

Module 18

Speech: Listening Comprehension

In this module, the teacher will read a passage while you listen attentively. After that, you will be allowed to ask a few questions and discuss briefly. Following that, the same passage will be read out to you once more, and then you will have to answer the questions that follow.

The teacher now reads the passage for this section in Appendix 2.

Questions

1. From the passage, we can conclude that castles are
 - A. palaces built for monarchs.
 - B. nobles' residential buildings.
 - C. depots where soldiers lived.
2. Because they were so huge and grand
 - A. only nobles could think of building such.
 - B. only soldiers could live and work inside them.
 - C. they could be built only for kings.
3. When the speaker said, "that was then," we can understand that
 - A. castles can no longer provide the type of security just described.
 - B. castles are no longer the vogue today.
 - C. people do not need to live in castles today.
4. Castles no longer guarantee defence because
 - A. those built nowadays are not very strong.
 - B. they can easily be bombed from the air.
 - C. wars are no longer very common today.
5. According to the speaker, nobles today show their power and worth by
 - A. spending their money on foundations and factories.
 - B. living among the people and as if they themselves are poor.
 - C. donating their wealth to charities.

Structure: Noun Phrases

In most cases, you have been learning single parts of speech like nouns, verbs, pronouns, adverbs and adjectives. But to speak or write good English, you need more than just individual words. You need more than one word to be able to form larger units of meaning called phrases and

clauses. For words to form meaningful units, they must also be combined in a logical and ordered way. Consider these two examples:

- *1. Rat fat big the.
- 2. The big fat rat.

The two examples contain exactly the same words. But in the first example, the words have been combined in a wrong sequence. This is why the phrase is meaningless. Phrase (2) is meaningful because the words have been arranged in the correct order or sequence:

Meaning and nature of phrases

A phrase is a group of grammatically arranged words which does not have subject or predicate. A phrase serves as a single part of speech. English has different types of phrases: noun phrases, verb phrases, adjective phrases, verb phrases and prepositional phrases. Examples are the following:

- a. **The corrupt governor** has been detained. â€” Noun phrase
- b. The tenant **has moved** to Lagos. â€” Verb phrase
- c. The house **on the hill** belongs to the Oba. â€” Adjective phrase
- d. John spoke **with bitterness**. â€” Adverb phrase
- e. The graveyard **in front of the church** has been sold. â€” Prepositional phrase

You can see from the phrases above that apart from verb phrases, a phrase does not have a verb. A verb expresses action; a verb is a doing word. In these examples, no verb is present. Again, you may have noticed that the adjectival and prepositional phrases are alike.

Noun phrases as subjects of verbs

A noun phrase does the job of a noun. Noun phrases often begin with a determiner (a, an, the) and end with a noun. Noun phrases can play the following roles in sentences:

Subjects of verbs, objects of verbs, in apposition to another noun, and object of a preposition

Subject	Predicate
Peter	is white.
The old tree	is withered.
Riding to school	is fun.
To be happy	is sometimes difficult.
A bowl of rice	is waiting for me.

“Peter” is the name of a person. “Peter” is a noun. In the sentence, “Peter” serves as the subject of the sentence because a subject is what the sentence is talking about. The sentence is talking about “Peter”.

“The old tree”, “Riding to school”, “To be happy” and “A bowl of rice” are also the subjects of the sentences because the sentences in which they occur are talking about them. Nouns are usually the subjects of sentences; therefore “The Old tree”, “Riding to school”, “To be happy” and “A bowl of rice” are nouns. But because they contain more than one word, these units are not just nouns but noun phrases. Now, why are “The old tree”, “Riding to school”, “To be happy” and “A bowl of rice” phrases not clauses? They are phrases and not clauses because they do not contain verbs.

Noun phrases as objects of verbs

Just as single word nouns can serve as objects of verbs, so do noun phrases function as objects of verbs, e.g.

i. The chief bought a **bag of rice**.

