

Soundtracks

12



Word formation (Part 3)

EXAM FOCUS p.198

- 1** Work in pairs. Find out which sounds your partner loves and hates.
- 2** Read the article. Which sound was voted the most popular?

Our favourite sounds

Is there anything more (0) *reassuring* than the sound of rain lashing against the windows? Or more (1) than a baby's laugh? According to some new research, these are some of our favourite sounds. But as you may have guessed, (2), there is nothing we love more than the (3) sound of waves crashing against rocks. Fireworks, walking on snow and cheerful screams from people on a rollercoaster were also high in the (4) The reason for the popularity of many of these sounds is that they are associated with happy memories or the (5) of something good to come. The sounds around us create atmosphere and emotion as (6) as any other sense and that shared sense of exhilaration that comes from going to a football match or theme park can be (7) to any memorable experience. The survey also revealed the sounds that we loathe. (8), the noise that makes us shudder the most is the sound of nails being scraped down a chalkboard.

REASSURE
RESIST
SURPRISE
SOOTHE

RANK
ANTICIPATE
POWER

CENTRE
PREDICT

EXAM TIP

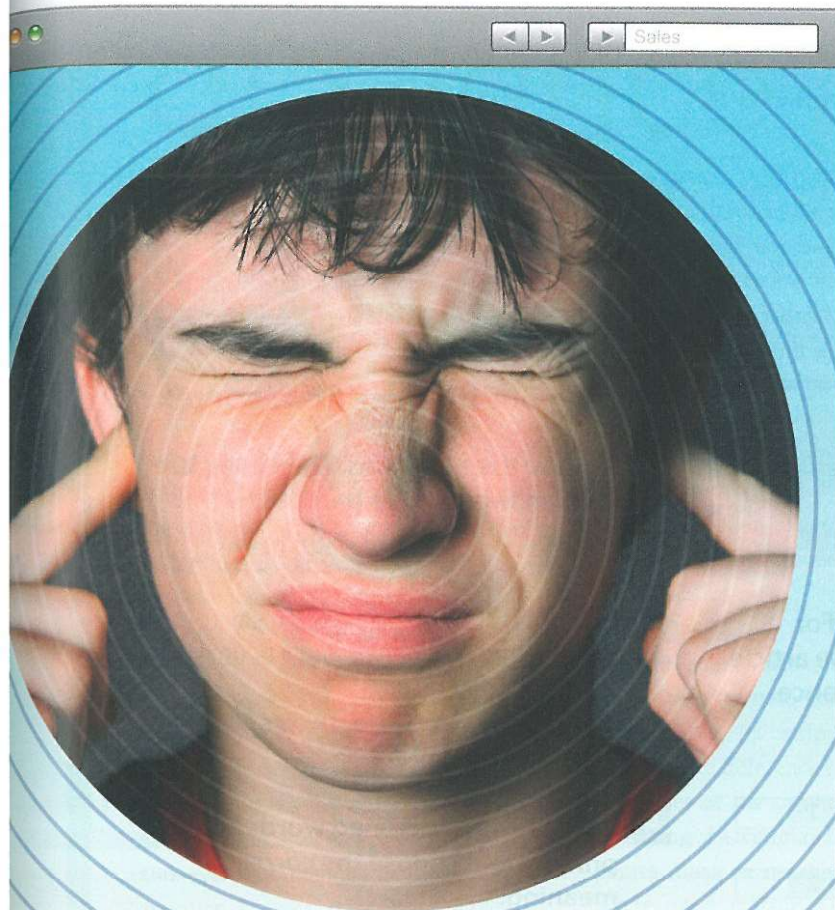
Check that you have spelt the words correctly. Word formation tasks often involve losing the final *e* from an infinitive form, e.g. *reassure* – *reassuring*.

- 3** Work in pairs. Look at the words in capitals in Activity 2 and list as many forms of each word as you can. Then decide which of the missing words are adjectives, adverbs or nouns.
- 4** Read the article again. For questions 1–8, use the word given in capitals at the end of some of the lines to form a word that fits in the gap in the same line.
- 5** Work in pairs. Try to predict five more unpopular sounds that you think were listed on the survey. Then turn to page 167 and check your ideas.

