

Listening and Speaking Activities

Paragraphs

Listen to some paragraphs giving information on different topics. The thought groups that you hear are one possible choice for these paragraphs giving new information. The speaker uses the basic stress pattern that you learned about in Chapter 4.

Read these general instructions about listening and practicing the paragraphs before you listen to the tape of the paragraphs themselves.

1. Listening

Before you listen, read each paragraph to become familiar with the content. Then listen without looking at the words. Pay attention to the word stress and the focus words.

Replay the tape several times.

2. Speaking

Practice any difficult words. Use a dictionary to find the stressed syllables. Monitor word stress.

Practice one sentence at a time. Replay the tape and put your tape recorder on pause the tape after each sentence. Look away from your book as you repeat each sentence.

Record the whole paragraph. Monitor your speech as you talk, and listen to your recording. Decide if there is anything you want to change. Rerecord the paragraph and listen to it.

The Beatles

1. Listen and fill in the missing focus words. The remaining focus words are underlined.

Ever since the Beatles / crossed the _____ / in the early 1960s / America has experienced varying degrees / of Beatlemania. The anniversary of their _____ / in the United _____ / is still celebrated / by devoted followers. / Long after John, / Paul, / Ringo /and George / went their separate _____, / the Beatles have remained / the world's most famous _____ Group. The country still mourns / the tragic death of John Lennon, / who was shot in 1980 / on the streets of Manhattan / near his _____. / Beatles' songs are constantly requested / on the radio. Old recordings of songs / are re-released / in digitally-recorded packages / that usually go "double-platinum." / The Beatles seem to be a permanent part / of American popular culture.

2. Listen to these words. Draw a dot over the stressed syllable in each word.

experienced celebrates followers remained Manhattan requested platinum
permanent

3. Check the word stress by using a dictionary and listening to the tape again.

Computer Junkies

1. Listen and underline the focus word in each thought group. Replay the tape several times. Listen for airplane tickets. It sounds like a compound noun.

Thanks to the exploding popularity / and accessibility of technology, / many people / now spend so much time / in front of their computers / that days pass / before they leave the house. / Why should they? / On the Internet / they can make new friends, / chat with old ones, / order take-out food, / go shopping, / check in with their boss, / reserve airplane tickets / and plan their next vacation. Or they might just "surf the net," / a phrase used to describe / what you're doing / when you explore the Internet / with no particular task in mind. /

2. Listen to these words from the paragraph. Draw a dot over the strongly stressed syllables.

exploding popularity accessibility technology

computers Internet vacation describe explore

reserve shopping particular

3. Check your answers by replaying the tape and using a dictionary.

Lifestyles

In the United States, it's not uncommon for young couples to live together without getting married. Some couples want to test out their relationship before committing to marriage. Other couples may live together because they love each other and see marriage as an unnecessary formality. Needless to say, such views are controversial. Proponents of marriage argue that if two people really love each other, they should not need to "test" their relationship. They should be willing to make the commitment. Also, many religions believe it is immoral to live together without getting married. This is just one of the many lifestyle choices that confront young people in our changing world.

1. Listen to these words from the paragraph. Draw a dot over the strongly stressed syllables.

uncommon relationship formality controversial

proponents commitment religions immoralconfronted

2. Check the word stress by using a dictionary and listening to the tape again.

• Science Fiction

Science fiction has fascinated American movie-going audiences for decades. These movies are so popular that they have grossed billions of dollars worldwide. Perhaps it is due to our culture's fascination with technology, but people must like them for other reasons as well. Some people have argued that science fiction films are popular because they give us the chance to explore our biggest fantasies and deepest fears. In *Star Wars*, one of the most successful of the early science fiction films with unusual special effects, the Rebel Forces overthrow the dark and powerful Empire. The film shows how the little guys can outsmart the mean and mighty enemy with some good old-fashioned teamwork.

1. Listen to these phrases from the paragraph. Underline the focus words. The phrases in the brackets have compound noun intonation.

