

# UNIT 1

## TOPIC: LISTENING SKILLS

### LECTURE 2

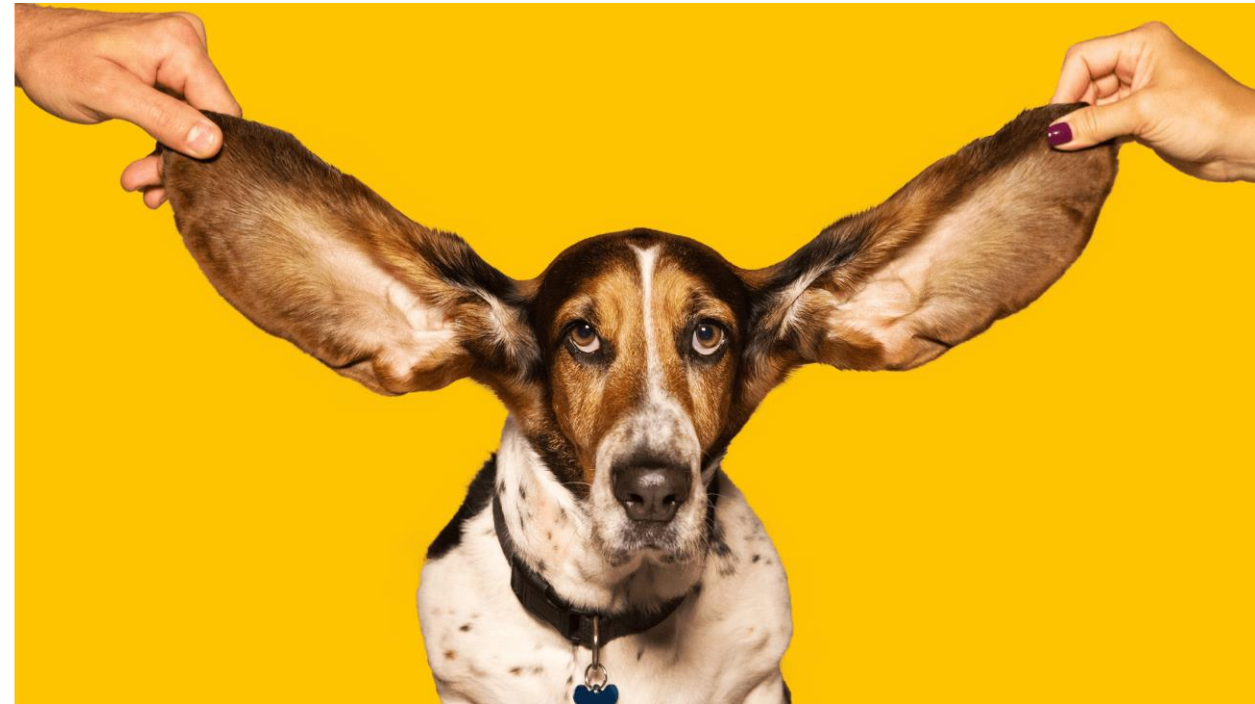
#### CO: HM002.1



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# Subtopics

Problems in  
comprehension and  
retention, note taking  
practice, listening tests



# Problems in Comprehension

Underwood (1989) organizes the major problems as follows:

- ❖ lack of control over the speed at which speakers speak
- ❖ not being able to get things repeated
- ❖ the listener's limited vocabulary
- ❖ failure to recognize the “signals,”
- ❖ problems of interpretation
- ❖ inability to concentrate
- ❖ established learning habits

# Retention Problem in Listening

## Remembering Stage:

The remembering stage occurs as the listener categorizes and retains the information she's gathering from the speaker.

- ❖ Memory is essential throughout the listening process.
- ❖ Memory lets the speaker put what she hears in the context of what she's heard before.
- ❖ Using information immediately after receiving it enhances information retention.
- ❖ Distracted or mindless listening reduces information retention.

# Remembering Stage

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In the listening process, the remembering stage occurs as the listener categorizes and retains the information she's gathered from the speaker for future access. The result—memory—allows the person to record information about people, objects and events for later recall. This happens both during and after the speaker's delivery.

Memory is essential throughout the listening process. We depend on our memory to fill in the blanks when we're listening and to let us place what we're hearing now in the context of what we've heard before. If, for example, you forgot everything that you heard immediately after you heard it, you would not be able to follow along with what a speaker says, and conversations would be impossible. Moreover, a friend who expresses fear about a dog she sees on the sidewalk ahead can help you recall that the friend began the conversation with her childhood memory of being attacked by a dog.

# Remembering Stage

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Remembering previous information is critical to moving forward. Similarly, making associations to past remembered information can help a listener understand what she is currently hearing in a wider context. In listening to a lecture about the symptoms of depression, for example, a listener might make a connection to the description of a character in a novel that she read years before.

Using information immediately after receiving it enhances information retention and lessens the forgetting curve, or the rate at which we no longer retain information in our memory. Conversely, retention is lessened when we engage in mindless listening, and little effort is made to understand a speaker's message.

Because everyone has different memories, the speaker and the listener may attach different meanings to the same statement. In this sense, establishing common ground in terms of context is extremely important, both for listeners and speakers.

# Note Taking Practice

Six good reasons to take notes

- ❖ Notes are a useful record of key information, and the sources of that information
- ❖ Writing notes helps you remember what you heard
- ❖ Taking notes helps you to concentrate and listen effectively
- ❖ Selecting what to note down increases your understanding
- ❖ Notes create a resource for exam preparation
- ❖ Notes taken in classes often contain information that can't be found elsewhere

# Note Taking Practice

## Strategies for effective note-taking

### ❖ Concentrate and pay attention

Arrive prepared to actively listen and learn, and to think critically. Analyzing and questioning the information helps you to focus and understand what you hear.

