

## UNIT / 01: THE MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT

### READING

#### OUTCOMES

- skim a text quickly to understand the general idea
- scan a text for specific information to answer short-answer questions
- use skimming and scanning to locate the answer quickly
- understand and produce paraphrasing
- use the present continuous and present simple correctly.

#### OUTCOMES

Ask students to focus on the outcomes of the lesson. Elicit/explain to students that *skimming* and *scanning* are both reading techniques, which are very useful for the exam. Timing is a major factor in the IELTS reading and therefore students need to be able to locate information quickly. Explain that these two techniques are designed to help with this. You do not need to discuss their meaning in detail at this stage, as each is described and practised fully, throughout the lesson.

Tell students that the theme of the unit is *The Man-Made Environment* and elicit meaning (anything in the environment made by people- more commonly buildings, but you could also have man-made beaches/lakes etc.)

This unit will focus on buildings or more specifically, homes. This is a popular topic in the exam and can arise in any of the four papers (reading, writing, speaking & listening).

#### LEAD-IN

**01** To engage students in the topic/generate vocabulary, draw students' attention to the photos of houses on pages 8 & 9. Ask students if they would like to live in either of these houses? Why/ why not? What would be their ideal home and why?

##### Alternative

Choose your own selection of photos displaying different types of houses (big, small, old, modern etc.) and display on the board.

As the whole class discuss one of the photos -

e.g. What are the main features of the house? What do you like/dislike about the house?

Students then work in pairs to discuss all of the photographs in this way.

Feedback as a whole class and write any new vocabulary on the board.

Ask students to read the list of vocabulary and complete the table in exercise 01.

If needed, complete the first line of the table as a whole class.

**Location:** beach, city centre, mountains, countryside, remote island

**Building type:** skyscraper, bungalow, mansion, castle, garage

**Style:** glamorous, simple, traditional, modern, spacious

**Rooms:** cellar, gym, dining room

**Parts of a room:** staircase, floor, ceiling, window

**Materials:** wood, marble, leather, stone

**02** Ask students to think about their dream home and complete Exercise 02. You could start this by providing a longer example and describe your own dream home.

As a whole class ask some of the students to report on what their partner has told them.

#### Definition

Skimming: to read a text quickly in order to understand the main idea.

Scanning: to read a text quickly in order to find specific information.

These techniques are useful for the exam because candidates need to be able to read texts quickly. Many candidates make the mistake of reading texts word for word. There is not time for this, as they have 60 minutes to answer 40 questions.

Tell students to read through the definition of skimming and scanning.

Ask students if they have used these techniques before. Elicit why they are important for the IELTS exam.

**03** Write the words *scanning* and *skimming* on the board and elicit a few examples of when they are used, e.g. looking up a word in a dictionary- scanning. Write at least one example under each heading.

2	skimming	3	skimming	4	scanning
5	scanning	6	skimming		

Draw students' attention to *Tip 3*, which advises them to practise these reading techniques as much as possible, as this will help them greatly with the set time limit.

Practising these techniques in their mother-tongue as well as in English, may also help. They could do this at home by reading magazines, newspapers, books etc.

#### Extension

Devise a set of questions around the textbook, asking students to find information using skimming and scanning techniques. You could divide the class into teams and assign a point to whichever team produces the answer first.

E.g. In Unit 3, which page has an article on ..... (skimming)  
 Read the article on page.... How many .... (scanning)

Before locating the answer, students must also tell you which reading technique they will be using to find the information.

- 04** Ask students to look at the photograph of a home, which cost more than one billion dollars to build. Students discuss what they like/dislike about the design.
- 05** Explain to students that they are going to skim read an article about this home, to understand the main ideas. Set a time limit. Draw students' attention to *Tip 5*, which reminds students to ignore unknown words.

#### Advice

It is a good idea not to permit the use of dictionaries during this and some other reading practice, as it is tempting for students to look up every unknown word. In preparation for the exam, students need to be accustomed to not having access to a dictionary.

- 06** Tell students to complete the questions in *Exercise 06*.

#### sample answer

- 1 names, verbs, adjectives, numbers  
 3 Antilia (Mumbai, India)  
 4 1 f 2 d 3 c 4 e 5 g 6 a 7 b

- 07** Explain to students that they are now going to scan the text for information.

Draw students' attention to *Tip 7*, which states that in many of the IELTS reading tasks the answers appear in the same order as the text. Check students understand the meaning of this by asking: "Where in the text is the answer to Exercise 07, question 1? (beginning) 3? (middle) 6? (end)."

Tell students to complete Exercise 07. Again set a time limit.

- 1 Mukesh Ambani 2 27 3 marble  
 4 the lotus flower and the sun 5 168 6 600

#### Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing is to repeat something using different words, often in a shortened form, which makes the meaning clearer.

It is useful in the IELTS reading exam because many of the questions paraphrase what is written in the text. It is important therefore that candidates understand the concept of paraphrasing.

- 08** Ask students to read the definition of paraphrasing in the student book. Elicit from students why it may be useful for the exam.

Explain that each of the statements in Exercise 08 paraphrases one of the paragraphs in the text.

Dictate the first line of Exercise 08 - *The house has many desirable facilities...* Ask students to match this sentence with one of the paragraphs A-F.

Elicit from students how they approached this and which words helped them locate the answer quickly.