Science fiction science fiction films biggest fantasies
movie-going audience powerful Empire old-fashioned [teamwork]
unusual special effects Rebel Forces

2. Listen to these words from the paragraph. Draw a dot over the strongly stressed syllables.

fascination technology decades audiences teamwork

3. Check the word stress by using a dictionary and listening to the tape again.

• Do You Like Westerns?

The Western is one of the world's favorite kinds of film. It is a classical struggle between good and evil often set in a small western town in the nineteenth century. The typical town has dirt streets, a cemetery, a saloon and a general store. In a typical plot, a stranger rides into a frontier town just in time to save its citizens from a greedy, sadistic villain. Eventually, after all kinds of danger and humiliation, the hero confronts the villain in a "shoot-out." Whoever has the fastest draw--that is to say, whoever pulls his gun most quickly-- shoots the other. In Westerns, after much pain and suffering, the good guy usually wins. That's part of the reason Westerns are so popular. Good triumphs over evil, and people feel happy when they walk out of the theater.

1. Listen to these phrases from the paragraph. Underline the focus words. The phrases in the brackets have compound noun intonation.

a classical struggle a typical plot the fastest draw in the
nineteenth century
a small western town a greedy, sadistic villain the [good guy] usually
wins
[frontier town] [general store]

2. Listen to these words from the paragraph. Draw a dot over the strongly stressed syllables.

humiliation confronts cemetery saloon triumphs

3. Check the word stress by using a dictionary and listening to the tape again.

• Let's Get Some Pizza

1. Listen and underline the focus word in each thought group. Replay the tape several times. One of the focus words in this paragraph is a compound noun. The focus is on the first word of the compound noun shown inside the brackets. Example: reserve [pizza stands].

Americans love pizza / and it's everywhere! / They get it from pizza stands, / the Italian restaurant / around the corner, / or the local deli / offering slices to go. Some people make it themselves / from do-it-yourself packages. / One of the most popular / of all pizzas / is sold in the frozen food section / of the local supermarket. / More than 1.8 billion slices / of frozen pizza / are sold each year. / Fifty-six percent / of working moms / with children under thirteen / say that frozen pizza / is their children's favorite food. / With a long list of available toppings, / health-conscious shoppers / may prefer the fat and cholesterol-free types / or even the rice flour "Pizza-Soy pie" created in Chico, California. / The pizza industry / in this country / is expected to be hot / for years to come. /

The statistics are from the National Frozen Food Institute, McClean, Virginia, in conjunction with the Information Resources Inc. study, June 1995.

• Pets Are Big Business

It is estimated that about 60 percent of all US households have an animal as a companion to the family. Pet pampering has gone beyond buying manicures, jeweled collars and hand-knit sweaters for toy poodles. Mail-order catalogs, pet hotels, transportation services, specialized trainers, pet psychiatrists and an array of specialized food products are just a beginning. Pet superstores are changing things for customers, retailers, suppliers, and investors. More than 500 discount giants sell pet foods, toys, clothes, and furniture at a lower prices. Pet superstores that provide special services are especially popular. Some stores offer bathing and grooming, training, basic health treatment and in some cases animal adoption. Today, pets are big business.

1. Listen and underline the focus words in these phrases from the paragraph.

pet pampering jeweled collars hand-knit sweaters mail-order catalogs
specialized trainers discount giants basic health treatment animal adoption

Poetry

These poems follow the intonation of natural conversational speech. Read the instructions before you listen.

1. **Listening**

- Listen to each poem several times. Each line of the poem is read as one or two thought groups. Notice the focus words and where the speaker slows down or pauses.
- Replay the tape several times until you are familiar with the intonation and the rhythm.
- Clarify any new vocabulary.

2. **Speaking**

- Practice one line at a time. Replay the tape and put the tape on pause after each line.
- Remember to make the biggest fall in pitch at the end of the sentence where you see the period.
- Record the whole poem. Monitor your pronunciation. Decide if there is anything you want to change. Re-record the poem and listen to it.

The Owl And The Pussy Cat By Edward Lear

Listen to the poem and fill in the structure words. Replay the tape several times and tap your hand on the focus words to keep up with the rhythm.

