

Listening skills practice: Help others, help yourself – exercises

Listen to the radio interview with two young volunteers and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the two parts of the phrase and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1..... to do | a. an experience |
| 2..... to overcome | b. a job |
| 3..... to volunteer | c. safety standards |
| 4..... to meet | d. to help |
| 5..... to organise | e. experience |
| 6..... to gain | f. an event |
| 7..... to deal with | g. the public |
| 8..... to share | h. an obstacle |

1. Check your understanding: grouping

Match the activity with the person who talks about it. Two sports are not mentioned by either speaker.

| | | | | |
|--------------|---------------|--------------|------------------|------------|
| table tennis | modern dance | football | cricket | Parkour |
| tennis | skateboarding | kick scooter | marathon running | BMX biking |

| Debbie | Liam | Not mentioned |
|--------|------|---------------|
| | | |

2. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer to these questions.

1. Liam says that Parkour is ...
 - a. a type of military training.
 - b. a means of jumping off high buildings.
 - c. a way of overcoming obstacles.
 - d. a kind of video.
2. Liam's main job is ...
 - a. to check the bikes are safe.
 - b. to clean the ramps.
 - c. to do demonstrations.
 - d. to teach young people about BMX.
3. Which area did Liam not have training in?
 - a. giving medical attention.
 - b. cooking hamburgers.
 - c. food hygiene.
 - d. basic accounting.
4. Why did Debbie volunteer the second time?
 - a. to be more competitive in the job market.
 - b. to help other people.
 - c. to complete her degree course.
 - d. to learn how to train volunteers.
5. Which sport did Debbie not volunteer to help with?
 - a. cricket
 - b. swimming
 - c. table tennis
 - d. football
6. Debbie and Liam both say that ...
 - a. it's important to pay people to work in sport.
 - b. volunteers are often exploited.
 - c. they love volunteering.
 - d. volunteers are essential for sport.

Discussion

Would you like to be a volunteer?

What kind of area would you volunteer in?

Listening skills practice: How false information spreads – exercises

Listen to the radio interview about how false information spreads and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–j next to the numbers 1–10.

- | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|--|
| 1..... | inaccuracies | a. to prove that something is true |
| 2..... | to vaccinate | b. to write or say the words of a writer, book, etc. |
| 3..... | to cite | c. an African mammal with a long nose that eats ants |
| 4..... | measles | d. a plan to trick or deceive someone |
| 5..... | an aardvark | e. to intentionally damage property belonging to others |
| 6..... | a hoax | f. to change something so that it doesn't work as intended |
| 7..... | to vandalise | g. statements that are not correct |
| 8..... | to verify | h. not based on facts or proof |
| 9..... | to tamper with something | i. to give a person an injection to prevent them getting a disease |
| 10..... | unfounded | j. an infectious disease which covers the body in small red spots |

1. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer to these questions.

1. Which statement about circular reporting is true?
 - a. It is the spread of true information.
 - b. It is when false information is validated by one other source only.
 - c. It only occurs with information on Wikipedia.
 - d. It may involve several publications.
2. Which statement is true about journalists?
 - a. They are not permitted to copy information from Wikipedia.
 - b. They refuse to copy information from Wikipedia.
 - c. As soon as they include information in an article, they verify the information.
 - d. Many journalists may publish inaccuracies in several articles.
3. Which statement is correct?
 - a. Another name for a coati is a Brazilian aardvark.
 - b. The American student changed the information on Wikipedia to what he believed to be the truth.
 - c. Many people believed that a Brazilian aardvark was the same as a coati.
 - d. When writers wrote about the Brazilian aardvark they knew it was a joke.

4. Which statement is true about Wikipedia?
 - a. Some people add false content to a Wikipedia entry intentionally.
 - b. Updating information on Wikipedia is against the law.
 - c. There is hardly any true information on Wikipedia.
 - d. Many true facts on Wikipedia initially appear as false information.
5. What is true about childhood vaccines and autism?
 - a. There is a clear connection between childhood vaccines and autism.
 - b. Circular reporting incited many parents not to vaccinate their children.
 - c. The claims that they were connected first appeared on Wikipedia.
 - d. The media proved early on that the claims about vaccines and autism were false.
6. Which statement is correct?
 - a. Generally speaking, it's easy to identify false information.
 - b. If the original source is Wikipedia or the media, the information is almost always false.
 - c. Reflecting critically on what we read is something most people often do.
 - d. Lack of time to think and investigate can cause us to believe things that aren't true.

2. Check your understanding: gap fill

Complete the expressions from the audio with a phrase from the box.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------|---------------|
| take things at face value | by any means | spread like wildfire | In a nutshell |
| thought nothing more of it | | in no way | |

1. _____ (using as few words as possible), it's the confirmation of false information.
2. ... and _____ (not at all) is obvious as being false.
3. ... then he forgot about it and _____ (spent no time thinking about it).
4. That's not to say that all information on Wikipedia is false _____ (not at all).
5. ... unsupported claims were picked up by the media and _____ (became known by lots of people very quickly).
6. We often _____ (accept things as they appear, rather than thinking carefully about them).

Discussion

Do you use Wikipedia? What's your opinion of it?

Have you ever believed information and later discovered it was false? What happened?

Listen to a talk about how to get a job in the music industry and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Complete the idioms with a word from the box.

| | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| done | stone | worth | worth |
| struck | pulse | tied | door |

- for what it's _____
(= used when you are not sure that what you are saying is useful)
- easier said than _____
(= used when you think something is a good idea but might be difficult to do)
- to prove your _____
(= to show that you have something valuable to contribute)
- to have your finger on the _____
(= to know about recent changes and fashions)
- to get your foot in the _____
(= to enter a business at a low level with the chance of being successful later)
- a stepping _____
(= an event or experience that helps you achieve something else)
- to be star- _____
(= to feel enormous or too much respect for famous people, especially when meeting them in person)
- to be tongue- _____
(= to find it hard to express yourself in speech, usually because you are nervous)

1. Check your understanding: ordering

Write a number (1-6) to put these topics in the order that we hear them in the talk.

| | |
|-------|---|
| ..... | Keeping networking as much as possible |
| ..... | Starting to make contacts |
| ..... | How to treat celebrities |
| ..... | Showing music industry bosses that you are worth employing |
| ..... | The different jobs available in the music industry |
| ..... | Using social networks to project the right image to employers |

2. Check your vocabulary: gap fill

Complete the sentences according to the talk. Use no more than two words for each answer.

1. In the music industry, qualifications are much less important than _____.
2. When you are starting off in the business, the most important thing is to _____.
3. If you are lucky, you might get work as a paid _____.
4. You can impress people in the company if you have a _____.
5. An easy way to network could be to find someone you admire and _____.
6. Make sure that everything you post on social media reflects the _____ you want to project.
7. One of the exciting things about the music industry is that things are changing _____.
8. When you meet a celebrity you should treat him or her as a client and try not to be _____.

Discussion

Are you interested in the music industry?

Did you find any useful advice in the talk?

Listening skills practice: Living online – exercises

Listen to five different people talking about communication in the digital world and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the two parts of the phrases and write a–f next to the numbers 1–6.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1..... update | a. touch with everyone |
| 2..... be glued | b. on having fun |
| 3..... pay | c. to the screen |
| 4..... it's not the end | d. your status |
| 5..... stay in | e. attention to what someone's saying |
| 6..... miss out | f. of the world |