- 08** 1 C 2 E 3 F 4 A 5 B 6 D

Tell students to complete questions 2-6 using the same method as the example.

Explain/ elicit from students that some of these words are synonyms, a key function of paraphrasing.

#### Definition

Synonyms: words or phrases that have the same or nearly the same meaning as another word or phrase in the same language. e.g. The words "small" and "little" are synonyms.

Synonyms are useful in the IELTS Reading exam because questions rarely use the same words as in the text, this would be too easy. Instead questions often feature synonyms of words from the text. It is important therefore, that students focus on synonyms when they are learning new vocabulary.

- 09** Ask students to complete Exercise 09.

- 1 e 2 f 3 g 4 c 5 b 6 a 7 h 8 d

- 10** Explain to students that having looked at some of the key skills needed for the reading exam, they are now going to focus on two of the task types (short answer questions and completing sentences).

Explain to students that the short-answer questions will be similar to those featured in Exercise 07. In the exam however, there will be a set word limit for the answers, so it is important that students read the question carefully.

Ask students to read the explanation of short answer questions and Tip 10/11 which states that the answers to these type of questions come in the same order as they appear in the text.

Tell students to complete Exercise 10.

#### Advice

Make students aware of the following: hyphenated words count as one word and spelling accuracy is important.

- 1 9/ nine 2 man-made snow 3 clean their room(s)

#### Extension

For further practice on this task type, ask students to create some of their own questions on the text and then ask their partner to find the answers.

- 11** Explain to students that another similar type of task they may be given in the exam is sentence completion.

This task requires candidates to complete sentences in a certain number of words. The instructions will indicate how many words/ numbers should be used in the answer.

#### Advice

Candidates will lose a mark if they write more than the number of words asked for. Numbers can be written and hyphenated words count as single words. The answers come in the same order as they appear in the text.

Ask students to read the advice section in the book, which explains that the sentences used in this type of task, paraphrase words and ideas from the text.

Tell students to complete Exercise 11. Ask several students the answer, before revealing the correct answer. If some answers given are incorrect, discuss why this is the case (i.e. not grammatically correct.)

- 1 mythical island 2 guests 3 architecture

## GRAMMAR FOCUS: PRESENT SIMPLE/PRESENT CONTINUOUS

The purpose of exercises 12, 13 & 14 is to get students to notice the use of the present simple and present continuous in a text. Being aware of which tenses are being used, can help students to understand the meaning better.

**12** **Present continuous:** an action which is not complete, happening at the time of speaking  
**Present simple:** repeated actions, general facts, opinions

**13**  
 1 lives    2 believes    3 correct  
 4 clean    5 is entertaining

**14**  
 1 is working    2 am/'m renting    3 think  
 4 are/'re building    5 cleans

## EXAM SKILLS

**15** Explain to students that having practised the task type and some key exam skills, they are now going to complete an exam task on their own.

Tell students to complete the *exercise within a set time limit*.

1 (newspaper) publisher    2 Julia Morgan  
 3 3.5 million    4 3/ three    5 attend formal dinner(s)  
 6 the State of California    7 Europe    8 mother  
 9 15/fifteen years    10 every continent    11 zebras  
 12 (the) expensive maintenance

## WRITING

### OUTCOMES

- select key features of different types of graphs, charts and tables in order to describe them accurately
- use suitable verbs, adjectives and adverbs to describe trends in different ways
- compare different graphs or information in the same graph and write a summary of the main features.

### OUTCOMES

This lesson relates to writing task 1; describing different types of graphs, charts and tables. More specifically, the lesson focuses on describing charts/graphs accurately and selecting key features. Make sure students understand the meaning of "key features" (main points).

The unit also provides a great deal of language, which can be used to describe the different trends, which may feature in any of the graphs/charts in task 1. Make sure students understand the meaning of "trend" (a general development or change in a situation).

The third outcome uses the skills/language from the first two outcomes to teach/practise how to compare information in either one or more graphs, and to write a summary of the main features.

These outcomes are all key and common requirements for writing task 1.

## LEAD-IN

**01** Ask students the following:

*Have you had practice describing charts and graphs in your own language?*

*If so, when have you been required to do this?*

*Do you find reading/ interpreting graphs in your own language easy or difficult? Why/why not?*

Having a clear understanding of how comfortable your students are with reading and interpreting graphs/charts in their own language, will help you gauge how much support is needed with this aspect of the exam task. For example, students who are not used to discussing graphs and charts will not only need support with the language, but also with the skill of interpreting this type of data.

Tell students to complete Exercise 1 on their own and then compare answers with a partner. Whole class feedback.

2 line    3 horizontal axis    4 vertical axis    5 bar chart  
 6 bar    7 key    8 title    9 pie chart    10 segment  
 11 table    12 column    13 row

Draw students' attention to the information box, which states that students must be very familiar with the language in the lead-in. Without this key vocabulary, students will be unable to complete this common task in the exam.

### Extension

In order to practise this type of language further, you could describe/dictate various graphs/charts/tables to students, which they in turn must draw.

E.g. The horizontal axis indicates sales from 2005 until 2010. ...

**02** Explain to students that they are going to practise selecting just the key features of graphs/charts.

### Advice

Make students aware that they will be penalised for irrelevance or if their response is off-topic. They only have 20 minutes and 150 words for this task, so they should only report on the key features. While students won't be penalised for writing more than the word limit, they may leave themselves less time for Task 2, which is worth more marks.

