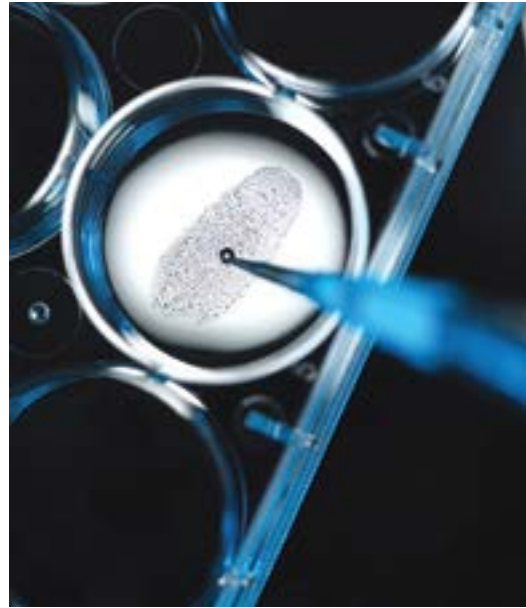


# Independent Student Handbook

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## LISTENING SKILLS

### Predicting

Speakers giving formal talks usually begin by introducing themselves and their topic. Listen carefully to the introduction of the topic so that you can predict what the talk will be about.

#### Strategies:

- Use visual information including titles on the board or on presentation slides.
- Think about what you already know about the topic.
- Ask yourself questions that you think the speaker might answer.
- Listen for specific phrases that indicate an introduction (e.g., *My topic is...*).

### Listening for Main Ideas

It's important to be able to tell the difference between a speaker's main ideas and supporting details. It is more common for teachers to test students' understanding of main ideas than of specific details.

#### Strategies:

- Listen carefully to the introduction. Speakers often state the main idea in the introduction.
- Listen for rhetorical questions, or questions that the speaker asks, and then answers. Often the answer is the statement of the main idea.
- Notice words and phrases that the speaker repeats. Repetition often signals main ideas.

### Listening for Details (Examples)

A speaker often provides examples that support a main idea. A good example can help you understand and remember the main idea better.

#### Strategies:

- Listen for specific phrases that introduce examples.
- Listen for general statements. Examples often follow general statements.

## Listening for Details (Reasons)

Speakers often give reasons or list causes and/or effects to support their ideas.

### Strategies:

- Notice nouns that might signal causes/reasons (e.g., *factors, influences, causes, reasons*) or effects/results (e.g., *effects, results, outcomes, consequences*).
- Notice verbs that might signal causes/reasons (e.g., *contribute to, affect, influence, determine, produce*) or effects/results (e.g., *is affected by, result in*).

## Understanding Meaning from Context

When you are not familiar with a word that a speaker says, you can sometimes guess the meaning of the word using the context or situation.

### Strategies:

- Don't panic. You don't always understand every word in your first language, either.
- Use context clues to understand the general idea. What did you understand just before or just after the missing part? What did the speaker probably say?
- Listen for words and phrases that signal a definition or explanation (e.g., *What that means is...*).

## Recognizing a Speaker's Bias

Speakers often have an opinion about the topic they are discussing. It's important for you to know if they are presenting all the facts, or only the facts that support their opinion. The speaker may use certain language when they have a strong bias.

### Strategies:

- Notice words like adjectives, adverbs, and modals that the speaker uses (e.g., *ideal, horribly, should, shouldn't*). These suggest that the speaker has a bias.
- Listen to the speaker's voice. Does he or she sound excited, angry, or bored?
- Notice if the speaker gives more weight or attention to one point of view over another.
- Listen for words that signal opinions (e.g., *I think...*).

## NOTE-TAKING SKILLS

Taking notes is a personalized skill. It is important to develop a note-taking system that works for you. However, there are some common strategies to improve your note taking.

### Before You Listen

#### Focus

Try to clear your mind before the speaker begins so you can pay attention. If possible, review previous notes or think about what you already know about the topic.