A **bag of rice** is the object of the verb **bought**. We can see that the noun phrase is made up of a determiner and ends with a noun. Other examples of noun *phrases* which serve as objects of verbs include the following:

- ii. The girl presented a **bouquet of flowers**.
- iii. The head teacher took **the bar of chocolate**.
- iv. The carpenter made a **set of doors**.
- v. Pass the **pinch of salt**.

Noun phrases as objects of preposition

As we saw earlier, any noun that comes after a preposition is the object of that preposition. Similarly when a noun phrase follows a preposition, that noun phrase is the object of that preposition.

Example: i. **They are working hard for the survival of Nigeria**.

For is a preposition and *the survival of Nigeria* is a noun phrase. Because this noun phrase follows a preposition, it is the object of the preposition. Other examples include:

- ii. The boys played the ball over the **black net**.
- iii. She is toiling for **her daily bread**.
- iv. Okeke is tired of **his lazy brother**.
- v. He made it through a **narrow tunnel**.

Noun phrases in apposition to other nouns

A phrase is in apposition to another noun when it is another label for the first noun, e.g.

- i. **The Vanguard**, a daily newspaper, **is not banned**.

a daily newspaper is a noun phrase. It is made up of an article, an adjective and a noun which describe the noun *newspaper*. What role does **a daily newspaper** play in the sentence. **A daily newspaper** is another label or name for *The Vanguard*. Therefore, A daily newspaper is in apposition to *The Vanguard*. Other examples of phrases in apposition to other nouns are the following:

- i. His car, **a flashy black Mercedes Benz**, is the envy of all.
- ii. Her favourite dress, **a long flowing buba**, was ruined by the dry cleaner.
- iii. The guard, **a tall slim ex-soldier**, was stabbed by unknown men.
- iv. Her pet, **a small black cat**, was found in the toilet.
- v. Tunde, **the only son of Bakare**, is ill.

Exercise

Underline the noun phrases in the following sentences and state their grammatical functions.

1. A hardworking man will never go hungry.
2. He gave the child a cup of tea.
3. Lend me your two big ears.
4. Amina, the black beauty, is chiefs favourite wife.
5. The class gave their teacher a set of expensive glasses.

Reading Comprehension

First, discuss the following:

- ↳ How much do you know of Islam's founder, Prophet Mohammed?
- ↳ How and when did Islam start?
- ↳ What do you know of revelations?
- ↳ Are there different sects and denominations in Islam?

The Islamic Religion

If you are a true Muslim, you would know that Mohammed founded the religion. Mohammed was a great prophet of Allah who never regarded himself as a god or equivalent to God the Almighty. Rather he claimed to have received several revelations from God and was commissioned to see that the messages were carried out. Today, the effect of that

commission is a religion. But then, who was Mohammed?

Mohammed was an Arab, born in Mecca, in 570 AD, to a widow who herself died when Mohammed was six years old. Without parents, he had to live with his uncle and work for a wealthy woman, Khadijat, for whom he carried out commercial tasks that took him to several places. The woman found him very faithful and thus came to trust him so much that she married him. They had four children, two boys and two daughters, but the boys died in infancy.



During the many trips, he consistently had several revelations on Mount Hira, near Mecca. The first was received when he was about 40 years old after which he started to preach the message that Allah is the only true God and that worshipping other gods was sinful. Of course, given the polytheistic nature of the Arab people then, he ran into stiff opposition. The more revelations he received, the more he preached them, and the more of the people's wrath he incurred. The greatest support Mohammed had during those trying early days was from Khadijat and his uncle, Abu Talib. So, you can imagine how troubled he would be when he lost both of them in the year 619 AD. This was when, because of increasing opposition, he and his followers had to flee to Medina. This flight is cited as the Hegira, and it was from that time that the Islamic calendar started being dated.

From Medina his followers and he were able to gather strength and fight against "unbelievers", Meccans inclusive. After several years of spreading the religious principles, they were able finally to enter Mecca and convert the people to Islam. Of course, all the while, more revelations were received, all of which were memorised by his followers. However, after his death, it was realised that if care was not taken, the revelations might all be lost since those who memorised them were dying. So, they were written down. The result is the Koran.

