

# Favors for a Friend: Example Listening Lesson

**Warm up:** Do your friends usually ask you for favors? What are some examples of favors that a friend might ask you for? List in a small group.



**Part 1: Listen for Favors:** Your friend, Todd, went to New York 2 days ago. He was planning to come back today, but instead he called you to leave you a message. In the message, he asks for 4 favors. Listen and check off the favors that he asks you to do.

- get the mail
- do his laundry
- pay his bills
- water his plants
- take care of his dog
- take care of his cat
- pick him up from the train station
- pick him up from the airport

## Part 2: To-Do List

First, fill in what you need to do on the left side of the to-do list before you listen again. Then listen to add details. For example, where should you put the mail?

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

**Part 3:** Listen again with the script. Underline the words he uses to ask for a favor.

Hey, hello. Hey, Oh, man I'm so glad I got you on the phone. This is Mark. Hey, listen, I really need you to do me a favor. I'm still in New York. I was supposed to come home, but it looks like I need to stay in New York for two more days. So, can you help

me out?



The first thing I need you to do is to check my mail. I should have a lot of mail. It will be in the front door, and it really piles up. And I have an important letter that's coming so can you take the mail out, and put it on the kitchen table?



Also, I left enough food and water for my dog, but just to be sure can you just check and make sure the dog has food and water and please walk the dog if you have time? I'm sure he's really frustrated because he hasn't been walked in a few days so please feed the dog and take him for a walk.



Oh, yeah, and my flowers. Listen I really need you to water the flowers, my plants inside the house. Don't worry about the garden outside the house in the backyard because the lawn and the flowers in the garden are on an automatic sprinkler system so they can get water, but can you water the plants inside the house? Please don't forget. I don't want them to die.



OK, and one last thing. I'm going to get home really late in a couple days and if it's possible can you come to the airport and pick me up? I'm on flight 755 on Delta and I arrive at 11:10 at night, so can you please come and pick me up? It would be a huge help. Ok, man. Thanks, buddy. I owe you. See you at the airport!

### Discuss:

- How close are Todd and the person he is speaking to? How do you know?
- Which favor does Todd think is the biggest favor? How do you know?

**Part 4: Ask for a Favor.** Imagine that you need a friend to do you a favor. Decide how big of a favor it is, and what kind of language you need to ask for the favor. Role play a phone call with a partner.

# Planning a Listening Lesson

**Objective:** Start with a clear, specific description of what you want students to be able to do by the end of the lesson.

**PRE-TASK: Warm Up and Preparation:** Activate students' background knowledge of the topic, provide them with essential language when necessary, and get them interested and ready to listen.

- Survey students on their personal experiences
- Quiz students about their general knowledge of a topic
- Ask students to brainstorm and list items or specific vocabulary related to a topic
- Have students match vocabulary items related to the topic to definitions
- Ask students to predict what they think they will hear based on some basic information
- Have students do a simpler listening task with more help from the teacher

**Listening TASK:** Have students listen and complete their assigned task. Students should listen to prepared audio more than once and for different reasons. Below are some different reasons for listening and some ideas for each purpose.

Listen for Gist:

- match audio to a picture, item (i.e. headlines, ads, etc.), person, or key word
- sequence pictures, items, speakers, or key words
- check a previously made prediction about the topics or ideas
- note down the topic of a conversation and what key words helped you determine that
- answer basic, general yes/no questions

Listen for Details (Content):

- fill in a form or survey related to the person
- fill in missing information in a chart
- create or fill in a graphic organizer, such as a T chart, web, venn diagram, etc.
- label a picture or diagram
- check off the name of the person who says various statements
- choose the best response
- take a message, write a to-do list or a shopping list, take notes, etc.
- follow instructions (i.e. "pick up your pencil," "fold a piece of paper," etc.)
- mark a route on a map
- take notes in order to retell what you heard (as in a jigsaw)
- Compare the speakers' views or experiences with yours

- Select the best, worst, easiest, etc.
- Solve a problem

Listen for Inferences:

- Think about what is not said in the text. What's "between the lines?" Have students guess speakers' attitudes, opinions, relationships, futures, pasts, etc.

**POST-TASK: Follow-Up:** Help students to make sense of the language they just heard. Examining the language more closely and then using the language can help them to process and retain it more effectively.

