

Listening (Script)

Task 1

OK, so the focus of this semester will be on the development of the EU and its enlargement. You'll have four written assignments to do. These must be typed and handed in on time or they will not be considered. They have equal weighting and make up 20% of your final grade, so take them seriously. We'll also have a couple of exams; a mid-term exam which will count 30% towards the final grade and an end of term exam which will also count for 30%. Each exam will be in two parts, a multiple choice test and then four short essay questions. At the end of the semester you'll also have to give an oral report, which will take the form of a 15 minute presentation on a topic of your choice related to the main course themes, followed by a Q and A session also of 15 minute. This will comprise 10% of the final grade. The remainder will be at my discretion depending on how well prepared you are for each class, and also how much you participate in each class. Attendance is also a factor in that there are 23 classes this semester and you need to attend at least 80% in order to pass. So that means if you miss more than four classes, you fail. I hope you all understand that. The grade you get is not dependent on other students in the class, so it's possible for everyone in the class to get As or to get Fs. To get an A you need above 90%, 80-90 is a B and 70-80 is a C. D is 60-70 and below that is a fail, F. Basically, if you put in the time and effort needed you will pass.

Task 2

Extract 1

Man: Research shows that the optimum time to start music education is between the ages of three and four. As well as improving manual dexterity and concentration, it seems that it may help emotional development, too. The piano is the instrument that many parents want their children to start learning, and I think three years old is the right time to start.

Woman: Personally, I don't think the piano is the best instrument to start with so early. Children have to show the mental, physical and emotional readiness to learn an instrument like the piano, which obviously takes a lot of effort and commitment. In my experience very few children under six are able to take on that kind of challenge. Starting early is vital, yes, but less demanding instruments would be my choice, things like the recorder or a half-size guitar.

Man: No, I think children of that age can learn to play simple tunes on the piano and they soon progress to more complicated pieces. And starting young on understanding musical notation lays down an excellent foundation for later on.

Woman: But a rather academic approach like that will turn children off for life if they're not ready for it. Enjoyment has got to be the priority.

Man: Well, enjoyment is certainly important, but ...

Extract 2

Interviewer: So, Ben, you're well known in the climbing world as a bit of a loner; you prefer climbing without other people. Is that true?

Ben: Well, to some extent. I've always talked to other climbers about the technical side of things – training, equipment, and things like that. But at the end of the day you've got to learn independently, through trial and error. If you're climbing in a group you'll always compare yourself to others, and that doesn't always help you to improve. It's good to admire other climbers, but different things work best for different people.

Interviewer: So you never climb with other people?

Ben: As far as possible, I climb alone, but occasionally I look to others for support. When I was younger I used to do most my climbing during the summer holidays, and I haven't done much winter climbing. So I still feel out of my depth climbing alone on icy rock faces. In those conditions you need people who've been brought up with it. It's good to have people around to advise you on what's a safe manoeuvre to make in the conditions.

Extract 3

Interviewer: You're such a household name, it must be terrifying for staff when you go into a restaurant. How do they react?

Amanda: It's true that a lot of people know me, at least in the restaurant world, so I always eat with a friend and they'll make the booking. Often, though, I get recognised and when that happens it's inevitable, I suppose, that they take a bit more care over serving the food. I've never been offered complimentary wine, though, or anything like that. That would be just too obvious, and of course it could be considered unethical to accept a gift like that.

Interviewer: And what makes a good restaurant?

Amanda: A good restaurant is one where the management and waiting staff have given some thought to why their customers are there. Most restaurant owners believe that the main reason people go to restaurant is for the food, but that's completely wrong. The main reason people go to restaurants is to have a good time, not because they're hungry. So there might be a big difference between the priorities of diners. For example, one thing that a restaurant gets judged on is the quality of service. What restaurant owners think is good is service that is efficient, but what customers have as their priority is friendly service.

