

ATC Language & Travel
Preparatory Certificate in ELT (State Qualified Teachers)
Skills 1 Listening & Reading: Handout 1

Task 1

Do the following represent use of top-down or bottom-up strategies for listening?

1. Before we start listening, we can already predict some possible words and phrases that might be used because of our knowledge of vocabulary sets associated with the topic. *TOP-DOWN*
2. We listen carefully to a recording a number of times so that we can find a word we can't catch clearly. *BOTTOM-UP*
3. When we don't clearly catch some of what people say, we hypothesise what we have missed and reinstate what we think there, based on our knowledge of similar conversations. *TOP-DOWN*
4. We know the typical pattern some interactions follow (e.g. the typical sequence of exchange when ordering a taxi on the phone), and this helps us to understand these when they are spoken. *TOP-DOWN*

Task 2

Form a small group and share experiences you have of listening in a second language, for example in class as language student, or on holiday as tourist. Do you recall utilising any of these strategies?

Task 3

Taking into consideration what you know about top down and bottom up approaches to listening, how do think we might train our students develop these useful strategies when listening? Discuss with your group.

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Skills 1 Listening & Reading: Handout 2

Possible Route Map for a Listening Lesson...

Procedure	Why?	How?
Discuss the general topic	Students start to think about the topic raising a number of issues that will be discussed later on in the recording. This preparation may help them to hear these things being discussed later.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm • Classroom survey • Discuss pictures • Read a short passage and comment
Predict the specific content	Students hypothesise specific issues that may be raised. This may help them to recognise the content more easily	Hypothesise or predict from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pictures • Quotes • Key words or phrases
Gist listening for overview	Students get an overall impression of the content without worrying about small items or individual words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to see if predictions from previous stage were correct • Put pictures of the story in the correct order • Choose the most suitable title from a choice
More careful Listening for complex meanings	By catching and interpreting smaller parts of the text, students fine-tune their understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension questions • Multiple choice • Summarise arguments • Compare viewpoints
Listening to pick out specific small language details	This focussed work (e.g. on pronunciation) may raise student awareness and thus help students to listen better in the future	Listen and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tick which word in the list of pairs you hear • Note down all the weak forms • Note down all the positive adjectives • Phrases to indicate...
Skills Integration	Students do a follow-on task integrating a different skill, usually a productive skill (i.e. speaking and/or writing) after a receptive skills lesson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class discussion on the topic • Agree or disagree with points raised in the text • Comparing personal experiences with those expressed in the listening

Different Types of Listening Tasks

If you are designing your own tasks to accompany a listening text, consider the different types of responses these tasks might require from your learners:

1. No Overt Response

The learners do not have to do anything in response to the listening; however, facial expressions and body language often show if they are following or not. They might listen in this way to stories, songs, or entertainment (films, video, etc)

2. Short Responses

- Obeying instructions: Learners perform actions, or draw shapes or pictures, in response to instructions.
- Ticking off items: Listeners mark or tick off words/components as they hear them
- True/false: Learners indicate whether statements are right or wrong; or make brief responses ('True!' or 'False!' for example)
- Detecting mistakes: Listeners raise their hands or call out when they hear mistakes
- Cloze: The listening text has occasional brief gaps, represented by silence or some kind of buzz. The learners write down what they think might be the missing word
- Guessing Definitions: The teacher provides brief oral definitions; learners write down what they think it is
- Skimming and Scanning: Learners are asked to identify some general topic or information (skimming), or certain limited information (Scanning)

3. Longer Responses

- Answering questions: Questions demanding full responses are given in advance.
- Note-taking: Learners take brief notes from a short talk.
- Paraphrasing and translating: Learners rewrite the text in different words.
- Summarizing: Learners write a brief summary of the content.
- Long gap-filling: A long gap is left somewhere in the text for learners to fill in.

4. Extended Responses

Here the listening is only a 'jump off point' for extended reading, writing or speaking: in other words, these are 'combined skills' activities.

- Problem-solving: Learners hear about a problem and try to solve it.
- Interpretation: An extract from a piece of dialogue or monologue is provided, with no previous information; the listeners try to guess from the words, kinds of voices, tone and any other evidence what is going on. Alternatively a piece of literature that is suitable for reading aloud can be discussed and analysed.

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Skills 1 Listening & Reading Handout 5

Possible Route Map for a Reading Lesson...

Pre-text	1	Introduction and lead-in , e.g. get the learners interested in the topic, activate what knowledge (and language) they already have on the topic. Discussion of key themes, make an explicit link between the topic of the text and students' own lives and experiences, focus on important language that will come up in the text.
	2	First task (pre-reading), e.g. predict from some extracted information (illustration, key words, headlines, etc), read questions about the text, students compose their own questions about the text.
Text	3	Tasks to focus on fast reading for gist (skimming), e.g. check text against predictions made beforehand, guess the title from a choice of three options, put events (or illustrations) in the correct order.
	4	Tasks to focus on fast reading for specific details (scanning), e.g. find single items of information in the text.
	5	Tasks to focus on meaning (general points), e.g. answer questions about meaning, make use of information in the text to do something (make a sketch, fill out a form, find out which picture is being described, etc), discuss issues, summarise arguments, compare viewpoints.
	6	Tasks to focus on meaning (finer points, more intensive comprehensive understanding)
	7	Tasks to focus on individual language items, e.g. vocabulary or grammar exercises, use of dictionaries, work out meaning of words from context.
Post-text	8	Follow-on task, e.g. role-play, debate, writing task (e.g. write a letter in reply), personalisation (e.g. 'have you ever had an experience like this one?')
	9	Closing, e.g. draw the lesson to a conclusion, tie up loose ends, review what has been studied and what has been learned

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Teaching the Skills 1: Reading and Listening
Handout 6

PLANNING A READING LESSON

Pre-text	1	Introduction and lead-in,
	2	First task (pre-reading)
Text	3	Tasks to focus on fast reading for gist (skimming)
	4	Tasks to focus on fast reading for specific details (scanning)
	5	Tasks to focus on meaning (general points)
	6	Tasks to focus on meaning (finer points, more intensive comprehensive understanding)
	7	Tasks to focus on individual language items:
Post-text	8	Follow-on task
	9	Closing:

PLANNING A LISTENING LESSON

Pre-text	1	Introduction and lead-in,
	2	First task (pre-listening)
Text	3	Task for gist listening for overview
	4	Task for more careful listening for complex meanings
	5	Task for listening to pick out specific small language details
Post-text	6	Follow-on task
	7	Closing: