

Unit 1 An electronic world

Unit overview

Part	This part will help you to ...	By improving your ability to ...
A	Listen more effectively in lectures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• understand disciplinary differences in listening aims• understand the difference between informative and persuasive speech• review your notes after listening• use Cornell notes
B	Become familiar with different types of written text	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• recognize types of text in different disciplines• understand academic arguments• recognize the development of arguments• identify persuasion in texts
C	Develop critical thinking skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• define critical thinking• use critical thinking in your studies• assess your own critical thinking skills• recognize factors that can interfere with critical thinking• understand how and why writers use citations
D	Prepare effective oral presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identify the purpose of a presentation• use software to create effective presentation visuals• make presentations with persuasive content• deliver presentations persuasively• create and deliver a successful group presentation
E	Develop essay writing skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• match structure and purpose in writing• write a suitable introduction• use citations in writing• use citations in different academic disciplines

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Excerpt
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Unit 1

Part A

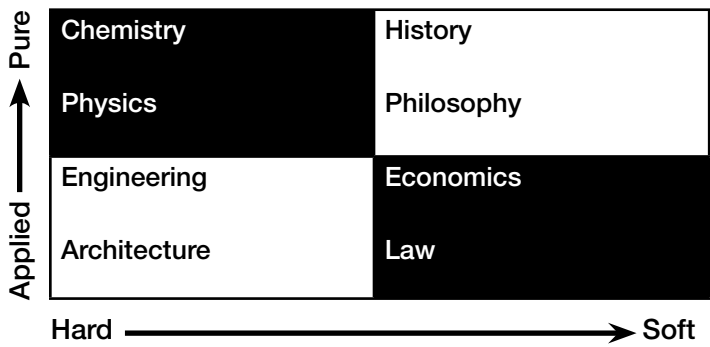
Understanding
spoken
information

By the end of Part A you will be able to:

- understand disciplinary differences in listening aims
- understand the difference between informative and persuasive speech
- review your notes after listening
- use Cornell notes.

1 Disciplinary differences in listening aims

- 1a Work in pairs. Take turns to say what subject(s) you are planning to study in your higher education course. Discuss the reasons for your choice.
- 1b Work in pairs. This diagram shows a common classification of higher education subjects into four categories: *pure*, *applied*, *hard* and *soft* fields. Say which category you think your subject belongs to.



- 1c Work in pairs. Discuss what the different characteristics of each category might be. Then use your ideas to complete the table.

Classification	Characteristics
1 Hard	
2 Soft	
3 Pure	
4 Applied	



- 1d** Now listen to a lecturer in education explaining the four categories. As you listen, add any key points to the notes you made in 1c.
- 1e** Work in groups. Compare your notes on the differences between the categories and then use your notes to discuss these questions about your subject.
- 1 How should you prepare before you attend a lecture?
 - 2 What kind of information can you expect to learn in a lecture?
 - 3 How important is it to think critically about the content of a lecture you hear?
 - 4 What general approaches to learning will be most useful for your studies?
 - 5 What specific approaches do you think will be most important for success?

2 The difference between informative and persuasive speech

- 2a** Work in pairs. Discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with these statements about the Internet.

The Internet ...

- has revolutionized global communications
- is a valuable tool for education
- is an essential part of work and study in the modern world
- can be accessed by almost everyone today.

- 2b** Work in pairs. Read these quotes about the digital divide. Then write notes on p.10 about what you think ‘the digital divide’ means.



‘It is dangerously destabilizing to have half the world on the cutting edge of technology while the other half struggles on the bare edge of survival.’
Bill Clinton



‘There are three aspects to bridging the digital divide, the three Cs – computer, connectivity and content. You have to get all three right to increase penetration of computing devices.’
N. Balakrishnan



‘Many people see technology as the problem behind the so-called digital divide. Others see it as the solution. Technology is neither. It must operate in conjunction with business, economic, political and social systems.’
Carly Fiorina



Notes

- 2c** Listen to three extracts about the digital divide. For each extract (A–C), write notes in the table about:
- 1 the source of the extract (e.g. *a lecture, a TV advertisement, a radio broadcast*, etc.)
 - 2 any new ways of defining the digital divide
 - 3 whether the purpose of the extract is to:
 - a *inform* the listener
 - b *persuade* the listener to accept a claim

Notes on the digital divide	
Extract A:	
Extract B:	
Extract C:	

The purpose of some higher education lectures is only to deliver information. You are not expected to decide whether or not you agree or disagree with the speaker’s views when their purpose is *informative*. However, sometimes the speaker’s purpose is *persuasive*. In these cases, the speaker will explain ideas and present information in a way that attempts to make their audience agree with a particular point of view (this is particularly common in ‘soft’ subjects). Sometimes a lecture may be both informative and persuasive.

- 2d** Consider the ten speakers in these situations. Decide whether the speaker would be more likely to talk in an *informative* or *persuasive* way (or both). Then compare your ideas with a partner.

