

Teaching Tips for the London Test of English – Listening

This is the last of three issues of Teaching Tips to be devoted to the listening section of the LTE examinations.

Vocabulary for Listening

As with the rest of the examination, it is important for students to learn vocabulary as sets of words and expressions related to particular topics, rather than as random unconnected items. It is also useful to remember vocabulary that commonly occurs together (collocations), and to note vocabulary in example typical sentences. All this will prepare students to follow what they hear in the exam. Also, for listening and speaking sections, candidates need to recognise vocabulary in its spoken form, not only as it is written down.

Activity 4 *To revise sets of vocabulary. To diagnose students' understanding and recognition of relevant vocabulary*

- 1) Get students in pairs to pick a theme from several you want to revise. Each pair should brainstorm a list of about ten vocabulary items associated with the theme. Then they each write a short dialogue, on their theme, incorporating the vocabulary they have listed.
- 2) Each pair performs their dialogue twice to the rest of the class. The first time, their classmates work out the theme. Get the classmates to explain exactly how they worked it out. This will focus their attention on the crucial 'give-away' vocabulary. The second time, the classmates note down as much as they can of the vocabulary they hear in the dialogue connected to the theme. If the class enjoys competitions they can compete to see who notices the most relevant vocabulary.

At each stage (writing, performing and listening), the teacher has opportunities to assess how familiar the students are with the relevant vocabulary, and so can give focussed feedback and advice on what the students need to work on.

Preparation Outside the Classroom

These activities are all adaptable for homework. In addition it is important for students to listen to lots of English! The activities here do not require audio material, but we assume you will be using audio material to accompany whatever course book your class is following. And there are other sources for students to explore at home. In class or for homework you could get students to list all the available sources they can think of for English-language listening material. As well as exploiting the internet and films, TV and radio programmes and channels in English, students could agree to meet or to telephone each other and to speak only in English, or arrange with a penfriend to exchange audio-recordings instead of (or as well as) written letters or emails.

For all parts of the LTE exam, the [LTE Handbook](#) gives details of the language and format for each level.

For more ideas for exam classes in general, an excellent book is [How to teach for Exams](#) by Sally Burgess and Katie Head (Longman 2005 ISBN: 0 582 42967 6).

Future issues of Teaching Tips will look at the reading and writing sections of the exams.