Ask students which city they think is the most expensive to buy a home in.

After gathering a few ideas, tell students to look at the first chart in Exercise 02.

As a whole-class discuss questions 1-6.

1 The world's most expensive cities  
 2 The cost per square metre in US dollars  
 3 Cities

- 4 The cost per square metre in each city
- 5 shortest – Monaco tallest – New York/Singapore
- 6 Monaco, Hong Kong and London are very similar; New York and Singapore significantly more expensive

Tell students to complete questions 7-21 in pairs.

- 7 Home ownership in some European countries
- 8 Percentage of people owning their own home
- 9 some European countries
- 10 Romania has the largest percentage of homeowners and Switzerland the smallest.
- 11 Most of the countries have similar figures, except for Romania.
- 12 Romania has a much higher percentage of homeowners than the other countries.
- 13 Average house size in selected countries
- 14 Different countries
- 15 Australia/Hong Kong
- 16 Australia/USA
- 17 Average size of houses in selected European countries
- 18 Two: countries/size
- 19 Denmark
- 20 Italy
- 21 France/Germany

- 03** Explain to students, that reading and interpreting the charts/graphs correctly is just as important as the quality of their English. Accuracy is one of the aspects students will be marked on, under the criteria of Task Achievement.

Ask students to read the sample answer in Exercise 03 and amend any data, which is incorrect. Whole class feedback.

- 03**
- 1 The pie chart provides information about the average house size in selected countries and the table in selected European countries.
  - 2 the USA
  - 3 45 m<sup>2</sup>
  - 4 selected
  - 5 most houses in Europe are much smaller than in the selected non-European countries
  - 6 Hong Kong

- 04** Elicit the answer to Exercise 04.

The writer did not make any errors with spelling or punctuation, but should not have included opinions (e.g. This is perhaps because it is such a large country'; 'This is most probably due to the size of each country').

Students aware that they will be penalised for giving their own opinion or speculative explanations. The answer to this task should be purely factual.

- 05** Explain to students that they are now going to practise describing trends within graphs/charts.

Draw the arrows shown in Exercise 05 on the board and elicit from students as much vocabulary as possible.

Tell students to complete Exercise 05.

- 2 Increase 3 Climb 4 Go up 5 Rocket 6 Soar  
 8 Decrease 9 Decline 10 Go down 11 Plummet  
 12 Plunge 13 Drop

Possible other words: rise, surge, shoot up, peak, fall, reduce, collapse, tumble, diminish, sink, dip

Exercises 05-15 provide students with the necessary language needed to describe trends, exploring the use of verbs, adverbs and adjectives. Students need to make sure they know these words, how they are used and how they are spelt. In task 1, under the criterion, Lexical Resource, students are marked on their ability to use a range of vocabulary, both accurately and appropriately. At this level, at least some attempt to use less common vocabulary is also a requirement to achieve high marks.

#### Advice

Make students aware that they will be penalised for incorrect spelling. It is common for students to spell some of these words incorrectly, so it is useful to check students' understanding of this.

- 1 rocket, soar 2 plummet, plunge

- 07** Exercise 07 reminds students that when they are using these key verbs they must remember to also apply the correct tense. Draw students' attention to the example in exercise 07. Tell students to complete exercise 07.

- 1 rose 2 remains / has remained/ remained  
 3 has decreased 4 are going to go up  
 5 have rocketed

Whole class feedback. Elicit from students which tense they used for each and why.

- 08**
- Big change:** dramatic, substantial, significant  
**Small change:** slight, modest  
**Gradual or no change:** steady, stable, unchanged

- 09**
- 1 significant / substantial / dramatic
  - 2 steady
  - 3 slight, modest
  - 4 unchanged / stable / steady

- 10**
- 1 C 2 A 3 B

- 11**
- Big change:** dramatically, substantially  
**Small change:** moderately  
**Gradual change:** gradually, slowly, consistently  
**Quick change:** sharply, rapidly

- 12**
- 1 significantly / considerably / substantially / dramatically
  - 2 slightly / moderately
  - 3 gradually / steadily / slowly / consistently
  - 4 sharply / quickly / rapidly

**13** Monitor the pair work.

**14** Check students' answers for the gap-fill activity

- 1 B Dubai    2 C Hong Kong    3 A London

**15** This exercise asks students to make a note of any new words or phrases they have learnt during the lesson. It is important that students make a habit of recording new words as having an extensive vocabulary is key to being successful in the exam.

- 15**
- 1 went up, plummeted dramatically
  - 2 remained, peak, rise
  - 3 increased steadily, decreased substantially, went up

## EXAM SKILLS

**16** Explain to students that having studied all the necessary skills/vocabulary needed for this task, they are now going to complete an exam task on their own.

Tell students to complete the timed task in class or assign as homework.

### Feedback

Before marking the answers yourself, you could ask students to assess what they and their partner have written. In pairs, students could discuss the positive and negative aspects of their work (self-assessment is an important learning tool for students and helps them to form the habit of self-reflection.)

Provide students with the following checklist:

Is the information accurate?

Is the information expressed clearly?

Is there a good use of tenses and vocabulary?(adjectives, adverbsetc..)