#### Predict

If you know the topic of the talk, think about what you might hear.

## Listen

### Take Notes by Hand

Research suggests that taking notes by hand rather than on a computer is more effective. Taking notes by hand requires you to summarize, rephrase, and synthesize information. This helps you *encode* the information, or put it into a form that you can understand and remember.

### Listen for Signal Words and Phrases

Speakers often use signal words and phrases (e.g., *Today we're going to talk about...*) to organize their ideas and show relationships between them. Listening for signal words and phrases can help you decide what information to write in your notes.

### Condense (Shorten) Information

- As you listen, focus on the most important ideas. The speaker will usually repeat, define, explain, and/or give examples of these ideas. Take notes on these ideas.  
Speaker: *The Itaipú Dam provides about 20% of the electricity used in Brazil, and about 75% of the electricity used in Paraguay. That electricity goes to millions of homes and businesses, so it's good for the economy of both countries.*  
Notes: Itaipú Dam → electricity: Brazil 20%, Paraguay 75%
- Don't write full sentences. Write only key words (nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs), phrases, or short sentences.  
Full sentence: *Teachers are normally at the top of the list of happiest jobs.*  
Notes: ~~teachers happiest~~
- Leave out information that is obvious.  
Full sentence: *Photographer Annie Griffiths is famous for her beautiful photographs. She travels all over the world to take photos.*  
Notes: ~~Photographer A. Griffiths travels world~~
- Write numbers and statistics. (9 bil; 35%)
- Use abbreviations (e.g., *ft., min., yr*) and symbols (=, ≠, >, <, %, →)
- Use indenting. Write main ideas on left side of paper. Indent details.  
*Benefits of eating ugly foods*  
    *Save \$*  
        *10-20% on ugly fruits & vegs. at market*
- Write details under key terms to help you remember them.
- Write the definitions of important new words.

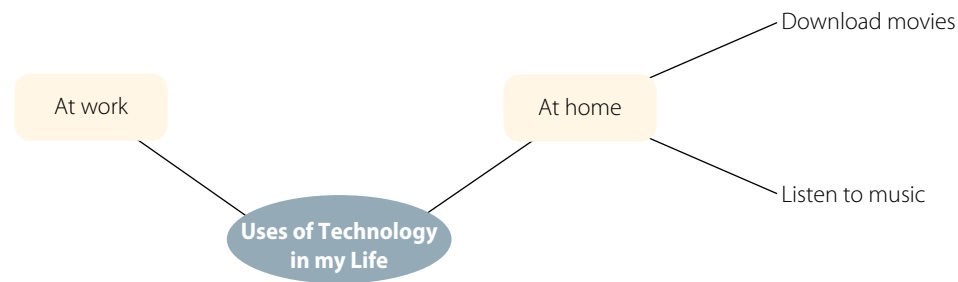
### After You Listen

- Review your notes soon after the lecture or presentation. Add any details you missed.
- Clarify anything you don't understand in your notes with a classmate or teacher.
- Add or highlight main ideas. Cross out details that aren't important or necessary.
- Rewrite anything that is hard to read or understand. Rewrite your notes in an outline or other graphic organizer to organize the information more clearly.
- Use arrows, boxes, diagrams, or other visual cues to show relationships between ideas.

## ORGANIZING INFORMATION

Use graphic organizers to take notes, or to organize your notes.

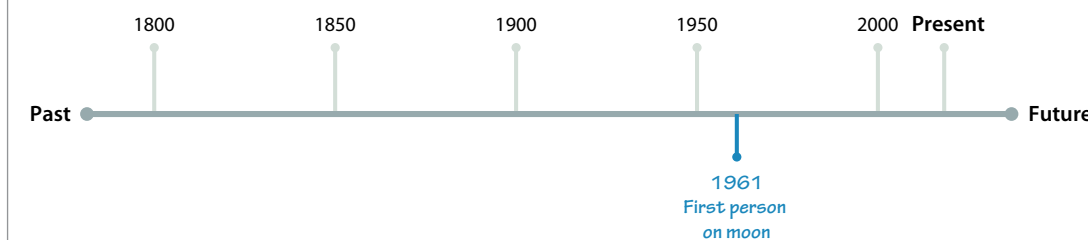
**Spider maps** show relationships.



