

IMPROVE YOUR IELTS

Listening and Speaking Skills




MACMILLAN



Barry Cusack Sam McCarter

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Introduction



What is *Improve your IELTS Listening and Speaking Skills*?

Improve your IELTS Listening and Speaking Skills is a complete preparation course for the Listening and Speaking Modules of the International English Language Testing System. Through targeted practice, it develops skills and language to help you achieve a higher IELTS score in these two modules.

How can I use this book?

You can use *Improve your IELTS Listening and Speaking Skills* as a book for studying on your own or in a class.

If you are studying on your own, *Improve Your IELTS Listening and Speaking Skills* is designed to guide you step-by-step through the activities. The book is completely self-contained: a clear and accessible key is provided, so you can easily check your answers as you work through the book. There are two CDs which contain all the recorded material necessary for the Listening skills and Speaking skills sections of each unit. There is also an audioscript which contains all the exam listening material on the CDs.

If you are studying as part of a class, your teacher will direct you on how to use each activity. Some activities, especially in the Topic talk and Speaking skills sections, provide the opportunity for speaking and discussion practice.

How is *Improve your IELTS Listening and Speaking Skills* organized?

It consists of ten units based around topics which occur commonly in the real test. Each unit consists of four sections:

Topic talk: exercises and activities to introduce vocabulary and ideas useful for the topic.

Listening skills: exercises and activities to develop the skills for questions in the Listening Module.

Speaking skills: exercises and activities to develop skills and language for the Speaking Module, including practice questions from one part of the Module.

Exam listening: one complete section of the Listening Module to practise the skills learned.

In addition, there are *Techniques* boxes throughout the book. These reinforce key points on how to approach Listening and Speaking tasks.

How will *Improve your IELTS Listening and Speaking Skills* improve my score?

By developing skills

The skills sections of each unit form a detailed syllabus of essential IELTS Listening and Speaking skills. For example, in Listening skills there is coverage of *Signpost phrases* and *Prediction skills*. In Speaking skills, there is coverage of *Comparing and evaluating* as well as *Describing advantages and disadvantages*. There is also Pronunciation practice at the end of the Speaking skills sections.

The *Topic talk* part of each unit develops vocabulary, phrases, and sentence forms for use in the Listening and Speaking Modules. The Speaking skills section has phrases to help you introduce and organize your spoken answers.

The Listening skills sections introduce you to the skills you need to tackle the various types of question that can be asked. Knowing the best way to tackle each type of question will enable you to get the best mark you can. The Speaking skills section will make you familiar with the different question-types and enable you to relax in the exam and perform at your best.

The Module consists of four sections: usually there are two monologues and two conversations on a variety of topics. There are ten questions in each section. The topics cover everyday social matters and subjects related to educational or training situations. You hear the recording only once, but you have time to look at the questions first and further time to write your answers.

The questions are of eight types: multiple choice, short answer questions, sentence completion, table completion, labelling a diagram, classification of information, matching information, and summary.

You will get one mark for each correct answer up to a maximum of 40 marks. The questions get gradually harder, but all the marks have the same value.

You have a one-to-one interview with an examiner lasting between eleven and fourteen minutes. There are three parts. First, the examiner asks questions on everyday topics such as family, hobbies, and likes and dislikes. Second, you speak for one to two minutes on a topic given by the examiner. Finally, you take part in a discussion on more abstract issues linked to the topic of the talk.

The examiner awards marks under four headings:

Fluency and coherence: speaking in a continuous way, without unnatural hesitation, and organizing your thoughts and speech in a logical way.

Lexical resource: using a range of vocabulary appropriate to the topic.

Grammatical range and accuracy: using a range of grammatical forms, including more complex forms, with a reasonable degree of accuracy.

Pronunciation: speaking so that you can be understood by the examiner.