**16** **Sample answer**

The bar chart shows how many people aged 25–34 either rent or have bought a house in the UK. Furthermore, it illustrates this change over an eleven-year period.

The number of home owners within this age range has decreased substantially since 2004. In 2004, nearly 60% owned their own home, whereas in 2014 this dropped to under 40%. There was a gradual decrease in home ownership over the eleven-year period which was more significant from 2009 to 2014. Only in 2011 and 2012 did the number remain stable at just over 40%.

The rental market, however, has increased dramatically over the same eleven-year period. From 2004 to 2014, the number of people renting has risen by nearly 30%. Again, this has been a gradual increase in most years, rising by just a few percent each year. In 2014, the rental market reached a peak at just under 50%.

In conclusion, therefore, it is easily apparent from this bar chart that for people between the ages of 25 and 34, the rental market is increasing each year, whereas the buyers' market is decreasing.

### Alternative

Students could work in small groups to produce an answer to this task. They could then present their work to the class.

## LISTENING

### OUTCOMES

- predict the type of information required for short-answer questions
- listen for specific information (e.g. complex numbers, difficult spellings) and write it down correctly
- listen to understand context
- answer multiple-choice questions correctly by eliminating distractors.

### OUTCOMES

Draw students' attention to the outcomes. This unit covers two IELTS tasks, short-answer questions and multiple-choice questions. Multiple-choice questions require students to listen carefully to have an understanding of either specific or general points. Whereas short-answer questions, require students to listen for facts such as names of places or people.

In order for students to be successful in these two tasks, several listening skills are also explored/practised in the unit. For multiple-choice questions *eliminating distractors* is a key skill which students need to be aware of.

### Definition

Distractors: the incorrect options in a multiple choice question. Designed to distract students from choosing the correct answer.

Eliminating distractors therefore, is the skill of discarding the incorrect options in a multiple choice question.

For short-answer questions, the skills of prediction and listening for specific information are key. Elicit meaning from students.

### LEAD-IN

- 01** Tell students to look at picture of the *For Sale* sign. Elicit who is usually responsible for selling houses? (an estate agent)
- Tell students to look at the three properties in Exercise 1.
- As a whole class, discuss the main features of Property A (e.g. flat, two levels, 3 bedrooms, a bathroom, kitchen & living room).
- In pairs ask students to discuss Property B and C in the same way.
- Tell students to listen to the recording and complete Exercise 01.

### Tapescript 02

- This is a very nice ground floor two-bedroom flat. It was recently modernised, with a new bathroom and kitchen. The main bedroom is a double bedroom with an en-suite bathroom and toilet, in addition to the main bathroom and toilet. There is a second, smaller bedroom. The living room is spacious and there is a large kitchen, which is big enough to be used as a dining room. The garden is accessible through the living room and the kitchen.
- This first floor flat is in a very nice area of the town and is connected to local shops and services, as well as having good transport connections. There are two double bedrooms, one bathroom, a newly fitted kitchen, a living room and a separate dining room, which could be turned into a third bedroom. There are stairs to the garden at the back. The flat needs some modernisation, but it is very well-kept and would be an excellent family home.
- This is a lovely flat, suitable for a family or for people sharing. The flat is on two levels – there's a first floor and a second floor, above a separate ground floor flat. Upstairs, there's a large double bedroom and a smaller double, as well as a third bedroom, which is only a single, but is still a good size. There's a large bathroom upstairs and also a small shower room downstairs. There's a spacious living room and a large kitchen/dining room, with a rear door to steps leading to the garden.

1 C    2 B    3 A

### Advice

This type of multiple-choice task is common in the exam and students must have practice in being able to interpret pictures/diagrams quickly. They need to identify the key features in these visuals and then listen for the same key information in the recording.

- 02** Tell students to listen again and note down the key words, which helped them locate the correct answer.

- 02**
- ground floor, two bedroom
  - first floor, two double bedrooms, one bathroom
  - two levels, large double bedroom, smaller double, third bedroom spacious livingroom, large kitchen, diningroom

Ask students to compare their notes with a partner. Whole class feedback-did they choose the same information?

- 03** Tell students to look at the notes in *Exercise 3*. Elicit from students what type of information is missing from each gap? Also, ask for examples, e.g. address of property - 33, Whitehill Road.

Explain to students that this type of prediction is a very useful exam technique, as it helps students to focus on the type of language required, even before listening to the recording.

Draw students' attention to *Tip 3*, stating that students will be given the context and some time to look at the questions before they start. Students should use this time therefore, to underline key words and carry out this type of prediction technique.

Tell students to listen to the recording and complete the notes with no more than two words/or a number.

### Advice

Make students aware that if they write more than the stated number of words, it will be marked as incorrect, so they should read the question very carefully. Hyphenated words count as single words.

