

Student's Notes

IELTS: Listening

Compared to the other parts of the examination, the listening test is quite challenging. This is because in the listening you not only have to read but also to listen and write. It is therefore very important that you know the strategies and when to apply them.

There are four sections with a total of 40 questions. You will only hear each section once. You have 30 minutes to complete the test followed by ten minutes to transfer your answers to an answer sheet.

Each section becomes more difficult – make sure you get a good start.

SOME STRATEGIES FOR THE LISTENING TEST

Become familiar with the different types of instructions before you do the test so that you are instantly aware of what is required i.e. multiple-choice, short answer, etc,...

Listen carefully to the instructions on the recording.

Write clear notes and answers in the question booklet as you listen so that you can read your writing when you come to transfer your answers to the answer sheet 30 minutes later.

If there is more than one speaker, try to distinguish between the voices. This will help you to understand what they are saying.

If you need to write more than three words, your answer is probably incorrect.

If you don't know the answer to a question, move on or you will be left behind.

Do not worry if you do not understand everything on the recording.

Write an answer for every question, even if it means you are only guessing. Marks are not deducted for wrong answers, and sometimes your guesses will be correct.

Do not accept the first answer that seems correct. Subsequent information may change what you had originally thought was the answer; distractors are included to really test your listening.

Before taking the test, practise listening, much as possible. Listen to the BBC, CNN and ABC to help adjust to British, Australian and North American accents. This can be done while you are cooking or cleaning the house! At the same time you can try to imitate the speaker's pronunciation, intonation and fluency which will help improve your speaking skills.