

NB Read out the text which is not in italics. Read at normal speed making it sound as much like spoken English (rather than English which is read aloud) as possible.

Part one, part one.

You will hear eight short unfinished conversations. Choose the best reply to continue the conversation. Put a circle round the letter of the best reply. First look at the example (15 seconds). You will hear the conversations twice.

Number one. Number one. (6 seconds)

M: So you're sure you want the white one?
F: *[hesitation/unsure]* Well, I do like that one.
M: So, you've made your decision, then?
(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)
(10 seconds)

Number two. Number two. (6 seconds)

F: I know Spain's not your first choice, but it's much cheaper.
M: *[unconvinced]* I know we can't really afford California.
F: So we've agreed on Spain, then?
(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)
(10 seconds)

Number three. Number three. (6 seconds)

M: There's no harm in having a go, is there?
F: *[hesitatingly]* Well, ... you could lose a lot of money.
M: But I could also make a fortune.
(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)
(10 seconds)

Number four. Number four. (6 seconds)

F: Of course, you met Mr Williams at your interview.
M: That's right.
F: And this is Miss Robbins, our Chief Accountant.
(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)
(10 seconds)

Number five. Number five.

(6 seconds)

M: Of course, I could elaborate on that.

F: Actually, it would be helpful to know more.

M: Well, if you're sure I'm not boring you.

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds)

Number six. Number six.

(6 seconds)

F: I'll ring back and let you know the cost, then.

M: OK, that'd be very useful.

F: Speak later, then.

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds)

Number seven. Number seven.

(6 seconds)

M: Sorry, what sort of card did you want, madam?

F: Oh! *[frustrated]* I can't remember what it's called.

M: Perhaps if you explained?

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds)

Number eight. Number eight.

(6 seconds)

F: I've sent the brochures out, by the way.

M: But I asked you to wait until tomorrow.

F: Oh no. I'm so sorry. I totally forgot.

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds)

That is the end of Part One.

Part two, part two.

You will hear three conversations. Listen to the conversations and answer the questions below. Put a circle round the letter of the correct answer. You will hear each conversation twice. Look at the questions for Conversation One. (10 seconds.)

Conversation One

F: Ooh – this is nice – very cheerful!

M: You are joking!?! It would probably be lovely in a nursery – but it's hardly suitable for sophisticated, mature adults like us who wish to entertain their friends!

F: I suppose you'd like something brown and cream and boring to sit and stare at.

M: No, no – not at all – just plain – no patterns. I had in mind something that reflects our personalities – you know – chic, classy, that sort of thing.

F: But that's so dreary – and all the walls are plain now – I thought we could have a change – brighten up our lives a bit.

M: Umm – excuse me! Are you suggesting I need livening up a bit?

F: Well, now you come to mention it..... [fade]

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)
(10 seconds)

Now, look at the questions for Conversation Two. (10 seconds.)

Conversation Two

- F: Well, if we could discuss something else before we end, I'd like to suggest we stop trying to recycle everything and go back to collecting rubbish the way we did before.
- M: Why on earth would you want us to do that?
- F: There's uncollected rubbish everywhere – the place is a real mess, since we asked the children to sort out their rubbish and put it in different bins.
- M: I agree there's a problem, but if we as professionals can't educate the children, then who will? I assume you do believe in saving the planet.
- F: Of course I do. And I recycle everything at home. But here we're risking unhygienic surroundings.
- M: So perhaps we could try to improve the current system, rather than abandon it totally???
- F: If you really think that's viable, I suppose I'd consider it, ... yes

*(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)
(10 seconds)*

Now, look at the questions for Conversation Three. *(10 seconds.)*

Conversation Three

- M: Ah – this is the life! Sun, sand and sea. What more could anyone want?
- F: Well, ... perhaps a little breeze might be nice.
- M: Seriously??? I think this is ideal – doesn't the heat suit you?
- F: Yes, well, no, well I mean, it is lovely to be warm, but you can have too much of a good thing, and I think this may be a few degrees above what's comfortable for me.
- M: Why not ask that nice waiter for some more ice with that, then. That'd help.
- F: Mmm – Ok. I will. Though I'm not sure it'll work. A nice cold shower might be better.
- M: Brrr – sounds horrendous. You can have one when we get back to the hotel, of course, but I thought we could pop down for a dip later on– that'd be better.
- F: Mmm – that might be good, though in this heat it'll be more like taking a warm bath.

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds)

That is the end of Part Two.

Part three, part three.

Listen to the talk and complete the notes. Write **short** answers (1 – 5 words). An example is done for you. (30 seconds.) At the end of the talk you will have two minutes to read through and check your answers. You will hear the talk twice.

You have one minute to look at the notes below.

(1 minute)

(beep)

Big Ben is really the nickname for the great bell of the clock at the Palace of Westminster in London, although it's often used to refer to the clock tower too. The sixty-one metres at the bottom of the Clock Tower are of brickwork with a sand coloured limestone cladding. The rest of the tower is a framed spire of cast iron. Its foundations are on a fifteen-metre square raft, made of concrete three-metres thick, going down four metres below ground level. And the four clock faces are fifty-five metres above ground.

