote because she was going out to dinner after work. And you know what? No one said anything; they just accepted it as if it was perfectly normal. I found it quite upsetting.

Speaker 3:

Yes, of course it should be mandatory! Otherwise people simply won't do it. How many turned out to vote at the last election? Was it something like 60%? I know that I wasn't there because I simply couldn't be bothered, and had better things planned for that evening. I mean, don't get me wrong. I am not trying to say that it's not important to vote, of course it is. I'm just saying that I'm too lazy to do it. So if you want me to cast my vote, you've got to make me. I'm just being honest here. So yeah, bring on mandatory voting, especially for the students! Once you get them into the habit, they might keep voting later in life...we are quite easy to train... *(laughing)*

Speaker 4:

I'm not really sure how to answer that question. I try and vote whenever I can, but I also know people who don't and I believe that it's their personal choice and it should be respected. Perhaps they have good reasons not to vote, such as having to care for a family member, or work responsibilities. I also think it can be a very difficult decision, and sometimes you are not sure what way you should be voting. And if you don't really understand what you are deciding about, and just chose to vote the same way as your friends or partner, only because someone told you that you have to vote? Surely it would be better not to vote at all than just cast a vote you don't really understand.