

ADVANCED LEVEL LISTENING COMPREHENSION SAMPLE

Task 1

You are going to hear six extracts about different topics. Match options (a-g) to texts (1-5), you have an extra option you don't need to use. You will hear the extracts TWICE. Now you have 60 seconds to read the options. The first text is an example.

Which speaker/extract...?

- a) ... mentions common electoral promises?
- b) ... provides a solution to a long-term problem?
- c) ... talks about an irrelevant decision?
- d) ... ~~explains the multiple and beneficial uses of a single action?~~
- e) ... mentions contrasts in a person's life?
- f) ... provides a solution to solve an everyday problem?
- g) ... talks about a difficult decision?

Example	d
Text 1	
Text 2	
Text 3	
Text 4	
Text 5	

Transcripts

Example-Recycling tips

It's been said that the human race is living well beyond the planet's capacity to support us. One remedy to this problem is to stop buying so much stuff, which is what the recycling-conscious community at "Make it and mend it" would like us all to do. The recent global financial crisis has made everybody more aware of the need to save money, but this is also about saving the planet; by making the best use of the resources we have available we can cut down on manufacturing, reduce waste going into landfill and spread a little hand-made love.

Text 1- Taking a driving test

Well, my idea has to do with terra firme and not outer space; I'm often driving behind people going 40 miles an hour on the fast lane on a high way or people sitting without moving when the light changes to green at an intersection or doing something else that's erratic and then I catch up with them or I pass them and I find out, typically, they are talking on their cell phones. Now in the United States there are various, some States that prohibit driving while talking on the cell phone and others that allow it; but even in the ones that prohibit it people still do it; so my remedy for this which I think would change the road dramatically is that all of these people that wanna talk on the cell phone while driving should be required to pass their driver's exam while talking on the cell phone.

Text 2-Preventive care for kangaroos

Kangaroos at an Israeli zoo get a visit from a dentist; the marsupials were given a special toothpaste that helped eradicate a deathly kangaroo mouth disease; the disease makes kangaroos lose their appetite and they eventually starve to death. Veterinarians have to subdue the bouncy creatures before brushing their teeth. Luckily for the kangaroos the special toothpaste treatment is only needed once.

Text 3- Sarah Palin

"I love Alaska, this is my home..." If this is the start of a run for president, it would certainly be the most unconventional in history. "I would describe myself, my family as just normal average every-day Americans..." Part reality show, part adventure documentary, Sarah Palin's Alaska gives millions of Americans a closer look into her private world. "Oh, is he telling to get the heck out of here?" But for one of America's most high-profile politicians, the question of whether she will run for the White House in 2012 isn't going away. The Conservative right loves her, so does the Tea Party Movement, but traditional Republicans worry she scares off the moderates who usually decide the presidential election.

Text 4- The politics of broadband

The Conservatives have promised that if they got in the Government they would extend super-fast broadband to most of the country, they'd pay for it with part of the licence fee. Roy Cathleen-Jones is our technology correspondent; Roger, how does this compare with what Labour are promising and what is already on offer?

Well, here's the rather eye-catching line in the Conservatives' technology manifesto: "we would be the first country in Europe to extend super-fast hundred megabit per second broadband across most of the population". Now Labour says this is nothing new, that it's already promised this super-fast next generation network to 90% of the population by 2017.

Text 5 - Tough decision

Keith Fitzhugh had a dream to play pro football; he followed that dream to high school and college and he was an incredible player, he even made it to two training camps with the New York Jets before being cut, then this week, because of injuries the Jets called him back but he told them he'd rather keep his current job as a train conductor; it may seem crazy to you, but to Keith, it's all about his family.

Key: 1-f, 2-b, 3-e, 4-a, 5-g

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Task 2

Electric cars

Listen to the following radio programme about electric cars and choose the best option to complete the sentences below.

You will hear it **twice**.

You have 2 minutes to read the questions

1. **According to the people speaking in the recording...**
 - a. ... this kind of car is not fashionable or enjoyable at all.
 - b. ... it's the moment for this type of cars now because of the growing concern about climate change.
 - c. ... their price is already accessible to any kind of customer.

