

Exploring Skills for English Tests

Listening Part 1: B1

Format of the task

There are three parts to the B1 Listening test. In **Part 1**, candidates will listen to 10 short recordings, which may be dialogue or monologue (approximately 60-80 words). The topics will be on everyday life contexts and appropriate to B1 level.

Questions in this part consist of a single three-option multiple choice question (MCQ) for each recording. The focus of these questions will be on identifying key information. Candidates will need to answer the questions as they listen.

Candidates will have time to read and check their answers. All audio recordings and questions are at B1 level and each recording will be played twice.

Skills/functions being assessed

- Focus on identifying key information
- Understanding of straightforward factual information
- Comprehension of general messages about everyday life, work or study for example: recorded messages and public announcements, short broadcasts, radio bulletins, and weather reports

Tips for teachers

Provide candidates with:

- Skills in time management: candidates need to be aware of the pace of the test
- Practice in listening and identifying key message, key information and factual information and encourage paying attention to both speakers
- Skills to be able to understand unfamiliar words through context
- Opportunities to do tests without taking notes (as the online test does not permit using pen and paper)

Tips for learners

- In preparation, listen to as many audio exercises in English as you can that involve a variety of situations, topics and speakers
- Read the questions carefully before listening and remember the key words
- Listen for key pieces of information that are related to the question
- Use the second listening to check your answers
- Prepare by using the online Skills for English (SfE) practice tests

Sample B1 Listening Part 1 Task

The extract below is an example of the type of recording a candidate may encounter in Part 1.

The wrong options (B and C) are also mentioned in the text, so listen for the details connected to each option in order to choose the correct answer.

Allen	Hi Steve, have you finished Mr Smith's homework?
Steve	No, I haven't done anything Allen. I've been too busy finishing my biology assignment. What is it we have to do for English again?
Allen	We've got to analyse sections of the novel we read last week. It took me about 2 hours!
Steve	Oh no, it's going to take me twice as long! When is it again?
Allen	It's our second lesson after history, I think.
Steve	Guess I'm going to be up all-night finishing this!

Both speakers discuss the options in the conversation and that the level of the conversation is within B1 level.

First listening: You have approximately 15 seconds to read the question first before hearing the first recording.

Second listening: after hearing the recording a second time you have approximately 10 seconds to select the correct answer.

1. What subject has Steve not finished preparing for?

- a. English**
- b. Biology
- c. History

All of the options do occur but only one relates to the question. The green highlighted text shows the correct answer, and the yellow highlighted text shows the wrong answers.

Answer:

1. a

Note: this sample task is for guidance purposes only. For examples of level-specific listening tasks, please refer to the Skills for English Practice Tests available through the Skills for English website: <https://skillsforenglish.com/language-learning/>