1. Check your understanding: matching

Match the ideas to the speakers and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1..... Speaker 1 | a. Has recently learned about some of the negative effects of excessive online communication. |
| 2..... Speaker 2 | b. Is suffering from the fear of missing out. |
| 3..... Speaker 3 | c. Has witnessed great changes in the way we communicate over recent years. |
| 4..... Speaker 4 | d. Thinks that the amount of time teens spend online is alarming. |
| 5..... Speaker 5 | e. Is quite happy for any photos of themselves to be posted online. |
| 6..... Not said | f. Thinks limiting teenagers' access to technology is unfair. |
| 7..... Not said | g. Wishes people would talk more in person. |
| 8..... Not said | h. Enjoys being able to contact all friends with the same message at once. |

2. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

- | | | | |
|----|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | Speaker 1 likes to know as soon as they get a new message. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | Speaker 2 thinks the most annoying thing is when people use their phone in meetings. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | Speaker 3 says that FOMO, or fear of missing out, is more common among teens. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | Speaker 4 thinks that young people today are aware of the drawbacks of online communication. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | Speaker 5 has made a lot of new friends thanks to online communication. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

Discussion

Which of the speakers do you agree with most?

Do they express any views that you disagree with? Why?

Listening skills practice: Man or beast? – exercises

Listen to the radio programme about *Being a Beast* by Charles Foster and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the words and expressions with the correct definition and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1..... a badger | a. a large animal with brownish red fur; the male has antlers |
| 2..... a fox | b. a shy animal with a black and white striped face that is active at night |
| 3..... an earthworm | c. an animal with short brown fur that swims well and eats fish |
| 4..... a red deer | d. a dog-like wild animal with reddish fur |
| 5..... an otter | e. a small bird with curved wings that can fly very fast and makes a screaming noise |
| 6..... a swift | f. a small animal with a thick, bushy tail which climbs trees and eats nuts |
| 7..... a squirrel | g. a very common small animal with a long tail |
| 8..... a mouse (plural: mice) | h. a very small creature with no bones, arms or legs which lives in soil |

1. Check your understanding: ordering

In what order does the reviewer describe Charles Foster's experiences with these creatures? Write a number (1–6).

| | |
|-------|-----------|
| ..... | red deer |
| ..... | earthworm |
| ..... | otter |
| ..... | swift |
| ..... | fox |
| ..... | badger |

2. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer or option.

1. What kind of book is being discussed?
 - a. a philosophy textbook
 - b. a mixture of different genres
 - c. a fascinating novel
2. Charles Foster decided to try and live as different animals because ...
 - a. he wanted to understand how they live.
 - b. he was doing research into animals.
 - c. he was tired of living as a human being.
3. According to Foster, children are better than adults at living like animals because ...
 - a. they are more physically agile.
 - b. they are more sociable.
 - c. they rely on their senses of sight and smell more.
4. What was Foster's greatest problem with living as an otter?
 - a. He didn't like spending hours in the water.
 - b. He wasn't able to catch fish in his mouth.
 - c. It's difficult to recreate the otter's preoccupation with food.
5. Foster felt his experience living as a red deer ...
 - a. was not very successful.
 - b. taught him the most about animals.
 - c. taught him more about another animal than the deer.
6. Why was Foster questioned by a policeman in London?
 - a. He was stealing food from bins.
 - b. He was sleeping in a public place.
 - c. He was pretending to be a fox.
7. Foster felt a great respect for foxes because ...
 - a. they can survive in an urban environment.
 - b. he formed a relationship with one.
 - c. they are good at finding food anywhere.
8. Jon recommends the book *Being a Beast* because ...
 - a. it's funny.
 - b. it contains a lot of detailed information about animals.
 - c. it can help us understand what it means to be human.

Discussion

What do you think of Charles Foster's experiment?

Would you like to read the book?

If you were an animal, what would you like to be? Why?