Today, the religion is second in numerical strength only to Christianity. Adherents are in virtually all countries but there are today several sects. The two main sects are the Sunni and Shiite. In Nigeria, you might not readily realise which of the various movements is Sunni and which is Shiite. This is because most Muslims in the country actually belong to just one of the sects. In some countries, the Sunni is stronger; in others, it is the Shiite. However, there are some countries where the two are almost equally powerful.

However, whichever sect it might be, all Muslims regard the Koran as the message from God. All Muslims world-wide would want to see the Islamic system of justice, the Sharia, in operation. In most Islamic dominated countries, this system of justice is in operation, often along with some other judicial systems, but sometimes exclusively. Such a country is Saudi Arabia, a country which has no constitution apart from the Koran. (559 words)

A. Now do the following:

- a. Write down the time taken to read through the passage.
- b. Using the usual formula, calculate your reading speed.
- c. From the analysis for scoring reading rates (appendix 1) decide the category into which your reading rate falls.

B. Without going back to the passage, answer the following questions:

1. The passage makes it clear that Mohammed was
 - A. a prophet;
 - B. a god;
 - C. an associate of God;
 - D. an angel of God.
2. From the passage we can conclude that Mohammed's father
 - A. died when he was young.
 - B. died when he was six years old.
 - C. gave him over to his uncle.
 - D. died before he was born.
3. Mohammed started to preach to the people
 - A. when he was worried about the so many idols.
 - B. because of his experiences during his commercial trips.
 - C. while returning from Mount Hira, near Mecca.
 - D. as a result of the revelations received on Mount Hira.
4. When the people first heard the sermons, they
 - A. immediately accepted them.
 - B. fought Mohammed.
 - C. became antagonistic to Mohammed.
 - D. forced Mohammed to flee Mecca.
5. Today, most purely Islamic nations
 - A. have the Shiite and the Sunni movements.
 - B. would like to see Sharia practised in their countries.
 - C. actually practise the Sharia judicial system.
 - D. adopt the Koran as their constitution.

Now, score and record your attempt. Then, calculate your reading efficiency indices and record your attempts in the appropriate place.

C. Read the passage again, and answer the following questions:

6. What type of life did Mohammed live from very early in life? Why?
7. Why do you think the people who first listened to Mohammed's sermons opposed him?
8. What was the initial result of this opposition?
9. What was the eventual result of the opposition?
10. Why do you think the adherents of the two opposing sects often clash?

General discussion question

Do you think it is possible for the founder of any new religion to have his way right from the beginning and not be opposed?

Summary Work

Again, we shall have an exercise similar to that carried out in the last modules. So, do the following:

- a. identify the key idea in each paragraph; and/or
- b. identify the topic sentence in each case.

Then summarise the said key idea or topic sentence as neatly as possible.

Now, for each paragraph, identify the key sentence and summarise it.

Now, in 5 sentences, one for each,

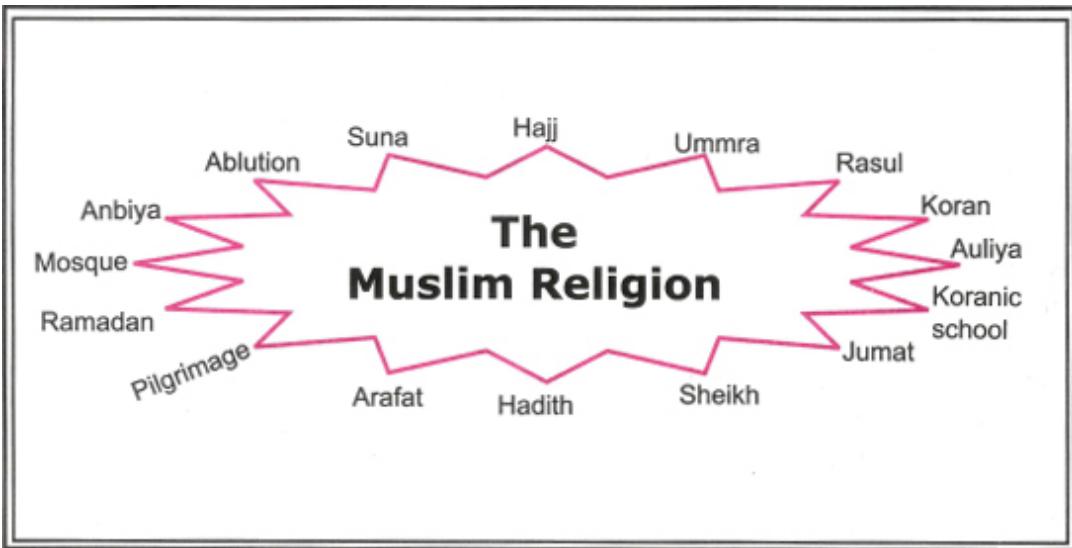
- a. summarise the prevailing condition when Mohammed was born and what his early life must have been like.
- b. summarise how and why he started preaching to his people.
- c. summarise the immediate and later results of the people's opposition.