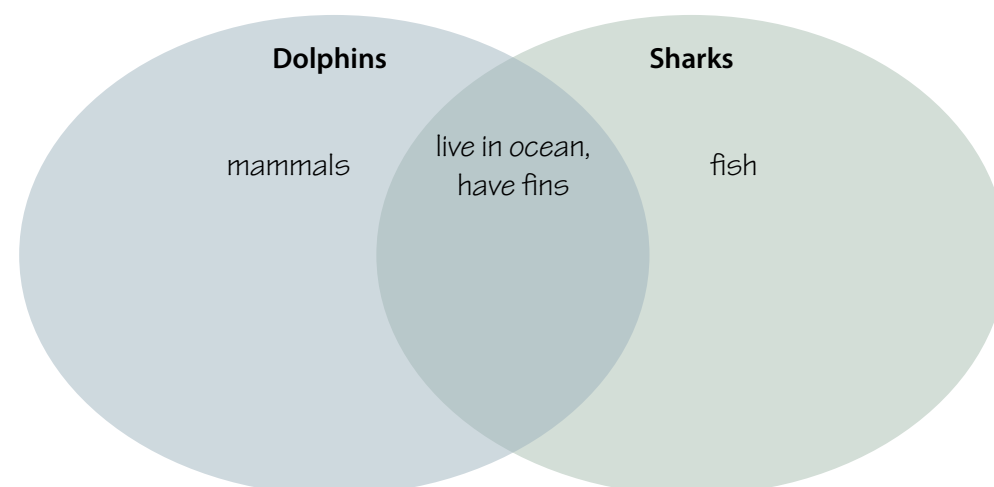
**T-charts** compare two topics.

Bringing Tourists to a Town	
Pros (For)	Cons (Against)
brings money to town	town becomes too crowded

**Timelines** show a sequence of events.



**Venn diagrams** show the differences and similarities of two or more things.



## SPEAKING: PHRASES FOR CLASSROOM COMMUNICATION

### Phrases for Expressing Yourself

#### Expressing Opinions

*I think...*      *In my opinion/view...*  
*I believe...*      *Personally...*  
*I'm (not) sure...*      *To me...*

#### Expressing Likes and Dislikes

*I like...*      *I hate...*  
*I prefer...*      *I really don't like...*  
*I love...*      *I don't care for...*

#### Giving Facts

*Studies show...*  
*Researchers found...*  
*The record shows...*

#### Giving Tips or Suggestions

*You/We should/shouldn't/could...*  
*You/We ought to...*  
*It's (not) a good idea to...*  
*Let's...*  
*Why don't we/you...*

#### Agreeing

*I agree.*      *Absolutely.*  
*True.*      *Definitely.*  
*Good point.*      *Right!*  
*Exactly.*

#### Disagreeing

*I disagree.*  
*I'm not so sure about that.*  
*I don't know.*  
*That's a good point, but I don't agree.*

### Useful Phrases for Classroom Discussions

#### Checking Your Understanding

*So are you saying that...?*  
*So what you mean is...?*  
*What do you mean?*  
*Do you mean...?*  
*I'm not sure what you mean.*

#### Asking for Repetition

*Could you say that again?*  
*I'm sorry?*  
*I didn't catch what you said.*  
*I'm sorry. I missed that. What did you say?*  
*Could you repeat that please?*

#### Checking Others' Understanding

*Does that make sense?*  
*Do you understand?*  
*Is that clear?*  
*Do you have any questions?*

#### Asking for Opinions

*What do you think?*  
*Do you have any thoughts?*  
*What are your thoughts?*  
*What's your opinion?*

