

**Track 1:** Progress Test Units 1–2, Listening exercise 1

- A:** How would I describe myself? Mmm, well, I like to think that I'm not judgmental and that I listen to everyone's point of view. It's very hard not to have preconceived ideas of course but I pride myself on my ability to empathise and understand other people. Obviously there are certain ways of life that are alien to me but at the end of the day as long as you're not hurting anyone through your behaviour, then who are we to judge?
- B:** I guess my friends would say that I'm very outgoing and always up for a party. It's true that I'd rather hang out with friends than do whatever it is I'm supposed to be doing. Even as a child I loved going to parties and meeting people. I've never been shy, which is a blessing I suppose. It must be so hard if you are.
- C:** If I'm totally honest, I'd have to admit that I like to do things my own way. Yes, you get the idea ... my way is the only way. Even if I knew I'd made the wrong decision, I wouldn't back down. I know my wife gets exasperated and I can see why but after a lifetime of digging my heels in I don't think I'll be able to change now.

**D:** I'm sure I've got worse as I've got older but everyone I know says the same thing. I never used to be quite as bad but now I can't even leave the house without checking that I've locked the back door at least three times. And as for the cooker, even if I know I haven't used it I'll have to check a few times. I've even been known to go back home again just to double-check. I dread to think what I'll be like in a few years ...

**E:** I've always enjoyed watching people. I was the quiet one at school and while everyone else was messing around, I'd just sit quietly and observe. I'm fascinated by people, their motivations and the way they behave. You can tell so much just by reading body language or facial expressions. That's probably why I became a counsellor.

**F:** I've never found it easy to make friends. I'm an only child so I'm used to spending a lot of time on my own. When I was at school I didn't really join in with all the games and teams. In fact I hated sport and was always the last to be chosen. You know how it is at school, if you're not sporty you tend to get ignored and now that I'm at university, it's much the same really. I keep myself to myself and just do my own thing.

**Track 2: Progress Test Units 1–2, Pronunciation exercise 2**

- 1 Have you had a chance to look at my essay?
- 2 I don't know what's wrong with Dan these days.
- 3 Let's have a coffee when you've finished all your stuff.
- 4 You must be exhausted after your long journey.
- 5 What's your opinion of the new Italian restaurant?
- 6 It sounds as if you're really busy at the moment.

**Track 3:** Progress Test Units 3–4, Listening exercise 1

**A:** I really don't think there's ever an occasion where it's ok to use the death penalty. I mean, look at the states in America where there are hundreds of people on death row just waiting and waiting. Some of them have been in prison for years and with that hanging over them. I don't know if there's any connection between the number of criminals doing time for violent crime and the lax gun laws but certainly it seems from the outside as though it's pretty easy to get hold of a firearm. Perhaps if there were tighter controls, the crime rate would fall.

**B:** I watched a really upsetting documentary on television the other day. It was about border control and people trying to get into the country illegally. So many of these immigrants pay vast amounts of money to gangsters to get them out of their own countries and then they lose everything. Not only is it incredibly dangerous but there's no guarantee that they'll make it. If they're caught, they're treated like animals and deported. Surely it's a fundamental right to be able to live safely and with dignity.

**C:** Is there any correlation between education and child exploitation? Well, to my mind, of course there is. Children are denied the chance to go to school just so that we in the developed countries can have cheap goods. We've all seen pictures of those so-called sweat shops where kids work ten hours or more a day in appalling conditions for hardly any money. Instead of exploiting them, we should be giving them an education so they can fulfil their potential. Don't get me started!

**D:** We're lucky that we can say whatever we want here. When I was younger I used to go to Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park in the centre of London. You'd see crazy people there, standing on their soap boxes, talking about pretty much anything from war and peace to the monarchy and animal cruelty. Those speakers who were good would gather huge crowds and it was always fun to heckle and join in. I couldn't imagine living in a country where you have to be careful about what you say.

**E:** Social unrest is surely caused by poor living conditions. If you grow up in a family where no-one is actually working and all the adults are on benefits with little chance of getting a job, there are bound to be problems. If you feel that you're not respected, then why would you respect anyone yourself? If the only way you can get noticed is by being a nuisance and causing damage, then I guess most people would do that. In a consumer society, having no money leaves you feeling very angry and resentful I'd imagine.