Listen for Noticing (Pronunciation, Grammar, or Vocabulary):

- listen for discourse markers
- write the verbs you hear and their tense
- fill in gaps on a script (cloze)
- write short sentences in a dictation
- circle the word stress or sentence stress
- mark the intonation with an up or down arrow
- circle places where you hear linking
- write down all the words you hear with a specific sound
- mark the script where you hear reductions in speech (gonna, wanna, etc.)

Speaking Activities

- perform a speaking task similar to what was heard (in pairs, as a presentation, as a recording, etc.)
- discuss the content using guide questions
- respond to the speaker

## Recommended Links for Listening and Speaking

### Listening Sources for Native Speakers

- [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org) NPR
- [www.ted.com](http://www.ted.com) TED Talks
- [www.thersa.org](http://www.thersa.org) RSA Animates
- [www.gcflearnfree.org](http://www.gcflearnfree.org) A multi-faceted website with lessons on wide variety of practical topics from computer skills to how to use a bus schedule, some with audio.

### For English Language Learners

- [www.ello.org](http://www.ello.org) English Language Listening Lab Online
- <http://www.esl-lab.com/> A website where you can listen to ESL dialogues and answer quiz questions for practice.
- <http://learningenglish.voanews.com/> VOA Special English
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/>
- <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/listen-and-watch>
- <http://www.lyricstraining.com/> A fun way to learn English by listening to popular songs and filling in the missing words.
- <http://www.englishcentral.com> A website where you can listen to real video clips and type the words you hear.
- <http://www.real-english.com/> Interviews with people on the street for all levels.

### For Beginners

- <http://www.reepworld.org/>

### Pronunciation

- <http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/english/frameset.html>
- <http://www.colorvowelchart.org/>

### Assessing Speaking

- [www.soundcloud.com](http://www.soundcloud.com)
- <http://audacity.sourceforge.net>

### Assessing Listening

- [www.schoolology.com](http://www.schoolology.com) (for Listening Logs)

### Other Tools

- [www.online-stopwatch.com](http://www.online-stopwatch.com)



# What will we learn in this workshop?

- Introduction listening activity
- 10 Tips for Teaching Listening
- Example listening lesson
- You'll make your own lessons!



# A Get-to-Know-You Listening Task

**Step 1:** Get with a partner. Interview your partner and take notes.

**Step 2:** Share the person's name and 3 brief, important or interesting pieces of information about the person.

**Step 3:** Listen to try to remember the information you hear so that you can answer Megan's questions correctly.

# Reflection

- What were the two listening activities?
- How was this different from simply having participants stand up and introduce themselves?
- If you were doing this with students, what additional support would they have required?

# 1. Listening can and should be taught.

- Listening will make up over 50% of the time students spend functioning in a foreign language. (Nunan, 1998)
- “School” learners especially are in need
- Can be integrated with reading, writing, and speaking



## 2. Start from your students' real-world listening needs.

- health
- housing
- shopping
- school
- transportation
- work
- banking
- news
- community
- social life
- parenting
- Dialogues and monologues
- Planned and spontaneous
- Interpersonal and transactional
- Participant and non-participant
- Formal and informal

# Brainstorm: What are some situations that your learners will need to listen to and understand English?



# 3. Prepare students to listen to real *spoken* language.

Spontaneous spoken language is not like prepared or written language.



Discuss: Why is spoken language is different from written language?



# Features of Spoken Language

- False starts, mistakes, unfinished thoughts
- Redundant, non-linear
- Non-verbal communication
- Simpler grammar, less precise vocabulary
- Fillers and hesitation markers
- Slang, idioms, chunks
- Various accents and dialects
- Reduced forms, stress intonation
- Speed is up to speaker

(Lynch, 2009; Brown, 2007)

# Real Spoken English

It's a science fiction, like fantasy movie and it takes place in this magical world and it's about the, I think three or four children, they go into this fantasy world through some piece of furniture in their house, like through their dresser or something and they meet up with giants and dwarves, like little people and talking beasts and all these fantasy creatures like that.

The man with the hats--see the guy with the hats? The old guy, no the young one--on the left--well he realizes the monkeys--or chimps, I suppose they are--the chimps have stolen his hats

# 4. Teach strategies for interactive listening.

When a live speaker is involved, what can learners do to make listening more comprehensible?



# 5. Provide a variety of voices.

“Teacher, I like your class because I understand you! I can’t understand other people.”



