

Listening Skills

IGCSE English ■ Topic 9

IGCSE English



What we will cover

- 1 Predict before you listen
- 2 Catch the detail
- 3 Use both playings
- 4 Opinions & connections
- 5 Distractors





Predict before you listen

- read the question
- **predict** the answer type
- listen & confirm

You hear each **recording** *twice*. Predict: a place? a name? a number?



Listen for facts, attitudes, and what is implied

Catch the detail, use both playings

catch the detail

listen for **specific** facts –
names, times, **directions** ;
same order as the questions

two playings

answer on the 1st, **check** on the
2nd; don't change a right answer



Listening tasks reward careful attention

Opinions and connections

opinions

notice word choice – strong
words show strong **feelings**

connections

“but”, “because”, “so”
show how ideas link

Listening for attitude, not just information

the harder questions ask how a speaker *thinks or feels*, not just what they say

listen for the words *around* the fact – *unfortunately, luckily, to be honest*

listen for tone hesitation, emphasis and speed all carry attitude the transcript would not show

ideas connect in a longer talk, follow how *one point leads to the next*

why it matters the answer is often in the link between two ideas, not in either one alone

A speaker who says “the food was fine” after praising everything else is signalling a complaint. Attitude questions test exactly that reading.

Distractors

~~A cinema~~

B park

~~C museum~~

B

Wrong options are **distractors** .

A speaker may mention an option, then change their mind. Listen to the **whole** idea before you choose.

Watch the distractors

Q: When is the football match?

"Let's meet before the match on **Saturday** – oh wait, they moved it to **Sunday**."

mentioned first -
then corrected: a **distractor**

A Friday

~~**B** Saturday~~

the correction is
the **answer**

C Sunday ✓

listen to the **whole**
idea before
you choose

A distractor is mentioned first, then corrected - the correction is the answer

The small words that point to the answer

the key point

the main thing is.../ what matters is.../ above all...

a feeling or attitude

to be honest.../ the trouble is.../ I'm delighted that...

order of steps

first...next...finally... – these help you follow a sequence

a change of mind

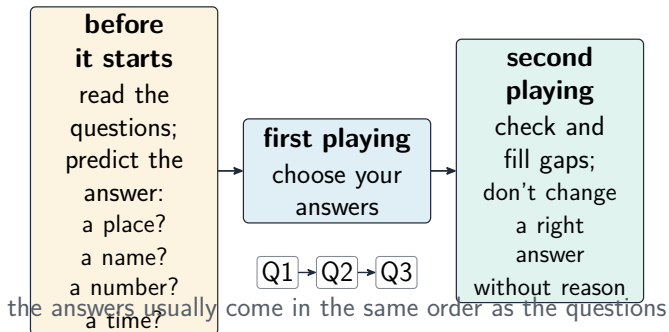
actually.../ on second thoughts.../ but then again...

contrast

however.../ although.../ whereas... – often the moment the real answer arrives

Trained ears listen for these rather than for the content words. They tell you **where in the recording** the answer is about to be said.

Use both playings



Use the two playings differently: answer first, then check

Exam tips

- Read the questions before the audio starts and underline the key words in each one.
- You hear everything twice: answer what you can in round one, check and fill gaps in round two.
- Speakers often correct themselves with numbers, days and spellings. The last version is the answer.
- Missed one? Let it go and follow the next question; return to the gap in the second play.
- Write something for every question. There is no penalty for a wrong guess.



Worked example – a listening distractor

You hear: “The trip was going to be on Friday, but now it’s Saturday.” The question asks which day. What is the answer?

- The answer is **Saturday**.
- “Friday” is a **distractor** – deliberately said **first** to catch you.
- The signal is “**but now**”: it **cancels** what came before.
- Listen for **correction words**: *but, actually, in fact, no wait, instead of*.

The **first** number or name you hear is often the wrong one. Wait for the **whole** sentence – correction words tell you which answer really counts.

Implied meaning

- Sometimes a speaker **suggests** something without saying it openly.
- Think about what they really mean, not only the exact words.

Hearing what is not said

Attitude

Questions often ask for a **feeling or attitude** – pleased, disappointed, surprised, unconvinced – and the word itself is never spoken.

What gives it away

Tone of voice, hesitation, an exaggeration, and the words around the fact: “well, I *suppose* it was fine”.

The trap

Distractors repeat words you heard. The right answer usually paraphrases what was meant.

Ask what the speaker *would* have said if they simply agreed – the gap between that and what they said is the attitude.

Topic 9 – key takeaways

1

Predict

read the question & expect the answer type

2

Both playings

answer first, check second

3

Opinions

word choice shows feelings

4

Distractors

hear the whole idea before choosing

Check yourself

- 1 How many times do you hear each recording?
- 2 What should you do before listening?
- 3 What shows a speaker's strong feeling?
- 4 What are the wrong multiple-choice options called?

**Answers**

1. twice 2. read the question & predict 3. a strong word choice 4. distractors