Listening skills practice: Sleeping for exam success exercises

Listen to the talk about how getting more sleep can help you achieve better exam results and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the words and expressions with the correct definition and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1..... a handful | a. to try to learn a lot very quickly before an exam |
| 2..... to consolidate | b. studying what has already been studied in order to remember it better |
| 3..... to snore | c. an informal word for sleep |
| 4..... a brain wave | d. a small number |
| 5..... kip | e. the system that moves blood through the body |
| 6..... the circulatory system | f. to breathe noisily while you are asleep |
| 7..... revision | g. an electrical signal or impulse in the brain |
| 8..... to cram | h. to make something stronger |

1. Check your understanding: ordering

Write a number (1–7) to put the things Professor Manson talks about in the order that you hear them.

- | | |
|-------|--|
| ..... | When memory consolidation takes place. |
| ..... | How the things we learn become part of our long-term memory. |
| ..... | The ideal amount of sleep at each stage of life. |
| ..... | The average time students in the class sleep. |
| ..... | Conditions that improve memory consolidation. |
| ..... | A personal memory from the past. |
| ..... | Reasons why the human body needs sleep. |

2. Check your understanding: gap fill

Listen and complete the sentences with between one and three words.

1. Professor Manson remembers having lots of exams and assignments at school but didn't _____ her revision time very well.
2. Revising for an exam the night before can help _____ but a good night's sleep is even better.
3. There is a clear link between _____.
4. Most students in the class sleep between _____ hours, whereas the recommended amount for 14- to 17-year-olds is more.
5. Sleep helps the body regulate its vital functions and also gives the _____ a chance to restructure information.
6. Memory _____ is when information passes from our short-term to long-term memories via the hippocampus.
7. Memory consolidation is improved by _____ information regularly.
8. Memory consolidation takes place during stages of _____ sleep.

Discussion

What's the perfect amount of sleep for you?

What effects do you notice if you don't get enough sleep?

Listening skills practice: Teens going veggie – exercises

Listen to five teenagers talking about becoming vegetarian or vegan and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Circle the correct option to complete the sentence.

1. Your diet is ...
 - a. what you eat.
 - b. what you eat when you want to be healthy.
 - c. how often you eat.

2. To 'go on a diet' is ...
 - a. to combine healthy eating with exercise.
 - b. to stop eating meat.
 - c. to try to lose weight by eating less food or certain types of food.

3. A vegetarian is someone who ...
 - a. doesn't eat meat.
 - b. doesn't eat meat or fish.
 - c. doesn't eat any animal products, including eggs and milk.

4. A vegan is someone who ...
 - a. doesn't eat meat.
 - b. doesn't eat meat or fish.
 - c. doesn't eat any animal products, including eggs and milk.

5. If a diet is nutritious, it contains ...
 - a. more protein than carbohydrate.
 - b. all the elements that the body needs.
 - c. lots of vitamins.

6. Protein is a substance in food which is needed by the body for many biological processes. It can be found in high levels in ...
 - a. meat, eggs, cheese, fish and nuts.
 - b. apples, oranges, lemons and mangoes.
 - c. olive oil, vegetable oil, butter and margarine.

1. Check your understanding: matching

Match the sentences to the speakers and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | | |
|--------|-----------|---|
| 1..... | Speaker 1 | a. Is vegetarian because they were influenced by a famous person. |
| 2..... | Speaker 2 | b. Became vegetarian because of their family. |
| 3..... | Speaker 3 | c. Is vegetarian for health reasons. |
| 4..... | Speaker 4 | d. Is vegetarian because they dislike meat. |
| 5..... | Speaker 5 | e. Is vegan because they follow social media trends. |
| 6..... | Not said | f. Is vegan for ethical reasons. |
| 7..... | Not said | g. Is vegan for health reasons. |
| 8..... | Not said | h. Is vegan because they love vegetables. |

2. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer to these questions.