### Tapescript 03

- Estate agent:** Morgan's Estate Agents. How can I help you?  
**Caroline:** Hello. I'm calling about a property that you have for sale – in Churchill Road.  
**Estate agent:** Sorry. Did you say Church Mill Road?  
**Caroline:** No. Churchill Road – C-H-U-R-C-H-I-L-L.  
**Estate agent:** Oh, right. We have two for sale in Churchill Road – a three-bedroom property and a two-bedroom one. Can you tell me which one you're calling about?  
**Caroline:** It's the three-bedroom one.  
**Estate agent:** Oh, yes. Would you like to arrange a viewing?  
**Caroline:** Yes, but first of all, I'd like to check some details.  
**Estate agent:** Certainly. What would you like to know?  
**Caroline:** First how many lounges has it got?  
**Estate agent:** There are two. There's a small one at the front and a larger one at the back, leading to a sun-room.  
**Caroline:** A sun room? That's nice to know.  
**Estate agent:** Yes. It's perfect to sit in on those chilly or rainy days as it's got its own heating. And you can get to the garden through the sun-room door.  
**Caroline:** Lovely. I've always liked the idea of outdoor space with a lawn. I do a bit of gardening myself. What about the kitchen?  
**Estate agent:** It's fully-fitted – so it includes a cooker and a dishwasher and all the other things you'd expect in a kitchen. You can also get to the outside space through the kitchen door.  
**Caroline:** That sounds great, not having to buy a cooker and dishwasher.  
**Estate agent:** Yes, it would be perfect for you. I should add that there's a garage and a short driveway.  
**Caroline:** Oh, that's very useful. My husband usually drives to work, but I mostly use public transport.  
**Estate agent:** Well, regarding transport, it's only five minutes from Edgely Station and there are regular buses to the town centre, so it's very well connected.  
**Caroline:** That's excellent!  
**Estate agent:** So, would you like to arrange a viewing?  
**Caroline:** I'm free tomorrow morning. Is 11 o'clock OK?

- Estate agent:** Oh, no, I'm sorry. I'm busy then.  
**Caroline:** How about one o'clock then, or one forty-five?  
**Estate agent:** One o'clock would be best for me.  
**Caroline:** OK, great. Let's meet then. Oh, my name is Caroline Prendergast. My number is 07945 872310.  
**Estate agent:** I'm Peter Eliot.  
**Caroline:** Is that with two 'l's?  
**Estate agent:** No, one: E-L-I-O-T. My number is 07863 905073. That's 07863 905073. I look forward to seeing you then.  
**Caroline:** OK. Goodbye.  
**Estate agent:** Goodbye.

1 Churchill Road	2 Three / 3	3 Two / 2
4 garden	5/6 (a) cooker	6/5 (a) dishwasher
7 1 / one o'clock	8 Eliot	9 07863905073

**04** Exercises 04 and 05 practise students' ability to understand and write down numbers. This is a common requirement of the exam, and therefore students must feel confident in this area. It is advisable that students write down numbers as figures rather than words, in order to avoid any errors in spelling.

Tell students to listen to the short conversations in *Exercise 04* and complete questions 1-5.

#### Tapescript 04

##### Conversation 1

- A:** How much is that altogether?  
**B:** That's £53.72, please.  
**A:** Sorry, did you say £43.72?  
**B:** No, £53.72.

##### Conversation 2

- A:** So how far is it to Paris?  
**B:** I've just checked. It's 472 km.  
**A:** 472 km? That's a long way. Are you sure you want to drive?

##### Conversation 3

- A:** Someone left a message for you, Mr Henry. He wants you to call him on 01897 625730.  
**B:** Sorry, I didn't get all that. Did you say 01857 629730?  
**A:** No, it's 01897 625730.

##### Conversation 4

- A:** So how big is the football field?  
**B:** It's 110 m by 55 m.  
**A:** 110 m long and 55 m wide? That's quite big.

##### Conversation 5

- A:** Can I book a place on the course on Saturday, please?  
**B:** Certainly madam. What's your membership number?  
**A:** It's B1074.  
**B:** Sorry, did you say D1074?

- A:** No, B1074.  
**B:** Oh, OK, thank you.

1 £53.72	2 472 km
3 01897 625730	4 110 m x 55 m 5 B1074

**05** In Exercise 05 students are presented with more complex numbers. Tell students to complete exercise 05. It may be useful to remind candidates that they are only listening for numbers here, as the measurement is already included (m)

#### Tapescript 05

- Estate agent:** Hello. I'm Peter Eliot. You must be Ms Prendergast?  
**Caroline:** Yes, that's right.  
**Estate agent:** So, this is the property.  
**Caroline:** Oh, I just wanted to check one thing – the price. If I remember rightly, it's £340,000?  
**Estate agent:** Actually, it's £350,000 at the moment, but we can discuss that later if you like it. As you can see, the front garden is very well kept.  
**Caroline:** Yes. The owners have taken very good care of it.  
**Estate agent:** Shall we go in? Follow me Here's the hall and the front lounge to the left.  
**Caroline:** Hmm, yes. It's very nice. What are the dimensions?  
**Estate agent:** It's 4.3 m by 3.28 m. That's very spacious for a smaller lounge.  
**Caroline:** Hmm, yes. 4.3 m long and 3.28 m wide. Can we go through to the second lounge?  
**Estate agent:** Certainly. If you'd like to follow me.  
**Caroline:** Ooh, it's lovely. What's the size of this room?  
**Estate agent:** Er, let's see ... the second lounge ... er ... it's 6.5 m x 4.25 m. And you can see the sun-room at the back and the garden.  
**Caroline:** Can we go and have a look?  
**Estate agent:** Of course. As you can see, there's enough room here for some plants and two sofas. You could even put a dining suite here.  
**Caroline:** That would be perfect for cooler days. I love it!  
**Estate agent:** And as you can see, there's a patio and a large lawn with flowers round the edges.  
**Caroline:** What are the dimensions of the garden?  
**Estate agent:** It's 30 m long and 10 m wide.  
**Caroline:** 30 m by 10 m? That's a good size for a family. It would be lovely in summer.  
**Estate agent:** Of course. Walk this way. Would you like to look upstairs?  
**Caroline:** Yes, OK.  
**Estate agent:** Here's the main bedroom. It's 4.91 m x 3.95 m – perfect for a large double bed. Oh, sorry, that's 4.91 m long and 3.95 m wide.