**F:** Despite the feminist movement of the 60s and 70s I'd say that women are still worse off than men. In recent surveys it was revealed that men still earn substantially more than women for doing the same job. How can that be in the twenty-first century? And as for getting older ... it's crazy. You're considered over the hill once you're in your fifties so if you lose your job at that age, it's pretty much impossible to get another one, although of course with all your experience, you're of far more use than some fresh graduate.

**Track 4:** Progress Test Units 3–4, Pronunciation exercise 2

- |   |        |         |
|---|--------|---------|
| 1 | really | silly   |
| 2 | body   | gaudy   |
| 3 | bury   | airy    |
| 4 | shady  | ready   |
| 5 | gloomy | footie  |
| 6 | body   | naughty |

**Track 5:** Progress Test Units 5–6, Listening exercise 1

**A:** I can't say that I feel particularly optimistic when I think about the future of our planet. There's so much to be worried about and to be honest, I think that one of the biggest challenges facing us is overpopulation. While the birth rate is falling in many countries of the developed world, quite the converse is true in countries in the developing world. The implications are obvious but unless governments introduce new policies I can't see how anything will change and the figures certainly point to an explosion in the not-too-distant future.

**B:** I agree. It's hard to have a positive outlook. I'm particularly interested in animals and animal welfare and the state of endangered animals makes for very grim reading. Soon animals in the wild will be a thing of the past if we're not careful. Already we read of entire species becoming extinct and you know what that means ... when they're gone, they're gone and there's no going back.



**C:** Actually I feel pretty good about the future. If you go beyond all the scaremongering hysteria of the media, you'll find that there are great strides forward in many areas of research, particularly with regard to finding alternative forms of energy. It's clear that oil reserves will run out at some point, so the race for new fuels is well and truly gathering pace now. After bio-fuels there will be something else I'm sure as I don't think that they're sustainable, and especially not if the population continues to grow at the current rate.

**D:** Well, frankly, I think all these arguments are pretty academic because if we don't have access to clean drinking water, then all life will cease anyway. Can you imagine a time when water will be a thing of the past? I predict that water will become a more valuable commodity than oil in years to come ... perhaps not in the imminent future but certainly in the next hundred years. Global warming is heating up the planet. You can see how strange the weather patterns are now, and I can only think that there will be more droughts and therefore less water.

**E:** I think pollution is our biggest challenge. I remember when the city where I lived had really clean air. Not any more. The signs are that the deterioration in air quality is speeding up. In the winter, there is often smog so thick that you can't see a metre in front of your face. How can that be good for our long-term health? We need to take action now in my opinion. It's not enough just to impose fines for environmental pollution, it's a case of re-education, but who's willing to get into that?

**F:** All this talk of people, but I think robots and computers are bound to take over the world at some point in the future, not in my lifetime I don't suppose, but who knows. Technology is developing at such a fast pace that anything is possible. I must say I wouldn't mind having a robot to do my housework and washing, but I do think that we are forgetting how to do even the simplest things for ourselves.

**Track 6: Progress Test Units 5–6, Pronunciation exercise 2**

- 1           Where did you put my dictionary?
  
- 2           I didn't want to tell Paul what had happened.
  
- 3           Please make yourselves comfortable.
  
- 4           Which vegetables would you like with your fish?
  
- 5           I feel compelled to take issue with what you said.
  
- 6           You have never really had faith in me, have you?

**Track 7:** Progress Test Units 7–8, Listening exercise 1

**A:** No question at all. The time I jumped out of a plane to do a parachute jump for charity. When I was asked to do it I leapt at the chance as I've always enjoyed extreme sports and that kind of thing. This was something else though. It really was a once-in-a-lifetime experience, but I can't really find the words to describe the feeling as I jumped. There I was freefalling down to the earth and everything came rushing towards me. There was a great whoosh and then my parachute opened, and I gently came down to land.

**B:** To be honest, if you're asking about earliest memories, you know your first day at school kind of thing, nothing at all springs to mind as something noteworthy. I don't even remember who took me to the school gate. I guess it must have been my mother but for all I know it could have been our neighbours as their son was at the same school. I know it's strange, but perhaps it was so traumatic that I've just wiped it from my mind, a bit of a memory lapse if you know what I mean.