Brainstorm ways to provide your students with meaningful exposure to other voices?

# Sources for Audio

- Textbooks--All Star, Ventures, OPD, etc.
- [www.ello.org](http://www.ello.org)
- <http://www.reepworld.org>
- <http://www.esl-lab.com/>
- <http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/>
- <https://www.ted.com/talks>
- [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)
- Your own recordings! ([www.audacity.com](http://www.audacity.com))

And more...

# Technology Concerns?

- Have a backup for the internet (may just be a script that you read)
- Use your cell phone or MP3 player to record and play
- Bring your own computer
- Bring computer speakers or bluetooth speakers
- Students can listen to each other
- Students can bring audio
- Have students listen outside of class

# 6. Have students listen *before* reading.

Think about new vocabulary, dialogues, transcripts, subtitles, etc.

- What happens if students read before they listen?
- What happens if students read while listening?

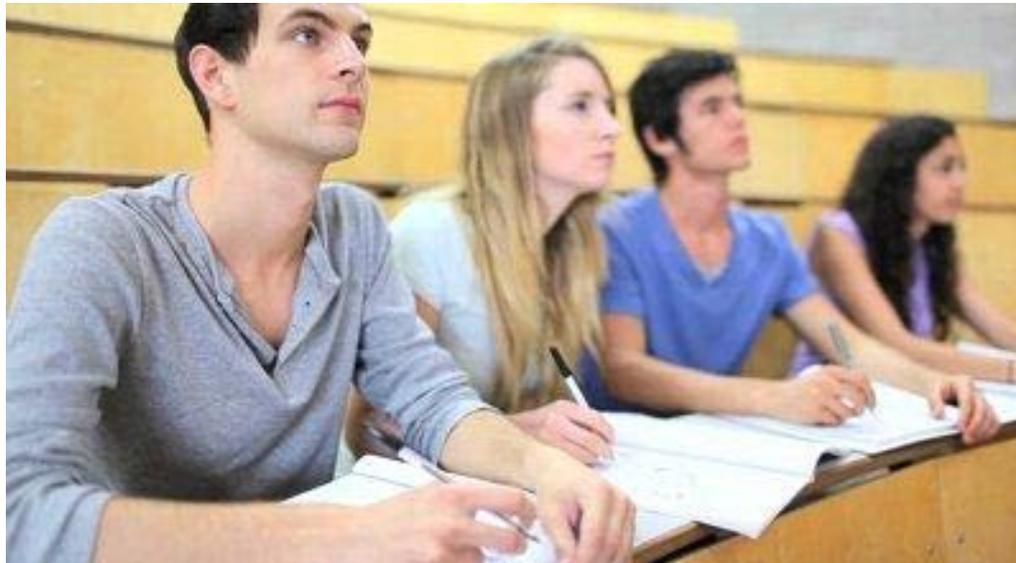


# 7. Make the invisible visible.

Teacher: “Do you understand?”

Students: “Yes.”

What can you do to know that they really understood?