- And there's an en-suite bathroom here, though it only has a shower unit and not a big bath like the main bathroom.
- Caroline:** That would come in very useful when we all get up to get ready for school or work.
- Estate agent:** Yes, that's a real positive. Here's the second bedroom. It's 4.2 m x 3.55 m – ideal for children to share.
- Caroline:** 4.2 m long and 3.55 m wide? OK, that's good. Yes, it's got plenty of room to play in.
- Estate agent:** And here's the last bedroom which is 3.25 m x 2.5 m. It would be ideal for a child.
- Caroline:** Yes, it would be fine for my older daughter.
- Estate agent:** The bathroom is just over here. It's got a large bath as well as a shower fitting.
- Caroline:** Great! It's just what we need.
- Estate agent:** So, would you like to put in an offer?
- Caroline:** Yes, please. This is the best property I've seen so far. I don't think I'll find a more suitable one.
- Estate agent:** Wonderful! If you'd like to come back to the office, I can take your details and arrange everything.

05

- 1 £350,000    2 4.3 x 3.28 m    3 30 x 10 m  
 4 4.91 x 3.95 m    5 4.2 x 3.55 m

### Extension

If you feel that your students need more practice with understanding and writing down numbers you could try the following exercise.

Divide the class into pairs and ask each student to write down ten numbers, without showing their partner (make sure students write down a variety of fairly complex numbers) One student then dictates their numbers, whilst the other writes them down. The roles are then reversed.

- 06** Tell students they are going to listen to the final conversation between the estate agent and client. Ask students to read through the questions in Exercise 06 carefully, and predict the type of information required for each.

### Tapescript 06

- Estate agent:** So, Ms Prendergast, let me take your details. I'll just enter your name. How do you spell it?
- Caroline:** P-R-E-N-D-E-R-G-A-S-T.
- Estate agent:** OK, that's it. And what's your present address?
- Caroline:** 52, Lanchester Road. That's L-A-N-C-H-E-S-T-E-R. It's in the Riverside part of town. The postcode is KE7 8UD.
- Estate agent:** And your home phone number?
- Caroline:** 01594 398210.

- Estate agent:** And I've got your mobile number: 07945 872310.
- Caroline:** Yes, that's right.
- Estate agent:** OK. Now the house is on the market for £350,000, but I know that the owners would be happy to accept a close offer as it's been on for a few months. What would your first offer be?
- Caroline:** I think £340,000 would be fair.
- Estate agent:** OK. I'll put that offer to them and we'll see what they say. Now, usually buyers have a mortgage arranged with a bank – a loan to buy the house, so that we can quickly complete the sale. Do you have one arranged yet?
- Caroline:** We've spoken to our bank and they're happy to offer us what we need, up to £300,000. We also have a 15% deposit in our bank account – about £52,000 – so that won't be a problem.
- Estate agent:** And is anyone buying your house? Will the sellers of this property need to wait for you to sell yours?
- Caroline:** No. We sold it a couple of months ago and we're staying with relatives, so we're ready to move in as soon as the sale is completed. So, when do you think you can get an answer on the offer?
- Estate agent:** I should be able to get one tomorrow. Then, if they agree, we can do things quite quickly. Your bank will do the survey – you know, send someone to check the house is in good condition and at the right price, and, if that's OK, we can then prepare the contracts for you and the seller to sign.
- Caroline:** How long do you think the sale will take after that?
- Estate agent:** Well, it's difficult to say. If things go well, we should complete it in about two months at the most. Most sales take about two months. However, if there are any problems, it could take longer, but we hope it won't be more than three months. For example, part of the house, like the roof, might be in bad condition and might need some work. Or there might be plans for a new road in the local area. Anything like that can delay the sale, but most of our sales go through quickly.
- Caroline:** Oh, I hope nothing like that happens! We're really looking forward to moving in soon. It's not easy living a long time with relatives, and my husband has a long journey to get to work, but those aren't the things I'm really worried about. If we can move in before the end of the summer, it'll



be much easier for the children to go to their new school. That's why I hope we can complete everything on time.

**Estate agent:** Don't worry. I don't see any problems with this sale, so I'm quite sure you'll be in the house by then. So, just to go over things again: I'll talk to the sellers tomorrow. If they accept your offer, then we can continue. If they don't, you'll need to put in a higher one quickly, but we should be able to agree by the end of the week. Then you ask your bank to send someone to check the house. If that's all OK, the next step is to prepare the contracts for you and the seller to sign, and we should complete the sale soon after that.

**Caroline:** Wonderful! I'll look forward to your call tomorrow. Bye.

**Estate agent:** Bye.

06

- 1 name, address and home phone number
- 2 mortgage from bank and deposit in bank account
- 3 two months (three at the most)
- 4 C (she wants to move in before her children start school)

07 Explain to students that in order to test their full understanding of the listening, the multiple choice questions will feature incorrect answers which may seem correct. These are called 'distractors.'