**C:** It'd have to be the salty air you get at the sea. When I was about seven the whole family went to visit cousins in Wales. They had a holiday cottage on the coast and every day we'd cross the road and be on the beach where we'd play all day. The weather was fantastic and the air smelled so fresh and alive somehow. Whenever I'm at the sea nowadays, I only have to close my eyes and I'm back there.

**D:** I've never been one for reminiscing about the past or revisiting old haunts filled with nostalgic memories, which is why my first holiday in France without my parents is a bit of a blur. I seem to remember there were four of us and we took the train and ferry over to Brittany, where we stayed at a campsite for a week. One thing I do remember though is that the food was fantastic.

**E:** The moment I heard that I'd passed my driving test was the greatest moment of my life. The whole experience is etched on my memory so clearly. I guess because I realised that this was the doorway to independence. I wouldn't have to rely on my parents any more, and I would be free to go wherever I chose.

**F:** Ooh, I knew you were going to ask me that! Why can't I remember? A bit of a memory lapse I'm afraid. I can see her so clearly though. Now, come on, what was her name? I almost had it there! She was small and very strict and she didn't let us get away with anything. We used to call her the dragon, though not to her face of course. Give me a moment and I'm sure it'll come to me.

**Track 8:** Progress Test Units 7–8, Pronunciation exercise 2

- 1            Let's hang out.
  
- 2            Slow down Martin!
  
- 3            Take it easy.
  
- 4            Why don't you let your hair down?
  
- 5            It's hard to switch off.
  
- 6            I'm going to have a breather.

**Track 9:** Progress Test Units 9–10, Listening exercise 1

**A:** To be honest I don't often get annoyed by stuff, but one thing that really drives me crazy is bad service in restaurants. We were on holiday a couple of weeks ago, and we decided to treat ourselves to a special celebration meal as it was our anniversary so we booked a table for two at a swanky restaurant in town. It's only just opened and we'd heard quite good things, but boy were we disappointed. The waiters were so rude and unhelpful, and the food was ridiculously expensive... all in all it was a total waste of money.

**B:** I'll tell you what drives me up the wall and that's mobile phone conversations when you're trying to read on the train. I have to travel up to London by train every day and sometimes I just want to scream. Why is it that people think that their boring conversations are endlessly interesting to the world at large? If I had my way, I'd ban them in public places, or at the very least on trains.



- C:** Wow! I've just come back from the most amazing tennis match I've ever seen ... Nadal versus Federer in the Wimbledon Final. I couldn't believe my luck when my boss told me he'd won a couple of tickets to the final. He said he couldn't go and offered them to me, so not only did I not have to pay for them but they were also in a prime spot. It really was the best day out.
- D:** No contest. My dog Jimmy is the best thing ever. I've only had him for a few weeks but already he's taken over my life. To be honest, there's nothing better than getting up early and going for a long walk through the fields. Jimmy loves to chase rabbits and birds and he just makes me laugh so much as he's so silly. I couldn't imagine being without him now.
- E:** Perhaps I'm just old-fashioned but I just don't understand the public obsession with celebrity gossip. Who on earth cares who's marrying whom or which diet so-and-so is on. Surely we have far more meaningful things to think about, and if there's one thing I can't stand it's those magazines with world exclusives and then the stars, in inverted commas, go on about how they don't have any privacy.

**F:** There's nothing better than live music, although I know a loud gig isn't everyone's cup of tea but for me it's the best thing ever. The last band I went to see was just absolutely awesome. They played for over two hours without a break and pretty much everyone in the audience was up and dancing. It's so hard to get back to normal life after something like that.