- 1 A chemistry lecturer giving a lab demonstration.
 - 2 A journalist making a TV news report.
 - 3 A course tutor leading a group seminar.
 - 4 A lecturer giving an introductory lecture on sociology.
 - 5 A lecturer presenting the results of their own recent research.
 - 6 A student discussing ideas for a research project he/she is working on with three other students on his/her course.
 - 7 A student giving a presentation about the causes and effects of the digital divide.
 - 8 A science student discussing the content of her poster presentation at a conference on computer security.
 - 9 A manager giving a business presentation for an improved technology to company directors.
 - 10 A government minister giving a speech to parliament.
- 2e Work in pairs. Which techniques could the relevant speakers in 2d use to persuade their audience? Write notes in this table.

Techniques for persuading an audience
Intonation / way of speaking:
Type of language used:
Supporting information and material:

- 2f Work in groups. Think about the differences between hard and soft subjects which you examined in 1c. Do you think the type of subject (hard or soft) influences the method(s) the speaker might use to persuade an audience? Discuss your ideas.
- 2g Read this paragraph about Internet use. What problem is the writer describing?

Increasing numbers of people around the world use the Internet for things like watching TV or movies, or even listening to radio broadcasts. These activities were previously performed with other technology. Some scientists claim that watching TV or listening to the radio over the Internet actually uses more energy than it would to use a regular TV set or radio.

- 2h Imagine that you are going to join a group discussion about the topic in 2g. First of all, decide your feelings about it. These questions may help you.
- Do you believe the scientists’ claims?
 - Do you have any information about this subject already?
 - Even if using the Internet in this way uses more energy, how serious is this issue?



2i Listen to extracts from two different lectures to learn more information on Internet use and power consumption. Write notes on the lectures and then decide whether the aim of each one is to inform or to persuade.

Notes
Lecture 1:
Lecture 2:

- 2j Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.
- 1 Which lecture (if either) could be used to support your own opinion on the topic?
 - 2 Have you changed your original ideas on the topic after listening to the lectures? If so, why?
- 2k Listen again and make a note of which persuasive techniques from 2e are used.
- 2l Look at the transcript for the two lectures in **Appendix 1**. Can you identify any words or phrases or any supporting information and material the speakers use to persuade their audience? Add them to your notes in 2i.

3 Reviewing your notes after listening

Always take time to review the notes you have made during a lecture, seminar or lab session to help you make sure you have understood the key information. You should do this as soon as possible after the lecture / seminar / lab session has finished. Reviewing your notes after listening helps you to quickly identify gaps in your knowledge or understanding. If you do not review your notes soon after listening, you may not be able to fully understand what you have written later. Reviewing your notes can also be useful to ask yourself how information from a particular lecture or class fits into the course that you are studying.

- 3a Work in pairs. Compare the notes you made while listening to the two lectures in 2i and answer the questions.
- 1 How useful are your partner’s notes for discussing the topic of Internet use and power consumption?
 - 2 Did your partner make notes on any information that you did not?
 - 3 Could your partner improve their note-taking style? How?
- 3b Look at your notes again and answer these questions.
- 1 Did you manage to take notes on everything?

- 2 Is there anything which is still unclear?
- 3 Is there anything that you need to find out more about?
- 4 Did you include any references that you could check in the library?

As well as reviewing your notes to check that they are accurate and cover all the key information, you can also use your notes to think about your *attitude* and *personal responses* to the information you have heard. This means:

- taking a careful, reflective attitude to any claims the speaker has made or information they have presented
- questioning the speaker’s opinions and deciding whether the information that you have heard matches your own opinion
- considering (or questioning) the methods or theories that you have heard.

Considering, reflecting on and questioning claims and information you have heard does not always mean disagreeing with it. The purpose is to identify points that you need to investigate more carefully.



3c Listen to three people describing the benefits of critically reviewing their notes. Write notes next to the speakers’ names.

Notes
Clare:
Manjit:
Fran:

- 3d Read a student’s notes on Lecture 1 in 2i about the effects of Internet use. Then answer these questions.
- 1 Can you see any problems with the style of these notes?
 - 2 Do you think the student has missed any important information?
 - 3 What is the student’s opinion on the topic?
 - 4 Do you agree with the points made in the notes?

Energy Consumption - watching TV etc online

Internet use ↑ rapid.
 ∴ electric. demand ↑

2007+ = Many people watch
 TV etc online / radio.

Dedicated home radio. (??)

Desktop = 100-150 W
 Laptop = 1/2
 TV = 74 W

But not just end user
 Data centres use much
 power.
 (61 bn kwh in 2006 / 80 bn 2010)
 ↓
 other things besides TV.

Intern. worse than TV/rad.
 for energy use.

- 3e Look back at your own notes on Lecture One. Are they still understandable?
- 3f Use your own notes to complete the column to the right of the student's notes in 3e with your comments, ideas or questions. Use these points to help you.
- the type of data
 - the writer's opinion
 - any problems you can see with the information
 - your own opinion
 - where the information came from
- 3g Compare the comments you made in 3f with a partner.