### ❖ Don't try to write down everything being said

Be selective—you don't have to transcribe the entire lecture. Effective listening note-taking involves recognizing key concepts and identifying and selecting what is relevant. Listen for the overall argument and note the main points and key information.



# Note Taking Practice

## Strategies for effective note-taking

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**Distinguish between main points, elaboration, examples, and new points by listening for:**

- ❖ introductory remarks. Lectures often begin with a useful overview of the key ideas or themes of a topic. This helps you grasp the ‘big picture’
- ❖ verbal ‘signposts’ that indicate something important is about to be said. Lecturers often signal key information with phrases like: “There are four main aspects”, “This is important...” or “To sum up”
- ❖ repetition. Important points will often be repeated, especially in introductions and conclusions
- ❖ phonological cues (voice emphasis, change in volume, speed, emotion and emphasis) often indicate important information
- ❖ final remarks. Most lectures conclude with a summary, a restatement of the main ideas and an indication of how the topic connects with upcoming material

*Look for: Non-verbal cues (facial expressions, hand and body signals) that indicate something important is being said. Visual cues (note what is on the visuals, note references to names and sources)*

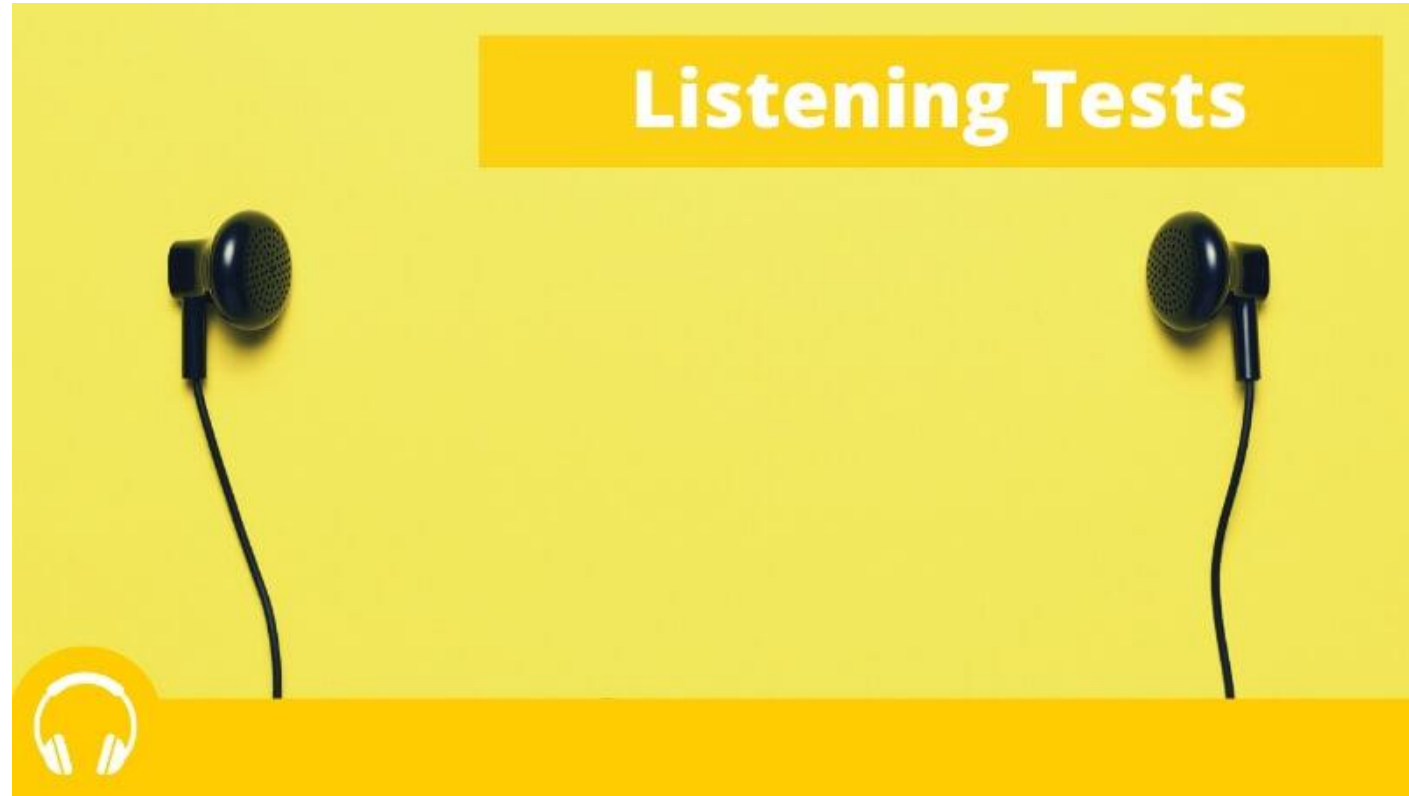
# Note Taking Practice

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## To review:

- ❖ Read through your notes. Make sure they are clear and legible. Clean them up - fix spelling errors, expand on abbreviations, tidy up handwriting (if necessary)
- ❖ Fill in missing words or information and add anything extra that you may have thought of since the lecture
- ❖ Code your notes - use colour and symbols to mark structure and emphasis, highlight major sections, main points and diagrams. Use different colours to emphasize main points, classify different topics and link concepts or information
- ❖ Explain and clarify diagrams by writing a simple version of their meaning
- ❖ Identify anything that needs further clarification



<https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/take-ielts/prepare/free-ielts-practice-tests/listening>

# Takeaway