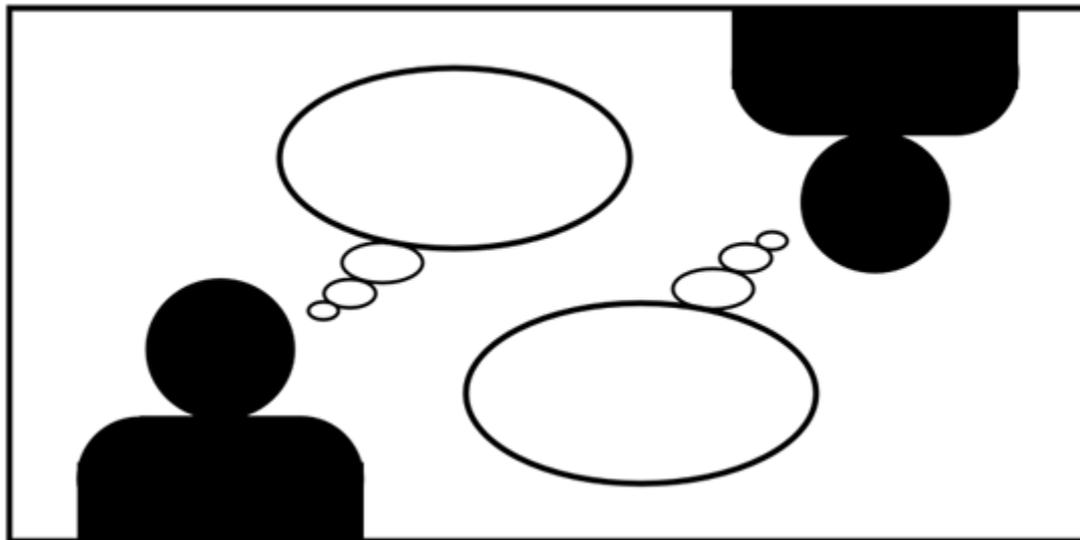
# Ideas for Making Listening Visible

- Demonstrating
- Writing notes (condensing information)
- Drawing
- Answering questions
- Identifying/choosing
- Repeating or reproducing
- Discussing or thinking critically about the content
- Extending
- Solving a problem (based on Lund, 1990)

## 8. Provide opportunities for both bottom up and top down listening.

**Bottom up:** parts → whole (decoding sounds into meaning)

**Top down:** whole → parts (predicting and guessing based on prior knowledge)





# Examples of Top Down Listening Activities

- Listen to sentences. Place a check in the column that describes the emotional reaction: interested, happy, surprised, etc.
- Listen to a dialogue and decide where the conversation occurred. Circle the location.
- Listen to a conversation between friends about television shows. Match the scenes from the shows to the right person.
- Listen to a story. Stop the story, then predict what will come next. Listen to check your prediction. (Brown, 2007)

# Examples of Bottom Up Listening Activities

- Listen to words of two or three syllables. Mark the stress.
  - Listen to sentences for ed endings. Mark yes or no.
  - Listen to announcements of airline arrivals and departures. Fill in missing details.
  - Listen to a lecture while reading a transcript of the material. Circle the verbal fillers.
- (Brown, 2007)

# Discuss (handout)

- What kinds of bottom up listening activities could you use with your students?
- What kinds of top down listening activities could you do with your students?



# 9. Keep tasks simple-- listening takes work!

Try not to overwhelm learners while listening.  
They already have to...

- Determine what sounds they're hearing
- Divide the sounds into words
- Test out possible matches for words
- Remember the meanings of words
- Connect the words into meaningful thoughts
- Infer unspoken ideas, feelings, opinions, agendas, cultural beliefs, etc.
- Prepare a response

# 10. Build your lesson around the task.

**Pre-task:** Prepare your students for what they're about to hear.

**Task:** Have students listen and complete their assigned listening task.

**Post-task:** Help students make sense of what they just heard.

(handout)



# Example Lesson

**Objective: Students will be able to understand requests for common favors between peers.**

<http://www.ello.org/english/Games/G011-PhoneCall.html>

# Reflection

- What do you think was effective about this listening lesson?
- What are some alternative possibilities for what we could have done after the listening?

# Your Turn: Create your own lessons!

- Get into small groups. Choose a listening task from the ones provided.
- Audio is at <http://bit.ly/1Kx6Dyh>
- On a large piece of paper, plan out a warm up/pre-task, specifics about the listening task, and a post-task/speaking activity.
- When you're finished, we'll walk around and visit the lessons. Use post-its to post positive comments and questions.



# Suggested Listening Tasks

## **Low Beginning:**

- Answer personal information questions.
- Determine prices of various items from an ad.

## **High Beginning:**

- Follow simple directions on a map.
- Take meal orders.

## **Low Intermediate:**

- Interpret safety recommendations.
- Determine the order of life events in a story.

## **High Intermediate and Advanced:**

- Discuss a news report about a murder.
- Take notes on a presentation about success.
- Participate in a conversation about love at first sight.

# Thanks so much for your time!

Questions or comments?

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# References and Resources

- Brown, D. (2007). *Teaching by principles*. White Plains, NY: Pearson Longman.
- Lynch, T. (2009). *Teaching Second Language Listening*. Oxford, UK: OUP.
- [http://www.cambridge.org/other\\_files/downloads/esl/booklets/Brown-Teaching-Listening.pdf](http://www.cambridge.org/other_files/downloads/esl/booklets/Brown-Teaching-Listening.pdf)
- <http://www.mhhe.com/socscience/supergoal/Chapter2%20Section3.pdf>
- <http://www.nclrc.org/essentials/listening/liindex.htm>
- [Maryland State Adult ESOL Standards](#)