In order to give them an example of this, ask students to read Exercise 07 and play part of the recording again.

#### Tapescript 07

**Estate agent:** And there's an en-suite bathroom here, though it only has a shower unit and not a big bath like the main bathroom.

**Caroline:** That would come in very useful when we all get up to get ready for school or work.

Ask students which is the correct answer? (C) Also, ask students which answer is not correct, but is true? (A) Which option is not true or correct? (B)

Explain to students that some answers may be true therefore, but not correct and this is a type of distraction. Another form of distraction is mentioning something in the negative, 'not a big bath like the main bathroom.'

#### Advice

Students must always listen carefully for little words such as 'not' which can change the whole meaning of a sentence or phrase.

### EXAM SKILLS

08 Explain to students that they are now going to do some exam practice. Before doing so, ask students to read *Tip 8* carefully. Like the reading exam, the recordings in the listening will use synonyms of the words in the question. Refer students to the tapescript 06.

1 B    2 C    3 A    4 B    5 A

## SPEAKING

### OUTCOMES

- speak about various aspects of where you live for Speaking Part 1
- respond to wh-, would and Yes/No questions about where you live
- prepare more information for common Speaking Part 1 topics
- use syllable stress in words correctly.

### OUTCOMES

This unit prepares students for Part 1 of the speaking test, which focuses on students' ability to speak about everyday topics, by answering a selection of questions. Outcome 1 deals with a very common topic in this part, speaking about where you live.

This unit also aims to enhance students' pronunciation in general, by focusing on syllable stress in words.

#### Definition

Syllable stress: the part of the word you give most emphasis to.

### LEAD-IN

01 Tell students to briefly discuss in pairs what they like/dislike about their home town, e.g.

There are lots of shops / There aren't enough shops.

If needed, you could start by giving your own example of what you like/dislike about your hometown.

Tell students to look at the vocabulary list in Exercise 01 and decide which column in the table each word belongs to.

Again, students should discuss their choices in pairs.

02 Tell students they are now going to listen to an extract from Speaking Part 1. They must listen carefully and answer the questions in Exercise 02.

#### Tapescript 08

**Examiner:** Now, in this section of the test, I'd like to ask you some questions about yourself and where you live. Do you live in a house or an apartment at the moment?

**Student:** Right now, I'm living in a house with two other students. It's a pretty big house with two floors, a garden and a shared bathroom. I moved in during the summer.

**Examiner:** Where do you live – in the city or the countryside?

**Student:** Our house is in the city centre, about five minutes' walk from the train station. We're close to all of the shops and restaurants, and our school is about a 20 minutes' bus ride from my house. There's lots to see and do around there, so I'm pretty happy with the location.

- Examiner:** Who else lives with you where you live?  
**Student:** Well, as I said – I live with two other students – they both go to the same school as me. One of them is from China and the other is from India. I'm from Romania, so I think we live in a pretty international house!  
**Examiner:** Is there anything you don't like about where you live?  
**Student:** Well, I don't like sharing my bathroom with others and the kitchen is often very busy, but I think that's normal for a shared house. Also, we need to do the gardening regularly or things get out of control. Sometimes the trains can be a little loud as well, especially in the mornings.  
**Examiner:** Now, let's talk about shopping. Where do most people go shopping where you live?  
**Student:** Most people go to the Citygate shopping centre, as it's the biggest and has the most shops and restaurants. There's also a cinema and ice-rink, so people go there not just to shop, but to hang out with their friends as well. It has all of the famous brands and most importantly, it's warm in the winter!  
**Examiner:** When do you usually go shopping?  
**Student:** I usually go at the weekends as I'm too busy with my studies to go in the week. The only problem is that the Citygate gets very full at weekends and you have to wait a long time to get a bus back home, because so many people are trying to catch the bus at the same time as you.  
**Examiner:** Why do lots of young people like to go shopping at big shopping centres?  
**Student:** I think it's because everything is in one place, and they're clean and comfortable and safe for young people to meet. Where else can you go that has all of the shops and entertainment under one roof that the big malls have?  
**Examiner:** Would you ever do your shopping at the local market?  
**Student:** I'm not really sure as the local market is more for older people who just want to go and buy some cheaper food or clothes, and the styles and brands on sale at the market are a bit old-fashioned for me, personally. Maybe my parents would be fine with going to the market, but there's really nothing interesting for me there.

02

- 1 8 questions.
- 2 *Wh-* questions – *Where, Who, When, Why; Would* questions; *Yes/No* questions with *Is* and *Do*
- 3 where (you) live; shopping
- 4 Approximately 15–20 seconds; 3–4 sentences per question

Draw students' attention to Tip 2, stating that the *Why* question usually comes last and might be more difficult to answer.

**Advice**

Tell students not to spend too long thinking about the most truthful answer. The examiner is testing their level of English, nothing else. The notion of inventing ideas can prove difficult for some students, so practice may be needed in this area.

- 03** Explain to students that most of the Speaking Part 1 questions are *Wh-* questions. Elicit these from students (*What? Who? When? and Why?*)

Tell students that they are going to listen to the same recording again and that they should note down any language the student uses to describe their home and shopping facilities.