1. Speaker 1 says she has noticed an improvement in ...
a. her energy levels.
b. her physical appearance.
c. her school marks.
2. Speaker 1 doesn't cook because ...
a. she needs to study instead.
b. her family eat a lot of takeaways.
c. her mum enjoys doing it.
3. Speaker 2 says there are ...
a. 5,000 vegans in the UK.
b. 500,000 vegans in the UK.
c. 1,000,000 vegans in the UK.
4. Some of speaker 2's schoolmates ...
a. are unsupportive.
b. are also vegans.
c. have changed their opinion on veganism.
5. Speaker 3 ...
a. is not strict about eating meat.
b. likes fruit but not vegetables.
c. doesn't eat enough nutritious food.

6. Speaker 3 makes ...
- a. no effort to eat healthily.
 - b. some effort to eat healthily.
 - c. a lot of effort to eat healthily.
7. Speaker 4 found it most difficult to be a young vegetarian ...
- a. at home.
 - b. at social events.
 - c. when people at school found out.
8. Since leaving home, speaker 4 ...
- a. eats a less varied diet.
 - b. is not so strict about being vegetarian.
 - c. finds it easier to be vegetarian.
9. Speaker 5 disagrees with ...
- a. eating any living thing.
 - b. the treatment of animals by the food industry.
 - c. cruelty to intelligent creatures like cows.
10. For speaker 5, the downside of vegan food is ...
- a. the time spent on preparation.
 - b. the lack of variety.
 - c. the texture.

Discussion

Are you vegan or vegetarian?

What do you like or dislike about your diet?

Which of the speaker's points do you agree with?

Listening skills practice: The benefits of sport – exercises

Listen to the classroom conversation about the benefits of sport and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the words and expressions with the correct definition and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1..... despite | a. to change subject (of a conversation etc.) |
| 2..... come in handy | b. to be more important than something else |
| 3..... to negotiate | c. be useful |
| 4..... to motivate | d. difficult to do |
| 5..... at the end of the day | e. regardless of |
| 6..... to outweigh | f. to make someone want to do something in a positive way |
| 7..... easier said than done | g. to discuss something in order to come to an agreement with another person |
| 8..... to move on | h. in the end |

1. Check your understanding: multiple selection

Which benefits of doing sport are mentioned? Tick (✓) seven.

| | |
|-------|---|
| ..... | reduced risk of diabetes |
| ..... | lower blood pressure |
| ..... | improved muscle tone |
| ..... | stronger heart and lungs |
| ..... | stronger bones |
| ..... | increased feeling of calm and tranquillity |
| ..... | improved mood |
| ..... | improved concentration |
| ..... | increased motivation |
| ..... | makes people less competitive |
| ..... | improved communication and negotiation skills |

2. Check your understanding: true or false

Circle *True* or *False* for these sentences.

- | | | | |
|----|---|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | The class have already talked about at least three of the physical effects sport has on the human body. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 2. | Doing sport can slow down the production of chemicals in the brain that make us feel good. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 3. | There are no real benefits associated with doing individual sport. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 4. | Swimmers or tennis players are responsible for their own achievements. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 5. | Being part of a team requires you to practise more regularly. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 6. | Collaborating with other members is essential for a team to be successful. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 7. | The skills you learn in a team sport are transferable to everyday life. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |
| 8. | It doesn't matter which sport you choose, as long as you're good at it. | <i>True</i> | <i>False</i> |

Discussion

Do you like playing sport?

What are the biggest benefits for you?

Listening skills practice: The fear factor – exercises

Listen to the extracts from different radio programmes talking about fear and phobias, and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–h next to the numbers 1–8.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1..... to faint | a. threatening or that seems bad or evil |
| 2..... to freak someone out (informal) | b. to laugh repeatedly in a quiet and uncontrollable way |
| 3..... sinister | c. to lose consciousness |
| 4..... flight | d. to make someone feel extremely angry, excited or worried |
| 5..... to pose a threat | e. to cause something to start |
| 6..... to giggle | f. escaping or running away |
| 7..... to trigger something | g. causing great emotional shock or upset |
| 8..... traumatic | h. to be potentially dangerous |

1. Check your understanding: grouping

Write the things that are mentioned in the correct extract.

- | | | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|---|--|
| a. A fear of heights | b. The difference between common fears and phobias | c. Symptoms of phobias | d. Why we like to be scared | e. A memory of fainting at the doctors |
| f. A fear one person has suffered their whole life | g. The fight or flight response | h. Why people develop phobias | i. The importance of context and danger | |

| Extract 1 | Extract 2 | Extract 3 |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | |

2. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best answer according to the radio programmes.

1. Extract 1
 - a. All anxiety disorders are called simple phobias.
 - b. Most people have a phobia of some type of animal.
 - c. Exaggerated or irrational fears are phobias.
2. Extract 1
 - a. Friendships can suffer as a result of phobias.
 - b. Most of us will feel dizzy and sweat when we see a tarantula.
 - c. Phobia sufferers are difficult to live with.
3. Extract 1
 - a. Children inherit phobias from their parents.
 - b. Scary encounters we have as children can cause phobias.
 - c. Most people who have a fear of dogs also suffer from aquaphobia.
4. Extract 2
 - a. Everyone screams when they feel scared on a roller coaster.
 - b. Many of us feel frightened during a horror film.
 - c. We prefer watching horror films as teenagers.
5. Extract 2
 - a. We can't control the reaction in our body when we're in danger.
 - b. The more dangerous the situation, the more likely we are to use critical thought.
 - c. When faced with danger our body produces either high levels of energy or pain-blocking chemicals.
6. Extract 2
 - a. Our bodies can't distinguish between real and false danger.
 - b. Our bodies can distinguish between false and real danger.
 - c. It depends on the person whether the body can distinguish between real and false danger.
7. Extract 3
 - a. Liz suffers physical symptoms because of her fear.
 - b. Liz always loses consciousness when she sees a needle.
 - c. Liz first remembers her fear while watching a horror film.
8. Extract 3
 - a. Abi had been diagnosed with coulrophobia by her doctor.
 - b. Abi prefers clowns that smile.
 - c. Abi feels just as scared now as she did as a child.

9. Extract 3

- a. Ben has fewer fears now than he used to.
- b. Ben avoids situations that cause his fears.
- c. Ben is having therapy to overcome his fears.

| |
|-----------------------------------|
| Discussion |
| Do you have any fears or phobias? |

Listening skills practice: War's silver lining – exercises

Listen to the talk about medical advances in World War I and do the exercises to practise and improve your listening skills.

Preparation

Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

| | | | |
|-------|---------|-------|---------|
| cause | develop | treat | suffer |
| | undergo | | extract |

1. Scientists are still trying to _____ a cure for cancer.
2. After the initial consultation, the patient will have to _____ a series of tests.
3. Many infections are easy to _____ with antibiotics.
4. Flu viruses _____ a lot of illnesses in winter.
5. The surgeon managed to _____ the bullet from the soldier's leg.
6. It's increasingly common for people in big cities to _____ from asthma and allergies.

1. Check your understanding: ordering

Write a number (1–5) to put these topics in the order that they are mentioned in the talk.

| | |
|-------|--------------------|
| ..... | paramedics |
| ..... | anaesthetic |
| ..... | World War I |
| ..... | X-rays |
| ..... | blood transfusions |

2. Check your understanding: gap fill

Complete the sentences with one, two or three words.

1. The speaker says that the First World War caused many deaths and injuries but also had some _____.
2. New weapons used in the war included _____, tanks and poison gases.
3. Twice as many people _____ in the war as died.
4. She goes on to say that X-rays were used widely and helped doctors detect fragments of _____ buried in tissue.
5. Stretchers were used to carry _____ out of the battlefield.
6. Paramedics, who are able to _____ in the field, were first employed in the First World War.
7. Another innovation was a machine for anaesthetising patients to make them _____ before operations.
8. One of the greatest medical breakthroughs was _____, allowing many lives to be saved at the end of the war.

Discussion

Have you benefited from any of the medical advances developed in World War I?