**Track 10:** Progress Test Units 9–10, Pronunciation exercise 2

- 1 subtle
- 2 poignant
- 3 whistling
- 4 cupboard
- 5 foreigner
- 6 mosquito

**Track 11: Mid-course Test, Listening exercise 1**

- A:** Peter can be so incredibly frustrating sometimes. Maybe it's something to do with his age but he really is very rigid in his thinking and in his behaviour. He'll always have his tea at the same time every day and nothing will get in the way of that. All his friends know so they wouldn't dare call him then.
- B:** There's a woman in our street who makes it her business to know everything that's going on, so if you want to know anything about anyone, I'd ask her. Well, actually, you don't need to ask her as she'll tell you anyway. I'm often tempted to tell her something that's not true to see how long it'll be before it comes back to me. I certainly wouldn't tell her anything I didn't want the world to know.
- C:** Frankly, you can't get a word in edgeways with Christine. I've never known anyone talk so much. She barely pauses to draw breath and then she's off again. I guess her husband must just turn off because it would drive you mad otherwise. And it's not as if she's saying anything particularly interesting. You know what I mean ... you can't have a conversation as such as she tends to make observations about stuff. I know it's mean, but when she calls I sometimes don't answer the phone.

**D:** You know I had no idea that Fred played the piano so well. He's always kept it very quiet and I only found out because other friends were talking about a festival they'd been to, and he was one of the performers. I don't know why he's so secretive about it. I'll ask him next time I see him, as I'd love to hear him play.

**E:** I feel very sorry for Maria. Nothing she does is good enough for her parents, and then her brother can do no wrong in their eyes. I think it all started when she kind of disobeyed their wishes and dropped out of college to go travelling. I'd imagine they're not used to anyone not doing as they wish, so since then they've been very cool towards her. I hope they'll realise how hurtful they've been, but at least Maria is happy doing her own thing.

**F:** I always enjoy it when Clare comes to say as she's so much fun. It doesn't matter how tired she says she is, she'll always rise to the occasion. I don't know where she gets all her energy or her jokes for that matter. The last time I saw her was at my brother's wedding and to be honest, she very nearly upstaged the bride.

**Track 12: Mid-course Test, Pronunciation exercise 2**

- 1 It is of the utmost importance that we take action now.
  
- 2 A surprising number of people are completely unaware of the threat to the environment.
  
- 3 Nothing I read in the papers could have prepared me for what I witnessed yesterday.
  
- 4 Not for the first time have I been reminded just how fragile our planet really is.
  
- 5 In her own way, Gemma is a remarkable woman, who has always followed her dreams.
  
- 6 I've always tried to lead by example.

**Track 13:** End of Course Test, Listening exercise 1

- A:** My job is very pressurised and I work very long hours. Most of the time I'm either in meetings or travelling so I don't get much in the way of exercise. I always pack a pair of trainers and jogging pants in my case so I can get out for a while to clear my head. I really need to be able to do that regularly, otherwise I end up feeling really stressed.
- B:** I don't really have time for myself during the week as I have a pretty busy job and two small children, who want my attention when I get home in the evening, but Saturdays are mine. I usually meet up with a group of friends and we have a game of football and then go for a good meal. It's a chance for all of us to relax and get rid of the worries of the week.
- C:** To be honest, I'm pretty tired at the moment. I've just started a new job so there's a lot to take in. I'm having to stay late most evenings, but there's a good group of people in the office so we tend to go out after work. I don't think I've been to bed earlier than midnight for the last few weeks. I'm not sure how much longer I can carry on, but hopefully I'll get an early night tonight.

**D:** There's nothing I enjoy more than reading. It's the best way to relax, but I just don't have enough time these days. Whenever I go on holiday I make sure I take a good stash of books so I can curl up and read. I used to be able to find time on Sundays, but these days there always seems to be something going on.

**E:** I seem to be governed by unrealistic deadlines at the moment. Everyone wants everything done immediately, and because I'm self-employed, I'm aware that my position is precarious. There will always be someone willing to give one hundred and fifty percent. I've been staying up until the small hours but am determined to get a better work life balance.

**F:** Being outdoors is the best antidote to the stresses of the office. In the summer I can spend all evening pottering. This year I decided to grow vegetables for the first time and really, there's nothing more satisfying than picking your own lettuce and tomatoes for supper. Noticing the daily changes makes you realise just how amazing nature is.



**Track 14:** End of Course Test, Pronunciation exercise 2

- 1 Better safe than sorry.
- 2 Out of sight, out of mind.
- 3 Home is where the heart is.
- 4 Practise what you preach.
- 5 Rome wasn't built in a day.
- 6 A picture is worth a thousand words.