#### Taking Turns

*Can/May I say something?*  
*Could I add something?*  
*Your turn.*  
*You go ahead.*

#### Interrupting Politely

*Excuse me.*  
*Pardon me.*  
*Forgive me for interrupting, but...*  
*I hate to interrupt, but...*

#### Making Small Talk

*What do you do? (job)*  
*Can you believe this weather?*  
*How about this weather?*  
*What do you do in your free time?*  
*What do you do for fun?*

#### Showing Interest

*I see.*      *Good for you.*  
*Really?*      *Seriously?*  
*Um-hmm.*      *No kidding!*  
*Wow.*      *And? (Then what?)*  
*That's funny / amazing / incredible / awful!*

## PRESENTATION STRATEGIES

You will often have to give individual or group presentations in your class. The strategies below will help you to prepare, present, and reflect on your presentations.

### Prepare

#### Consider Your Topic

- **Choose a topic you feel passionate about.** If you are passionate about your topic, your audience will be more interested and excited about your topic, too.

#### Consider Your Purpose

- **Have a strong start.** Use a quote, an interesting example, a rhetorical question, or a powerful image to get your audience's attention. Include one sentence that explains what you will do in your presentation and why.
- **Stay focused.** Make sure your details and examples support your main points. Avoid unnecessary information that takes you away from your topic.
- **Use visuals that relate to your ideas.** Drawings, photos, video clips, infographics, charts, maps, slides, and physical objects can get your audience's attention and explain ideas effectively. For example, a photo or map of a location you mention can help your audience picture a place they have never been. Visuals should be bright, clear, and simple.
- **Have a strong conclusion.** A strong conclusion is as important as a strong start. Good conclusions often refer back to the introduction, or beginning of the presentation. For example, if you ask a question in the beginning, you can answer it in the conclusion. Remember to restate your main points.

#### Consider your Audience

- **Use familiar ideas.** Think about the people in your audience. Ask yourself these questions: Where are they from? How old are they? What is their background? What do they already know about my topic? What information do I need to explain? Use language and ideas they will understand.
- **Share a personal story.** Consider presenting information that will get an emotional reaction; for example, information that will make your audience feel surprised, curious, worried, or upset. This will help your audience relate to you and your topic.
- **Be authentic (be yourself!).** Write your presentation yourself. Use words that you know and are comfortable using.

#### Rehearse

- **Make an outline** to help you organize your ideas.
- **Write notes on notecards.** Do not write full sentences, just key words and phrases to help you remember important ideas. Mark the words you should stress and places to pause.
- **Review pronunciation.** Check the pronunciation of words you are uncertain about. Note and practice the pronunciation of difficult words.
- **Memorize the introduction and conclusion.** Practice your presentation several times. Practice saying it out loud to yourself (perhaps in front of a mirror or video recorder) and in front of others.
- **Ask for feedback.** If something isn't clear or doesn't work, change it.

### Present

- **Pay attention to your pacing** (how fast or slow you speak). Remember to speak slowly and clearly. Pause to allow your audience time to process the information.
- **Speak loud enough to be heard** by everyone in the audience, but not too loud. Ask the audience if your volume is OK at the beginning of your talk.
- **Vary your intonation.** Don't speak in the same tone throughout the talk. Your audience will be more interested if your voice rises and falls, speeds up and slows down to match the ideas you are talking about.
- **Be friendly and relaxed with your audience**—remember to smile!
- **Show enthusiasm for your topic.** Use humor if appropriate.
- **Have a relaxed body posture.** Don't stand with your arms folded, or look down at your notes. Use body language when helpful to emphasize your points.
- **Don't read directly from your notes.** Use them to help you remember ideas.
- **Don't look at or read from your visuals too much.** Use them to support your ideas.
- **Make frequent eye contact** with the entire audience.