- 3h Now look at the same student's notes, in which the right column has been completed, and answer these questions.
- 1 What problems did the student find with the data given in Lecture 1?
 - 2 Which of the speaker's claims did the student disagree with?
 - 3 Overall, what is the student's opinion about the ideas in Lecture 1?

Energy Consumption - watching TV etc online

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Intern. worse than TV/rad. for energy use.

Any data?

How many? Is this just in UK or worldwide?

Check this.

For which year? This must be changing all the time.

But so do TV stations??

It may reduce because of improving technology.

The speaker strongly claims TV etc on net is no good.
But, doesn't consider technology advancing.

- 3i Compare the student's notes with your own in 3g. Did you have the same ideas?
- 3j What is your opinion of the content of the lecture after looking at the student's notes? Compare your ideas with a partner.

4 Using Cornell notes

Cornell notes refer to a note-taking system developed in the 1950s by a professor at Cornell University in the US. This note-taking style is designed to:

- help you memorize key information
- encourage you to think critically and reflect on material you have heard in lectures, seminars or lab sessions.

The notes below are used in 4a–c on p.17.

4

Regulating Libel on the Internet

check this definition

→

Dorfman "a printed or written Statement that says unfairly bad..."

Are all countries the same?

←

Countries – strict libel law
Web is not same

Increasing web libel

→

1

e.g. Willy Sanchez 2006 – Lib. claim → Bob Bates → domestic Violence (from Atkinson, 2007) → Becoming more common on net.

3

Individual and social effects of libel

↓

Individual effects

↓

fam. breakdown
personal rep.

Social/business

"

e.g. Restaurant Rev.

Practical?! →

John Sampson (1998) – Against open Internet → must have strict law to prot. comp. rights.

Is this okay?
Web is supposed to be free (?)

↑

Evan Norris (sp?) → Civi. Liberties

Who is this?
Check more.

←

2

Libel on the web is increasing. This is in contrast to libel laws in countries where prosecution is easy – the web is not strongly regulated. Libel has effects on individuals and businesses/society, so some campaigners demand strong libel regulation on the net. However, this does not seem reasonable as it would be impractical and limit the freedom of web use.

- 4a Work in pairs. Read the excerpts of Cornell notes on p.16 and discuss what the purpose of each section (1–4) might be.
- 4b Read this text on how to use Cornell notes. Match each paragraph (A–D) with a numbered section (1–4) of the notes on p.16.

How to use Cornell notes

- A** Write useful information such as the title, speaker or author, and date, in the box at the top. Draw a line to make another box at the end of the notes, then draw a vertical line to create two columns in the main body of the notes. Make sure the right-hand column is wider than the one on the left.
- B** In lectures or classes, use the large column on the right side to record notes.
- C** After a lecture or class, note key words in the left-hand column. Also, think of questions that you have about the information you heard, and note them here. You could also add your own comments or opinions. Cover the right-hand column, and look only at the key words and questions that you noted down. Try to recall as much as you can about the key points, or say your answers or opinions about these things out loud. If there is something that you are unable to comment on or don't understand, make a note that you need to check more about this in the library. Ask yourself how the information here is connected to other information you have learned in your course. Are there any problems with the information or claims? How can the information be applied to other situations? This is the stage when you really begin to think critically about what you have heard.
- D** Use the space at the end of your notes to write a brief summary in your own words. You should also add your own comments or opinions about the information in your summary. This helps you to understand the information, as well as memorize it. Review your notes regularly, to help you remember key information as well as develop a deeper understanding of the subject.

- 4c Work in small groups. Compare this style of taking notes with the method you currently use. What are the advantages and disadvantages of writing notes in this way?



UNIT TASK

Communications technology and culture

As you study each unit of this book, you will be asked to work on different stages of a task related to the theme or topic of the unit. The Unit 1 task is on the theme of *The Internet and culture*. At the end of each part, you will be asked to complete a stage of the task as follows:

Part A: Listen to an introduction to the topic.

Part B: Read two texts about it.

Part C: Think critically about the topic.

Part D: Prepare and deliver a group presentation on the topic.

Part E: Write an essay with this title:

How has the spread of communications technology affected cultures around the world? Assess the extent to which the Internet is a medium for western culture alone.



- a** Work in small groups. Discuss your ideas about the essay title you are going to write about in Part E of this unit.
- b** Listen to an extract from a lecture about the relationship between communications technology and cultures around the world. As you listen, write notes to answer these questions.
 - 1** What effect does the spread of communications technology, such as the Internet, have on different cultures around the world?
 - 2** To what extent do you think that cultures are becoming more similar because of the spread of the Internet?
- c** Listen again. Use this space to take detailed Cornell-style notes on the topic.

- d** Spend some time reviewing your notes, adding comments and questions.
- e** Work in small groups. Compare your notes and discuss your ideas on the topic.



Go to the checklist on p.198 and read the tips relating to Unit 1 Part A.