**Home:** pretty big house, two floors, garden, shared bathroom, city centre, about five minutes' walk, about twenty minutes' bus ride, I'm (pretty) happy with the location, Well, I don't like, shared house, the trains can be a little loud

**Shopping:** shopping centre, cinema, ice-rink, hang out, famous brands, gets very full, everything is in one place, clean and comfortable, entertainment, under one roof, local market, styles and brands, old-fashioned.

- 04** Exercises 04 & 05 practise some of the questions students may be asked in Part 1.

Tell them to ask/answer these questions in pairs.

Monitor students carefully, with the following marking criteria in mind: fluency/coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy & pronunciation.

At this level, it may be more appropriate to just correct errors relating to one or two of these areas, depending on the strength/weaknesses of your particular students.

**Advice**

In Part 1 students shouldn't just answer *yes* or *no* or expand too much i.e. go off topic and start talking about something else.

**Feedback**

Instead of correcting errors as you hear them and interrupting students in mid flow, you could make a note of some of the most common errors and present them to the entire class at the end of the activity.

- 06** Draw students' attention to the information section which states that there are a number of possible topics students might be asked in Speaking Part 1, such as news, entertainment or sport.

Tell students to complete Exercise 06.

- 07** Questions 7 & 8 deal with *Yes/No* questions, another common feature of Part 1.

Questions which usually start with *Do(es)* or *Is?/Are?*

Draw students' attention to *Tip 7*, stating that students shouldn't just answer *Yes* or *No*, but should also add at least two sentences explaining their answer. Exercise 07 provides examples of this.

Tell students to complete Exercise 07.

1 b    2 d    3 a    4 f    5 c    6 e

Tell students to complete Exercise 08 and monitor the length and relevancy of their answers.

- 09** Explain to students that sometimes there are many different ways to express the same type of question.

Tell them to read the example related to “weather”.

Write the word “restaurants” on the board in a bubble. Elicit from students four different questions associated with this topic.

How often do you go to a restaurant? What is your favourite restaurant etc.?

Tell students to complete the rest of the bubbles in Exercise 09.

Tell students to ask and answer the questions in pairs.

- 10** Tell students to add two more topics to the mindmap and again create four questions for each.

#### Sample answer

Other topics: sport, healthcare

#### Syllable Stress

Explain to students that in the speaking exam they also need to focus on their pronunciation. Using the correct syllable stress is just one aspect which will make sure they are clearly understood.

Write the following sentence on the board:

*Right now, I am living in an apartment with my friends.*

Ask students, to underline the stress in the word *apartment* and then check the answer in Exercise 11.

- 11** Tell students they are going to listen to these 16 words (Exercise 11) in the recording and they have to underline the stressed syllable in each.

#### Tapescript 09

- 1 Right now I'm living in an apartment with my friends.
- 2 I'm not too happy with my current accommodation – it's too small.
- 3 The architecture in my home town is fascinating.
- 4 I get up early as there's a lot of construction going on across the road.
- 5 My shopping mall has a lot of escalators, as there are ten floors in total.
- 6 The inhabitants of my home town are pretty easy-going as we live in a place with good weather.
- 7 The most famous monument in my home town is the Statue of Liberty.
- 8 Most visitors to my home town go to the museum as it's very famous.
- 9 The most boring places in my home town are the residential areas, as there are no shops there.
- 10 My home town has a huge stadium where people go to see the local football team.
- 11 These days, many people are leaving the city to go to the countryside, where it's cleaner.

- 12 I'd say that due to the traffic in my home town, the environment there is getting worse.

- 13 My home town has an interesting geography with big mountains and deep valleys.

- 14 The most interesting thing about where I live is the regional food that you can only get here.

- 15 On average we get pretty warm temperatures here in my home town.

- 16 Because I live in the countryside, the scenery here is beautiful – very colourful and bright.

2 ac / com / o / da / tion    3 ar / chi / tec / ture  
 4 con / struc / tion    5 es / ca / la / tor    6 in / ha / bi / tants  
 7 mon / u / ment    8 mu / se / um    9 res / i / den / tial  
 10 sta / di / um    11 coun / try / side    12 en / vi / ron / ment  
 13 ge / og / ra / phy    14 re / gion / al    15 temp / er / a / ture  
 16 sce / ne / ry

- 12** Tell students to listen to the words again and repeat them with the correct syllable stress.

#### Tapescript 10

1 A / part / ment    2 Ac / com / o / da / tion  
 3 Ar / chi / tec / ture    4 Con / struc / tion    5 Es / ca / la / tors  
 6 In / ha / bi / tants    7 Mon / u / ment    8 Mu / se / um  
 9 Res / i / den / tial    10 Sta / di / um    11 Coun / try / side  
 12 En / vi / ron / ment    13 Ge / og / ra / phy    14 Re / gion / al  
 15 Temp / er / a / tures    16 Sce / ne / ry

#### EXAM SKILLS

- 13** Tell students to complete *this exercise* in pairs. Without interrupting to correct errors, monitor students carefully and assess which areas they need more help with before the exam. i.e. lexical, pronunciation.

This exercise stipulates three sentences, as students need to be careful about the length of their answers. Answers should not be too long or too short, and therefore asking candidates to produce three sentences demonstrates roughly how long they should speak for.