Future in the past

► GRAMMAR REFERENCE p.180

6 Read the article and find two uses of the Mosquito.



Weird sounds

The 'Mosquito' is an electronic device which operates at a frequency that can only be heard by people under the age of about twenty. Most people lose the ability to hear this sound once they reach their early twenties.

The sound was originally developed in 2005 as a type of alarm by a British inventor, Howard Stapleton, who (1) was aiming to repel teenagers from loitering around shops near his home in Wales. The idea behind it was that teenagers (2) would be put off by the noise and leave before they could cause any trouble. And older shoppers (3) would be able to get on with their shopping undisturbed by either groups of teenagers or the sound that, in theory, (4) would drive them away.

It (5) would have been impossible to imagine that this teenage deterrent would actually be used by the very teenagers it was supposed to deter, who quickly understood the Mosquito's potential as a ringtone undetectable by parents or teachers. Or that the Mosquito, or Teen-buzz, as it is also known, (6) was going to become such a commercial success. ■

7 Work in pairs. Have you noticed a difference in your hearing to that of other age groups? Do you think there's anything unethical about using the Mosquito as a sonic weapon against teenagers?

8 Look at the underlined verbs in the article. Are they referring to a future plan or a prediction about the future that was made in the past?

9 Rewrite the second paragraph of the article as if it were 2005. What changes do you need to make?

Example: The sound has just been developed as a type of alarm by a British inventor, Howard Stapleton, who ...

LANGUAGE TIP

The future in the past is often used to talk about a change of plan or to make excuses for things you haven't done.

I was planning to go/would have gone/was going to go to the party but I wasn't feeling well.

10 Choose the correct alternative in each sentence.

- 1 The government *was considering/would consider* banning the use of the Mosquito alarm but has decided not to.
- 2 I was sure my mum *was going to be/would have been* angry when I lost my phone but she was OK about it.
- 3 I never dreamt that I *was winning/would win* the lottery. I still can't believe it.
- 4 We *would hope/were hoping* to get tickets but they've all just sold out.
- 5 The lesson *would have been/would be* cancelled but too many students had already arrived.
- 6 When I set off for work this morning, I had no idea it *was going to take/was taking* three hours to get there.

Speaking

11 Work in pairs.

Student A: turn to page 163.

Student B: turn to page 164.

Speaking

1 Tick (✓) the statements you agree with. Then compare your responses with a partner.

- I find silence awkward and I always try to fill the gaps in a conversation.
- I need silence to be able to concentrate properly.
- I would rather shops and airports were silent than have to listen to bland, canned music.
- The idea of going to a retreat and spending several hours a day in silence fills me with horror.

Multiple matching (Part 8)

► **EXAM** FOCUS p.201

EXAM TIP

Don't assume that because a word appears in both the question and a section of the text, it is the correct answer. Focus on matching the meaning and looking for paraphrases of key words.

2 You are going to read an article about silence. For questions 1–10, choose from the sections of the article (A–D). The sections may be chosen more than once.

In which section are the following mentioned?

an explanation of how silence is really a lack of mechanical sound

1

the contradictory and sometimes disturbing nature of silence

2

a missed opportunity for some to pay close attention to accidental and uncontrollable sounds

3

an opinion on where it may still be possible to experience silence

4

a description of the sounds made in a familiar setting that we become aware of during quiet periods

5

an unpredicted realisation following an attempt to experience true silence

6

how an unexpected loss of familiar background sounds can cause a change of mood

7

a comment about how our perception of a sound depends on the environment in which it is heard

8

how the experience of hearing something different to what was expected in a particular environment provoked a strong reaction

9

a contrast between the physical and emotional effect sounds can have, depending on their source

10

Speaking

3 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- Do you agree with the definitions of silence in the text?
- How would you have reacted to John Cage's 4'33"?
- Can you think of any endangered sounds that need to be preserved?
- What's the quietest place you've ever been to? Could you hear anything? How did it make you feel?