Vocabulary Development

Words associated with Islamic religion

We shall be examining the words that are associated with the Islamic religion. If you are a Muslim, quickly make a list of things you can see in a mosque or other words associated with this religion. If you are not a Muslim, also make a list of those words you have heard or you know that are associated with the Islamic religion.

Now study the words indicated in the diagram below:



Activity I

Write out the words indicated in the diagram above and look up the meanings in the dictionary.

Activity II

Now that you have known the meanings of the words in the diagram form correct sentences with the following:

- a. Koran b. Hajj c. Pilgrimage d. Ablution e. Ummra
- f. Sunna g. Mosque h. Jumat i. Hadith j. Arafat

Activity III

Supply other words associated with the Islamic religion which are not included in the list.

Continuous Writing

Writing an argumentative essay 2

The literary and debating society in your school has invited the senior prefect to speak against the motion that: "Wealth is better than good health."

Now read the attempt of the senior prefect.

Good afternoon,
The principal,
The coordinator of this programme,
All academic staff members,
My fellow students.

I have the pleasure to stand before you to speak against the

motion: "Wealth is better than good health". Being wealthy implies having money, houses, vehicles, etc. in abundance. And this is part of what makes life comfortable for man. Good and sound health has to do with the proper functioning of all the internal and external parts of the body. When a man has no complaint about any of these, then, we say that he is sound.

I am here to speak against the motion. So, I'm stressing that good health is better than wealth. My opponent has talked for the motion, stressing that wealth is better than good health. Ladies and gentlemen, nothing is as good as a sound health. It is possible for a wealthy man to be in a hospital if he is unwell.

My opponent has said that if one is wealthy, one has the means to eat whatever he likes and has ample opportunity to enjoy life. This is true only to some extent. If one is wealthy one can enjoy only if one's health is sufficiently sound. A person may have a delicious meal before him; this may even be garnished with all assorted meat. If he is not well he will not enjoy it. This is because his health is bad. Ladies and gentlemen, what is greater than health? Nothing!

It has also been pointed out that a wealthy man has the means to ride a fine and elegant car. This is again true to some extent. Notice that if he is sick and he is carried to the hospital in the beautiful car, he may not have the pleasure or comfort he is supposed to have. He may even be unconscious. If he is conscious but he is undergoing some agony, the beautiful car may be like hell on earth for him.

My opponent has also said that if one is wealthy, one will have buildings of different kinds. Let me tell you, my fellow students, that it is not the number of buildings one has that matters but how well one is. And in fact, it is not possible for one to be sleeping in about five buildings one has, at the same time. The extent to which one enjoys one's properties depends on one's state of health.

Finally, fellow students, you will agree with me that health itself is wealth. It is not those who possess material things that are truly wealthy but those who have a sound health. A sufficiently healthy man can achieve a lot. He can even be wealthy. So, when wealth is lost nothing is lost; but when health is lost something vital is lost. Nothing is greater than good health. Health, they say, is wealth.

Thank you for listening to me.

Now, write an attempt on the other side, i.e. "Wealth is better than good health."