

Exploring Skills for English Tests

Listening Part 3: B2

Format of the task

There are three parts to the B2 Listening test. In **Part 3**, candidates will listen to an extended monologue such as a talk on a topic of general interest a tourist site, or on a topic of general interest presented in a more academic context (approximately 460-600 words). Topics will be work or study-oriented and will be appropriate to B2 level.

The type of questions found in this part consist of 10 x note completion with candidates supplying the responses by typing in their answers. The focus of these questions will be on key information, main ideas, detailed or specific information, attitudes and opinions and topics can be abstract in nature. 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 B2 level. Candidates will hear this section played twice.

Skills/functions being assessed

- Focus is on key information, main ideas, detailed or specific information, attitudes and opinions
- Understanding of main ideas of propositionally and linguistically complex speech as well as complex lines of argument
- Distinguishing main themes
- Focus on both vocabulary and grammar to convey message

Tips for teachers

Provide candidates with:

- Practice in listening to a variety of recordings where the candidate can follow lines of arguments and identify attitudes, gist and opinions
- Skills to understand how informal and formal monologues are organised
- Strategies that focus on sentence completion such as practice with synonyms
- and word formation. Practice at filling in missing words from the recordings
- Skills to be able to understand unfamiliar words through context

Tips for learners

- In preparation, listen to as many audio recordings in English as you can
- Read the questions carefully before listening, remembering key words to identify in the recording
- Use the second listening to check your answers

- Practise using cues in the text to help you identify meanings of words you don't know. Practice exercises where you fill in the missing words from recordings
- Prepare by using the online Skills for English (SfE) practice tests

Sample B2 Listening Part 3 Task

The extract below is a short example of the type of recordings and questions a candidate may encounter in Part 3.

Speaker 1 You will have 1 minute to read the questions before listening to the audio. All the words and vocabulary are appropriate to the B2 level.	<p>Welcome to this week's podcast, where we explore new ideas and the science behind them. In this week's episode we are looking at the theme of "sleep" and how our sleeping habits have evolved over the years.</p> <p>The science in this subject is, relatively speaking, quite new and therefore still developing. Many assumed that sleep was an activity that involved nothing more than shutting our bodies down; rather like turning off a computer. However, sleep research has revealed that the brain is in fact engaged in a set of activities that is crucial to our short and long-term health. These activities include regulation of our breathing and heart rate. Managing body temperature is critical to ensure that we have enough sleep in which our bodies and our brain can complete these functions.</p> <p>Sleep scientists have identified 4 stages of sleep. Stage 1 is referred to as non-rapid eye movement (NREM) and this first stage can be challenging for many. Even scientists are curious as to how this process takes place. We have slept every night since we were in our cots, but sometimes we just can't switch off...</p>	Q1 Q2 Q3
--	--	------------------------

For questions 1 to 3, choose between ONE and TWO words from the recording and write your answers to complete the notes.

Science of sleep

- Sleeping patterns have evolved over time.
- Sleep science, is a recent and (1) _____ subject.
- Sleeping, NOT like turning off a computer.

All the questions appear in the same order that you hear them in the audio.

During sleep

- Brain is (2) _____ and working.
- Activities include: control of breathing/ heart rate and (3) _____.

Stage 1

- Known as NREM

Answers:

1. developing
2. Engaged
3. body temperature

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 at <https://skillsforenglish.com/language-learning/>