Vocabulary

working out meaning from context

4 Answer the questions. Then compare your answers with a partner.

- In section A, find a word which means *non-stop* and *huge size*.
- In section C, find a noun which means *lacking control or planning* and a noun which means *becoming louder*.
- In section D, underline four words which describe feelings of anger.

5 Look at the underlined words and phrases and choose the correct meaning.

- You'll have to speak up. He's a bit hard of hearing.
A is a little deaf
B doesn't listen to people
- A teenager who doesn't like loud music? That's unheard of.
A very unusual
B unbelievable
- I overheard the bus driver saying there'll be a bus strike next week.
A was given an explanation
B listened to someone's conversation
- Please turn the music down. I can't hear myself think.
A can't concentrate
B have a headache
- I won't hear of you getting the bus to the hospital. I'll drive you.
A won't let you
B wasn't thinking about
- Most people would benefit from a hearing aid over the age of seventy-five.
A hearing test
B hearing device

Culture

Sounds of silence

At was 1037 p.m. on a bitterly cold midwinter's night when an ice storm hit, cutting off our electricity for days. Suddenly, the incessant humming, buzzing and chattering of TVs, microwave ovens, radios, computers, digital clocks, lamps and the refrigerator were gone and with it, my sense of tranquillity. Other than the occasional snapping and popping of a perky fireplace fire, the house was doused in the sudden immensity of silence.

Silence unsettles us. Silence both widens our attention and focuses it at the same time. Not because of what we can't hear but because of what we suddenly can. At 2 a.m. a silent house can be an unsettling house. It creaks. It clicks. It shuffles. It's not that we hear nothing – we hear everything. Each and every unintended noise draws our attention. A silent house jumps to life.

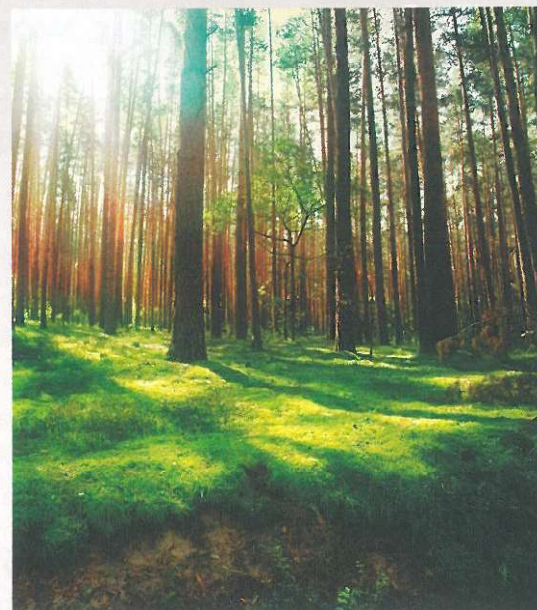
BThe composer John Cage once entered a soundproof chamber at Harvard University with the intention of listening to absolute silence. 'I literally expected to hear nothing,' he said. Instead of nothing, he heard the whooshing and gurgling of his nervous system and circulating blood. When he emerged, he declared that silence does not exist.



What we think of as silence is actually the absence of man-made noise. Kathleen Moore, in her article *In Search of Silence*, wrote: 'It's not easy to find silence in the modern world. If a quiet place is one where you can listen for fifteen minutes in daylight hours without hearing a human-created sound, there are no quiet places left in Europe. In the USA, a country with huge wide open spaces, there are none in the east. And in the American West? Maybe twelve.'

CNatural sound has a different quality and texture to man-made sound. There's randomness. It's stripped of intention. Think of the difference between the sound of a river or the continuous roaring and splashing of a waterfall to that of shopping centre music, a nearby freeway or even white noise machines. Man-made noise dulls us. Thought narrows. Sitting by a river or waterfall, or on a secluded stretch of beach, our thoughts become expansive. Our nervous system slows and soothes. We all become philosophers; we see and hear life's bigger picture with clarity.

Gordon Hempton, an acoustic ecologist, on a mission to preserve the natural sounds of the wilderness, noted that in a dense moss-covered forest it is possible to be aware of something as delicate as the sound of a falling rain drop – undetectable in any city. 'A drop of rain may hit twenty times before it reaches the ground and each impact – against the bough of a tree, a leaf or a rock – makes its own sound.' And you will hear each drip with deafening precision. It's not the sound itself but the silence surrounding it. Silence is not the absence of sound but the amplification of sound.



DIn 1952 John Cage's experimental work '4'33"' was performed by the young pianist David Tudor. The concert hall was ideal for Cage's '4'33"' because the back of the hall was open to the surrounding forest. The piece was four minutes and thirty-three seconds of the pianist sitting at the keyboard without playing a single note. Four minutes and thirty-three seconds of listening not to music but to silence. During the first movement only the wind in the trees outside the auditorium was audible. The second movement brought rain drops pattering the roof. The third whispers and mutterings from a confused and frustrated audience. The piece was a requiem to unintended sound.

Cage said, 'People began whispering to one another and some people began to walk out. They didn't laugh – they were just irritated when they realised nothing was going to happen and they haven't forgotten it thirty years later; they're still annoyed.' When Tudor finished, raising the keyboard lid and himself from the piano, the audience burst into an uproar – 'infuriated and dismayed,' according to the reports.

But Cage's work wasn't silent at all. It's not that nothing happened. For those who actually widened their awareness and listened carefully, they would have heard a world of unintended sound. ■

Onomatopoeic words

- 1 Match verbs 1–8 with things they could describe A–H. Then compare your answers with a partner.**

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 drip, patter | A a fire |
| 2 snap, pop | B a house at night |
| 3 creak, click, shuffle | C your nervous system |
| 4 hum, buzz, chatter | D raindrops |
| 5 roar, splash | E household gadgets |
| 6 whoosh, gurgle | F a waterfall |
| 7 whisper, mutter | G leaves |
| 8 rustle, sigh | H an audience |

- 2 Which of the verbs in Activity 1 could also be used to describe the sounds made by**

- an insect?
- a lion or tiger?
- something breaking?
- a dishwasher?
- a small animal's or child's footsteps?
- an old door or gate?
- a packet of crisps?
- long grass?

- 3 Choose the correct alternative in each sentence.**

- That light is making a really annoying *buzzing/shuffling* noise – it sounds like a bee.
- My dad always *clicks/creaks* his fingers when he's listening to jazz.
- During the storm a huge branch of the tree outside my window *popped/snapped* in two.
- Many people experience a *roaring/popping* noise in their ears during a flight.
- My stomach often makes loud *gurgling/splashing* noises after I've eaten – it can be very embarrassing.
- The dog's paws *clicked/pattered* across the wooden floor.
- You always hear the *creaking/snapping* of floorboards in horror films.
- You must be freezing! Your teeth are *popping/chattering*!

LANGUAGE TIP

You can use the *-ing* form of verbs to make nouns.
the **buzzing** of the computer

- 4 Work in pairs. Take turns to describe the sounds you can hear around you now.**

Example: I can hear the *buzzing/chattering* of the ...

- 5 Complete the sentences with the words in the box. There are two words you do not need to use.**

birds	ducks	frogs	hens	mice
owls	penguins	snakes		

- The quacked noisily as they splashed about.
- I like the sounds of the chattering outside my window.
- The hooted to each other all night long.
- The croaked more loudly as the storm approached.
- The shuffled along in the snow.
- The hissed in alarm.

Speaking

- 6 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.**

- How similar are the onomatopoeic words to the sound they describe?
- Do you think English has more/fewer onomatopoeic words than your language?
- Which of the sounds do you hear regularly?
- Which sounds do you identify with home, college or work?

- 7**  **46 Listen and describe the sounds you hear. What do you think they are?**