2. **Car makers ...**
 - a. ... are not interested in this type of cars yet.
 - b. ... have already marketed a viable, attractive, low-cost electric car.
 - c. ... are starting to make this type of cars as the prospect for a rise in the price of fuel is becoming clearer.

3. **As for the problems the batteries present nowadays...**
 - a. ... they take up a lot of the space in the boot of the car.
 - b. ... they have to be recharged too often for American standards.
 - c. ... they are ideal for places like America, but not for European countries.

4. **Some solutions suggested in the recording to solve the problems posed by the volt batteries are...**
 - a. ... lithium ion batteries, though they are not available yet.
 - b. ... a system to rent volt batteries and make weekly payments.
 - c. ... getting a battery subscription, a new method never tried before with any kind of product.

1
2
3
4

Electric cars-Transcript

In today's programme Louise Hidalgo asks if we're about to experience a revolution in driving as electric cars become ever more popular.

They said it was coming in the 1980s, they said it was coming in the 1990s; now we're in the next century, we're all worried about global warming, so has the electric car's time finally arrived? Some Governments think so and some carmakers and some journalists too.

This is the one I've been waiting for all day, this is the Tesla Roadster sports signature 250, goes up to 125 miles an hour and I wanna see if it does.

A BBC colleague, Jason Parma, test drove the first high performance electric sports car, sleek, fast and definitely not boring.

So one of the great things about electric cars is that all the power is available just as soon as you put your foot down, and there's no better car here today to test that, and I'm gonna put my foot down. Nothing short of amazing, the most most exhilaration that I've ever felt in my life and worth every penny.

The Tesla does cost a lot of pennies, about 150,000 US dollars in fact; but that's not the point, says environmental writer, Chris Goodall, the point is that the Tesla shows consumers and car makers what's possible.

This isn't necessarily what the future is going to be about, this is an extremely fast, very rapid acceleration sports car which costs over 100,000 dollars, it's completely wrong for the mass market; nevertheless it got rid of one important prejudice that we all have which is that an electric car is going to be slow, ponderous and uncomfortable, the Tesla isn't like that; it may not work financially, I hope it does, but it may not, but nevertheless it's shown the world's manufacturers just what can be done with electric-powered vehicles.

And car manufacturers certainly are taking them more seriously, at the world's largest car industry fair, the Frankfurt Motor Show in September many of the major car manufacturers had some kind of electric city car on display.

Hydrogen cars were conspicuous by their absence, and there was a raft of electric cars which are looking increasingly credible, with increasingly strident claims.

Auto industry journalist, Quentin Wilson

I think every car manufacturer I talked to is deeply, deeply serious about this and knows that the first to market with a viable, attractive low-cost electric car will inherit the market, instantly because it's a medium to long-term solution to both the cost and difficulty of fuelling up with fossil fuels.

Car manufacturers and Governments know they have to come up with alternatives to the internal combustion engine, Quentin Wilson says, not just because they have to cut carbon emissions, but because the era of cheap oil is over.

And that apocalyptic vision of 200 dollars a barrel that Goldman Sax said three years ago, that could be a reality, this can't carry on, so this is the main force that is propelling this huge, huge initiative both here and in America.

The main problem with electric cars are the batteries, they're big, and in the new electric Mini Cooper, for example, take up much of the rear seat. And they need recharging after about 100 miles, that's 160 kilometres, not far in a country like America. The latest battery technology, lithium ion, is promising, but Brett Smith, from the Centre for Automotive Research in the US State of Michigan, doesn't believe it's there yet.

Lithium ion looks like a good bet to be a possibility in the coming decade, it is definitely not the answer right now, that's important to understand, it is a developmental technology as we get the first, the second generation and even to the third generation of lithium ion we may get a whole lot closer than we are right know.

And the other big problem is they might be cheap to run, but batteries are expensive to buy.

The volt battery for the Chevrolet Volt over in North America looks like about a 15,000-dollar battery. Now over time that may come down drastically, but the question is how much time. A vehicle with a smaller battery's still gonna be a very expensive technology. The challenge is figuring out a way to fill in that gap, people have an expectation for how much they pay for a vehicle right now and they have a goal, and hope and dream to drive an electric vehicle, but, are they willing to pay for that differential and over the next decade or so that's gonna probably be a pretty big differential.