Despite being one of the world's most famous tourist attractions, the interior of the tower is not open to the general public for security reasons, although from time to time press and other VIPs are granted access. However, the tower has no elevator, so people going in have to climb the three hundred and thirty four limestone steps to the top.

In actual fact, the tower leans slightly to the north-west because of changes in ground conditions since it was built. More recently, tunnelling for the Jubilee underground line extension has had its effect. As a result of thermal conditions it also oscillates annually by a few millimetres east and west.

Big Ben is the largest four-faced chiming clock in the world. It's also the third-tallest free-standing clock tower. It celebrated recently its one hundred and fiftieth anniversary in May two thousand and nine. There were some special commemorative events. The clock faces are large enough to have once made the Clock Tower the largest four-faced clock in the world, but now the Allen-Bradley Clock Tower in Milwaukee, USA, holds that distinction. But the builders of the Allen-Bradley Clock Tower didn't add chimes to the clock, so the Great Clock of Westminster still holds the title of the 'world's largest four-faced chiming clock'.

The clock is famously reliable. The idiomatic expression of 'to put a penny on', meaning to slow down, originated from the method of fine-tuning the clock's pendulum. On top of the pendulum is a small stack of old penny coins; used to adjust the time of the clock. Adding or subtracting coins has the effect of minutely altering the position of the pendulum's centre of mass, and hence the rate at which the pendulum swings. Adding or removing a penny changes the clock's speed by just nought point four seconds per day. During World War Two, the Palace of Westminster was hit by bombs. On the tenth of May nineteen forty-one, a bomb damaged two of the clock faces and sections of the tower's roof, as well as destroying the House of Commons chamber. Architect Sir Giles Gilbert Scott designed a new five-floor block. Two floors are occupied by the current chamber which was used for the first time on the twenty-sixth of October nineteen fifty. Despite the heavy bombing the clock continued to run accurately and chimed throughout the war.

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds)

You will now have two minutes to read through and check your answers

(2 minutes)

(beep)

That is the end of Part Three.

Part four, part four.

Listen to the conversation and answer the questions. Put a circle round the letter of the correct answer. First, look at the questions. An example is done for you. (20 seconds.) You will hear the conversation twice.

- F: *[satisfied]* Mmm – that was fun, wasn't it?
- M: Well, fun...*[uncertainly]* yes, I suppose so. I have to admit that I did enjoy myself, but I wouldn't actually say it was good, Sue, would you?
- F: Ah – well that depends on your definition of 'good' Tony. I had a good time, and, judging by the foot tapping all the way through and the applause at the end, so did everybody else, so surely **that's** a reasonable measure of success.
- M: Well, on that basis, yes. But some people are very easily pleased, or just get carried away by the general atmosphere. That doesn't mean that merits praise though, does it?
- F: Oh Tony! You're so serious! We're not talking about a Shakespearean play or a Wagnerian opera here.
- M: No, no I know that...but just because it's **popular** entertainment doesn't mean it's ok for it to be tacky!
- F: Tacky?! What are you on about?
- M: Well, those **costumes**, for a start – I mean all that lycra – it was gross!
- F: Yes, it was, but that's what people wore in the seventies. You might not like it but it wouldn't be true to life to choose modern costumes that we think are chic and sophisticated, now would it?
- M: Oh – I know what you're saying, but my point is that pure seventies tackiness might make for a reasonable evening's entertainment, but whoever put this stuff together could've done a far better job and produced something really worthwhile, not just cobbled together songs and dances and a sappy romantic plot.
- F: A **what?** You're unbelievable! You are so, so cynical. It was fine! There's nothing wrong with a bit of love interest!
- M: Now that's not what I meant. You know full well I like a good romance as much as anyone – but this just wasn't very good. I couldn't **really** believe in it, there was no beginning and end, just filling gaps between songs.
- F: Ok, well that's different. Yes, I'll grant you that. But I'm looking at this as pure entertainment, which I reckon it does pretty well at, and I love the music, so I couldn't care less how it's stitched together, ... **you** seem to want a literary masterpiece.

(continued)

- M: Well, not quite that – but I did expect something more like a play than a concert, if you like. Then it would have appealed to me more. I want something to challenge me when I go out, something to make me think, enrich my life...
- F: Well, I know you generally prefer straight theatre to popular music, so I can see where you're coming from, but I'm not so concerned if it's not a perfect production.
- M: So you agree it was thrown together a bit carelessly, then?
- F: *[reluctantly]* Well...OK...But I think the show's a success because it doesn't try to be anything other than popular entertainment. Part of its success is probably the fact that the producers have the confidence to recognise this and don't take it too seriously.
- M: So you **are** of the same mind as me, really, then?
- F: Oh – I **dunno** – I mean I really did enjoy myself, and I would actually go and see it again, if for no other reason than that I love the songs, but I suppose it was a bit shallow...*[fade]*

(Wait 10 seconds before repeating.)

(10 seconds.)

That is the end of Part Four.

You now have two hours and ten minutes to complete the rest of the paper.