___ Owl ___ ___ Pussy-Cat went ___ sea

___ ___ beautiful pea-green boat.

___ took ___ honey, ___ plenty ___ money

Wrapped up ___ ___ five-pound note.

___ Owl looked up ___ ___ stars above,

___ sang ___ ___ small guitar.

___ lovely Pussy. ___ Pussy, ___ love,

What ___ beautiful Pussy ___ are,

___ are, ___ are!

What ___ beautiful Pussy ___ are!"

Pussy said ___ ___ Owl,

" ___ elegant fowl,

How charmingly sweet ___ sing!

Oh! Let ___ ___ married, too long ___ ___ tarried

___ what ___ do ___ ring?"

___ sailed away, ___ year ___ day,

___ land where ___ Bong-tree grows;

___ there ___ wood ___ Piggy-wig stood,

___ ring ___ end ___ nose,

___ nose, ___ nose,

___ ring ___ end ___ nose.

"Dear Pig, ___ willing ___ sell ___ one shilling

___ ring? ___ Piggy, I will.

___, ___ took ___ away, ___ married next day

___ Turkey ___ lives ___ hill.

___ dined ___ mince ___ slices ___ quince,

___ ate ___ runcible spoon*;

___ hand ___ hand, ___ edge ___ sand,

___ danced ___ light ___ moon,

___ moon, ___ moon,

___ danced ___ light ___ moon.

* A "runcible spoon" was coined by Edward Lear in 1871. It is a fork-like utensil with two broad prongs and one sharp curved prong, as used for serving hors d'oeuvres.

Dialogues

You can practice these dialogues with a partner or you can play both roles by yourself. Read the instructions before you listen.

1. **Listening**

- Listen to the dialogue and replay the tape several times.
- Check the word stress. Make a list of the longer words. Use a dictionary to check the stress.
- Divide longer sentences into thought groups by putting in slashes where you hear the speaker pause. Underline the focus words in each thought group.

2. **Speaking**

- Practice one sentence at a time. Replay the tape and press the pause button after each sentence.
- Practice the whole dialogue looking away from your book as much as possible.
- Record the dialogue by yourself or with a partner. Listen to your recording and decide if there is anything you want to change. Re-record the paragraph and listen to it.

• **Protesting a Phone Bill**

- 1-A: GTE. General Telephone. How can I help you?
- 2-B: My phone bill last month was over \$200. There seem to be a number of calls that I don't recognize. I'm wondering if there could be a mistake.
- 3-A: May I have your phone number, please, -- area code first.
- 4-B: (617) 850-9895.
- 5-A: Is that a business or a residence?
- 6-B: It's a residence.
- 7-A: One moment, please, while I locate your last bill. What calls are you referring to?
- 8-B: On the 13th I was charged for a call to Chicago for thirty-five minutes, and I don't know anyone in Chicago.
- 9-A: Are you concerned about any of the other charges?
- 10-B: There are some calls out of the country. One's to Japan, one's to Canada and the other is to South Africa.
- 11-A: Is there anyone living with you who might have made the calls?
- 12-B: There are only three of us, and I checked out the bill at home before I contacted you.
- 13-A: What about visitors or workmen?
- 14-B: Come to think of it, some friends were living in the apartment in November.
- 15-A: Where are they from?

16-B: One's from Japan and the other's from South Africa.

17-A: Hmm. That's sounding suspicious. Do you want us to continue to investigate this?

18-B: No, I guess not. Thanks anyway

• **Directory Assistance.**

A: Directory Assistance. May I have the area and listing you wish.

B: Please give me the phone number of Jonathan Winters. It's in the Antelope Valley area.

A: Do you know the name of the city?

B: I'm not sure of the city. I think it's Thousand Oaks,, or maybe it's Sycamore Canyon.

A: Thank you. Is this a business or a residence?

B: It's both a business and a residence. He works at home.

A: The number is, Area Code (805)-649-7809. Please make a note of it. Repeat: The number you wish is Area Code (805)-649-7809. For an additional charge of forty-five cents we will put the call through automatically by pressing the star key.

B: Thank you, but I'd rather dial it myself.