

Test section – Listening Part 3

Sentence Completion questions

Activities

1. Following the instructions
2. Analysing the context – True/False
3. Developing a strategy for Sentence Completion questions - Matching
4. Listening Part 3 practice

Aims

- to help students understand the importance of noticing and following the instructions
- to help students use the time before the audio starts to think about the context and nature of the conversation
- to provide students with strategies to approach this type of question
- to give students practice in a Part 3 of the Listening test

Learning outcomes

- Students will have practised using the time before the audio starts to analyse the context.
- Students will have practised how to approach Sentence Completion questions.
- Students will have applied the strategy to an IELTS Listening test Part 3.

Information about this section of IELTS

In the Listening test Part 3 test takers will hear a conversation between two to four people set in an educational or training context, for example, a discussion between a tutor and a student about a research project. There are 10 questions and they are in the same order as the audio recording. The recordings are heard only once. They include a range of accents, including British, Australian, New Zealand, American and Canadian. A variety of question types are used, chosen from the following: Multiple Choice, Matching, Plan/Map/Diagram Labelling, Form/Note/Table/Flow-chart/Summary Completion, Sentence Completion, Short Answer questions.

Time	45-60 minutes
Level	B1+
Class	Suitable for groups / large classes, F2F / Online
Interaction	Individual / pair work
Materials	Worksheets x2 and audio script attached

Material: Worksheet 1

Activity 1: Following the instructions

Time: 10 minutes

Procedure:

- introduce the focus of the lesson – Listening Part 3 – a conversation between 2-4 people in an educational or training context – Sentence Completion questions.
- give out Worksheet 1 and tell students to look at the instructions and questions. (Exercise 1)
- students work alone and answer questions 1-3.
- put students into pairs to compare answers and get class feedback.
- stress the importance of checking how many words/numbers should be used.
- get students to work in pairs to read the instructions and decide which of the answers would be correct. (Exercise 2)
- get class feedback.

Answers

Exercise 1

1 yes

2 yes

3 no (even if the information is correct, students will lose the mark if they write more than the stated number of words/numbers)

Exercise 2

1 Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

a) She had classes every Tuesday morning in the first semester. ✘ (3 words)

b) She had classes every Tuesday in the first semester. ✔

c) She had classes Tuesday mornings in the first semester. ✔

2 Write **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

a) He had 5 tutorials each term. ✔

b) He had five tutorials each term. ✘ (five written as a word counts as a word, so here there are 2 words)

c) He had 5 personal tutorials each term. ✘ (one number and two words)

Activity 2: Understanding the context

Material: Worksheet 1

Time: 10 minutes

Procedure:

- stress the importance of using the time that test takers have before the audio recording starts to make sure they understand the context of the conversation.
- students work alone and read the introductory script, the instructions and the questions, and answer the True/False questions 1-6.
- put students into pairs to compare answers.
- get class feedback.

Answers

- 1 True
- 2 False
- 3 True
- 4 True
- 5 False
- 6 False (this is not stated explicitly in the instructions, but the question type is 'Sentence Completion', and sentences should be grammatically correct).

Activity 3: Strategy for Sentence Completion questions

Material: Worksheet 2

Time: 15-20 minutes

Procedure:

- give students 2 minutes to read through the 6 steps in the strategy for dealing with Sentence Completion questions.
- put students in pairs to match steps 1-6 with the correct extra information a-f.
- get class feedback.
- explain that they can use this strategy for Sentence Completion questions in all Parts of the Listening test, not just Part 3. You may wish to take some time going through the important extra information.

Answers

- 1 c, 2 a, 3 e, 4 f, 5 b, 6 d

Activity 4: Listening Part 3 practice

Time: 10-15 minutes

Material: Worksheet 2

Procedure:

- tell students to look at the last page of the worksheet.
- tell students you are going to play the audio recording from the break (that occurs in the middle of the Part 3) just before questions 27-30 and explain they have some time to look at questions etc. and to apply the strategy.
- play the audio <https://s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/ielts-web-static/production/Sample-tests/Listening/ielts-listening-sample-task-4-sentence-completion.mp3> without stopping.
- get students to compare the answers in pairs.
- ask some students to come up and write their answers on the board or in the Chat box.
- go through the answers checking that the words are spelt correctly, and that the sentence is grammatically correct.

Answer key

- 27** motivation
28 time management / time-management
29 modules
30 summer school(s)

Follow-up activity

For self-study, the British Council IELTS Prep App provides further information and practice of this specific question type under Listening>Question types > Sentence Completion.

<https://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/take-ielts/prepare/free-apps>

Listening Part 3**Worksheet 1****Following the instructions**

- 1 *Look at the instructions and questions for Part 3 of the Listening test and answer questions 1-3 below.*

PART 3

Questions 27-30

Complete the sentences below.

*Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.*

Studying with the Open University demanded a great deal of **27**

Studying and working at the same time improved Rachel's **28** skills.

It was helpful that the course was structured in **29**

She enjoyed meeting other students at **30**

- 1 Can you write one word for your answer? _____
- 2 Can you write two words for your answer? _____
- 3 Can you write three words for your answer? _____

2 Which of the following answers (underlined) would be marked as correct according to the instructions? There may be more than one correct answer.

1 Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

- a) She had classes every Tuesday morning in the first semester.
- b) She had classes every Tuesday in the first semester.
- c) She had classes Tuesday mornings in the first semester.

2 Write **NO MORE THAN ONE WORD AND/OR A NUMBER** for each answer.

- a) He had 5 tutorials each term.
- b) He had five tutorials each term.
- c) He had 5 personal tutorials each term.

Understanding the context

Look at the introductory audio script, the instructions and the Part 3 questions and decide if questions (1-6) below are True (T) or False (F).

Two friends, Rachel and Paul, are discussing studying with the Open University. Rachel has already done a course at the university, but Paul has not. The extract relating to these questions comes from the last part of the recording.

PART 3

Questions 27 – 30

Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

Studying with the Open University demanded a great deal of **27**

Studying and working at the same time improved Rachel's **28** skills.

It was helpful that the course was structured in **29**

She enjoyed meeting other students at **30**

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1 You will hear a conversation between 2 people. | T / F |
| 2 They are both students at the Open University. | T / F |
| 3 Rachel knows more about the Open University than Paul. | T / F |
| 4 There are 4 questions to answer. | T / F |
| 5 You can write both words and numbers. | T / F |
| 6 Grammar is not important for this type of question. | T / F |

Listening Part 3

Worksheet 2

Strategy for dealing with Sentence Completion questions

Match each step in the strategy with the correct extra information.

1 2 3 4 5 6

	Steps		Extra information
1	Check instructions.	a	Think of synonyms or other ways of rephrasing the key words.
2	Identify the key words in each question.	b	Don't worry at this stage to check grammar or spelling. Just write down what you hear and listen for the next answer.
3	Look at the gap and decide what type of word(s) is/are missing.	c	How many words can you write? Can you use numbers?
4	Listen carefully.	d	You have time at the end of this recording before Part 4 starts. You can use this time to make sure the sentence is correct grammatically and you have spelt the words correctly. You also have 10 minutes at the end of the on-paper test to transfer your answers and check them. You have 2 minutes to check your answers if you are doing the test on computer.
5	Write down the answer on the test paper if you're doing the test on paper, or type the answer in the answer box on the screen if you're doing the test on computer.	e	What is the 'grammar' of the missing information? Is the word a noun, and adjective or a verb etc..
6	Check your answers.	f	Think about who is likely to say the answer. And remember, the answers from the audio recording are in the same order as the questions.

Answering Sentence Completion questions

Using the steps (1-6) from the strategy and the extra information, listen and answer questions 27-30.

PART 3

Questions 27 – 30

Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.

Studying with the Open University demanded a great deal of **27**

Studying and working at the same time improved Rachel's **28** skills.

It was helpful that the course was structured in **29**

She enjoyed meeting other students at **30**

Listening Part 3

Audio script

Two friends, Rachel and Paul, are discussing studying with the Open University. Rachel has already done a course at the university, but Paul has not. The extract relating to these questions comes from the last part of the recording.

- Paul** The other thing I wanted to ask you was, did you find it hard, studying with the Open University?
- Rachel** You mean, because you're studying on your own, most of the time?
- Paul** Mm.
- Rachel** Well it took me a while to get used to it. I found I needed to maintain a high level of **motivation**, because it's so different from school. There's no-one saying, 'Why haven't you written your assignment yet?' and that sort of thing.
- Paul** Oh dear.
- Rachel** You'll learn it, Paul. Another thing was that I got very good at **time-management** because I had to fit time for studying round a full-time job.
- Paul** Well I'm hoping to change to working part-time, so that'll help.
- Rachel** What makes it easier is that the degree is made up of **modules**, so you can take time off between them if you need to. It isn't like a traditional three-or four-year course, where you've got to do the whole thing of it in one go.
- Paul** That's good, because I'd like to spend six months travelling next year.
- Rachel** Huh, it's all right for some. Then even though you're mostly studying at home, remember you've got tutors to help you, and from time to time there are **summer schools**. They usually last a week. They're great, because you meet all the other people struggling with the same things as you. I've made some really good friends that way.
- Paul** Sounds good. So how do I apply?