One solution is that, instead of buying the battery outright, consumers lease it, sidestepping the initial outlay, and instead making maybe monthly payments. It's a concept that some Governments are looking at, and the carmaker Renault Nissan; and one visionary businessman in the US is even talking about a battery subscription service, similar to that for mobile phones.

Key:

1. **b** 2. **c** 3. **b** 4. **a**

Advanced level listening sample

Educated and jobless

You will hear a radio programme. Read through the statements below and complete them by filling in the gaps with one word according to what you hear. Gap 0 has been completed as an example.

You have 90 seconds to read the statements.

You will hear the recording twice.

0. Noreen Malone works for a New York based-magazine as a blogger.

1. The news reader says the _____ of the Occupy Wall Street movement made Noreen Malone reflect on the situation of her generation.

2. Noreen Malone talks about her friend, Sam, who had to take out _____ to continue his education after graduating from an Ivy League School

3. Noreen has been told by Generation X members that the _____ they suffered in their time was as bad as the present one.

4. Tony Carnevale believes that future employment prospects and high _____ are not determining factors for students to choose their majors.

5. He goes on to say that it is only when people have to face the _____ market that they realise they might not have made the right career decisions.

Key

- 0 blogger
- 1 demonstrations/protests
- 2 loans
- 3 recession/crisis
- 4 wages/earnings
- 5 labo(u)r/job

Transcript

LYDEN: Last week in New York City, I met up with another 27-year-old, Noreen Malone, a **blogger** for New York Magazine. Her recent cover story made quite a splash.

MALONE: It's called "The Kids Are Sort of Actually All Right," and it's about what it's like to be a 20-something and what looks like a contracting world right now.

LYDEN: Noreen and I met in Zuccotti Park, site of the Occupy Wall Street protest, because she's been blogging about it. It was partly those **demonstrations** that got her thinking about all the anxiety amongst people her age. But Noreen could also look closer to home, take her high school buddy, Sam.

MALONE: He went to a very good school.

LYDEN: An Ivy League school.

MALONE: And he...

LYDEN: Studied poetry, graduated. He bounced around for a few years. But when he got serious about finding a job...

MALONE: Getting back on a real career path, he just couldn't. He took out an extra set of **loans** to go to grad school. He rammed through those pretty quickly. And now he has something like \$80,000 worth of **debt**. And, you know, he can't find a job. And it's...

LYDEN: Now, if that had been just an occasional story, but it wasn't. Noreen heard story after story like this while writing her article.

MALONE: A lot of stories like that, where people have delayed their lives.

LYDEN: And to be sure, there have been other generations who graduated into bleak job markets. Noreen says she got a lot of feedback from members of Generation X, people who said their **recession**, in the '90s, was just as bad. One guy told her young people today should just quit their whining.

MALONE: This is not the first recession, I know that. This is the first recession where people have taken on so much crushing student **debt** to go to college. It's actually a big deal if you can't find a job because your loans will go into deferment. You will get a terrible credit score that will haunt you for the rest of your life.

LYDEN: Tony Carnevale is director of the Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce.

CARNEVALE: In many cases, the most popular majors pay the least and have the highest unemployment rate. The majors that tend to provide the most employment security and earnings tend to be those with some technical aspect to them.

LYDEN: Carnevale's survey of 2010 census data revealed more students study fields like psychology, English, even journalism than many science and math careers.

CARNEVALE: Pharmacology is another one, not very popular, but the earnings are very high, over \$100,000 a year over a 45-year career, and there are very few people who sign up.

LYDEN: Do those jobs seem, in your judgment, boring?

CARNEVALE: I think the reason people don't sign up for the majors that will guarantee them employment and high **wages** is, to some extent, because they don't

know. People make judgments about majors in a very casual way. And American students can switch majors relatively easily and do. They tend to move away from the technical majors and toward the softer, more qualitative kinds of majors.

LYDEN: That's interesting. You should - you would think it might be the other way around.

CARNEVALE: The reason, I suspect, is that people want to do what they like to do. There's nothing wrong with that. We also know from other data that if you don't like what you're doing, you're not going to be very good at it. So, there is that to consider. It's also a case where, I think, people simply don't think about this much until the day comes where they have to deal with the **labour** market. And the labour market is very unforgiving.