### Reflect

- **Consider what you think went well** during your presentation and what areas you can improve upon.
- **Get feedback** from your classmates and teacher. How do their comments relate to your own thoughts about your presentation? Did they notice things you didn't? How can you use their feedback in your next presentation?

## PRESENTATION OUTLINE

When you are planning a presentation, you may find it helpful to use an outline. If it is a group presentation, the outline can provide an easy way to divide the content. For example, one student can do the introduction, another student the first idea in the body, and so on.

### 1. Introduction

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement of main idea: \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Body

First step/example/reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting details: \_\_\_\_\_

Second step/example/reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting details: \_\_\_\_\_

Third step/example/reason: \_\_\_\_\_

Supporting details: \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Conclusion

Main points to summarize: \_\_\_\_\_

Suggestions/Predictions: \_\_\_\_\_

Closing comments/summary: \_\_\_\_\_

## PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

Sounds and Symbols					
Vowels		Consonants			
Symbol	Key Words	Symbol	Key Words	Symbol	Key Words
/ɑ/	hot, stop	/b/	boy	/t/	tea
/æ/	cat, ran	/d/	day	/tʃ/	cheap, watch
/aɪ/	fine, nice	/dʒ/	job, bridge	/v/	vote, have
/i/	eat, need	/f/	face	/w/	we
/ɪ/	sit, him	/g/	go	/y/	yes
/eɪ/	name, say	/h/	hat	/z/	zoo, is
/ɛ/	get, bed	/k/	key, car		
/ʌ/	cup, what	/l/	love	/ð/	they, father
/ə/	about, lesson	/m/	my	/θ/	think, both
/u/	boot, new	/n/	nine	/ʃ/	shoe, wash
/ʊ/	book, could	/ŋ/	sing	/ʒ/	measure
/oʊ/	go, road	/p/	pen		
/ɔ/	law, walk	/r/	right		
/aʊ/	house, now	/s/	see		
/ɔɪ/	toy, coin				

Source: *The Newbury House Dictionary plus Grammar Reference*, Fifth Edition, National Geographic Learning/Cengage Learning, 2014.

Rhythm
<p><b>Stress</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English words are based on syllables—units of sound that include one vowel sound.</li> <li>In every word in English, one syllable has the primary stress. It is louder and clearer than the other syllables.</li> <li>In sentences, new ideas and information are usually stressed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pausing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pauses in English can be divided into two groups: long and short pauses.</li> <li>Long pauses are used to mark the end of a thought.</li> <li>Short pauses are used to break up the ideas in sentences into smaller, easier to understand chunks of information.</li> </ul>

Intonation
<p>English speakers use intonation (the rise and fall of their voice) to help express meaning. For example, speakers usually use a rising intonation at the end of <i>yes/no</i> questions, and a falling intonation at the end of statements and <i>wh-</i> questions.</p>

## VOCABULARY BUILDING STRATEGIES

### Guessing Meaning from Context

You can often guess the meaning of an unfamiliar word by looking at or listening to the words and sentences around it. Speakers usually know when a word is new to the audience or is important for understanding the main ideas, and they often provide clues to its meaning.

- Repetition: A speaker may use the same key word, or use another form of the same word.
- Restatement or synonym: A speaker may give a synonym to explain the meaning of a word, using phrases such as, *in other words*, *also called*, *or*, and *also known as*.
- Antonyms: A speaker may define a word by explaining what it is NOT. The speaker may say *Unlike A, B is...* or *In contrast to A, B is...*
- Definition: Listen for signals such as *which means* or *is defined as*. Definitions can also be signaled by a pause.
- Examples: A speaker may provide examples that can help you figure out what something is. For example, **Mascots** are a very popular marketing tool. *You've seen them on commercials and in ads on social media – cute, brightly colored creatures that help sell a product.*

### Understanding Word Families: Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes

Use your understanding of roots, prefixes, and suffixes to recognize unfamiliar words and to expand your vocabulary. The root part of the word (also called the *stem*) provides the main meaning. A prefix comes before the root and usually changes the meaning (e.g., adding *re-* to a word means “again” or “back”). A suffix comes after the root and usually changes the part of speech (e.g., adding *-tion* to a verb changes it to a noun). Words that share the same root belong to the same word family (e.g., *event*, *eventful*, *uneventful*).

Prefix	Meaning	Example
<i>dis-</i>	not, opposite of	disappear, dislike
<i>un-, im-</i>	not	unfinished, impossible
<i>inter-</i>	between	Internet, international
<i>mis-</i>	badly, incorrectly	misunderstand, misuse
<i>pre-</i>	before	preheat, prepare
<i>re-</i>	again; back	repeat; return
<i>trans-</i>	across, beyond	transfer, translate

Suffix	Meaning	Example
<i>-able, -ible</i>	worth, ability	believable, impossible
<i>-ful</i>	full of	beautiful, successful
<i>-ion, -tion, -ation</i>	the action of	occasion, education, foundation
<i>-ize</i>	to make	realize, privatize
<i>-ly</i>	in the manner of	quickly, happily
<i>-ment</i>	result of an action	excitement, treatment

# Independent Student Handbook

### Tips for Using a Dictionary

- When you see or hear a new word, try to guess its part of speech (noun, verb, adjective, etc.) and meaning before you look it up in a dictionary.
- Some words have many meanings. Look up a new word in the dictionary and try to choose the correct meaning for the context.
- When you look up a word, look at all the definitions to see if there is a basic meaning. This will help you understand the word when it is used in a different context. Also look at all the related words, or words in the same family. This can help you expand your vocabulary. For example, the core meaning of *structure* is *something built or put together*.

**structure** /'strʌktʃə/ *n.* **1** [C] a building of any kind: *A new structure is being built on the corner.* **2** [C] any architectural object of any kind: *The Eiffel Tower is a famous Parisian structure.* **3** [U] the way parts are put together or organized: *the structure of a song||a business's structure*  
*-v.* [T] **-tured, -turing, -tures** to put together or organize parts of s.t.: *We are structuring a plan to hire new teachers.*  
*-adj.* **structural.**

Source: *The Newbury House Dictionary plus Grammar Reference*, Fifth Edition, National Geographic Learning/Cengage Learning, 2014

### Multi-Word Units

You can improve your fluency if you learn and use vocabulary as multi-word units (sometimes called *chunks*). Some multi-word units include idioms (*up in the air*), collocations (*interested in*), and fixed expressions (*in other words*). Keep track of multi-word units in a notebook or on notecards.

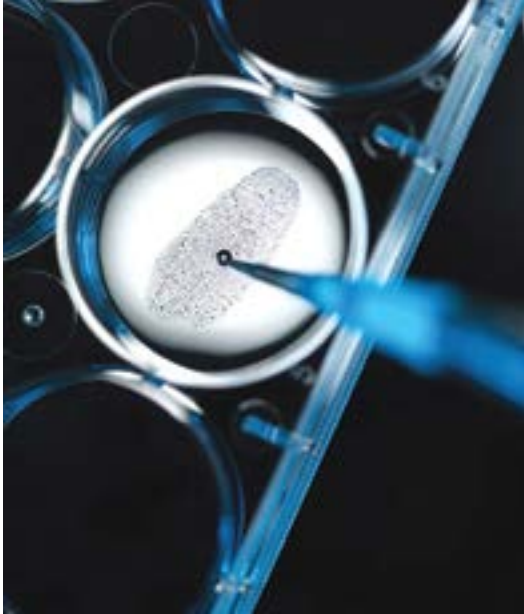
### Vocabulary Note Cards

You can expand your vocabulary by using vocabulary note cards. Write the word, expression, or sentence that you want to learn on one side. On the other, draw a four-square grid and write the following in the squares: the definition, the translation (in your first language), a sample sentence, and any synonyms.

definition:	first language translation:
sample sentence:	synonyms:

Use the cards every day to test yourself or a partner.

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