



Welcome to IELTS, your ticket to study and work overseas!

In response to the growing popularity of IELTS the Taipei Times, in conjunction with the British Council, brings our readers an IELTS preparation page which will run every Saturday on p14 of the Taipei Times. Each week will focus on a different area of the test. IELTS, the International English Language Testing System, is an upper-intermediate test of English communication. It can be used for university entry and emigration around the English-speaking world and beyond. It measures your ability to communicate across the four language skills — reading, writing, listening and speaking — through authentic challenging tasks. With over 700,000 people taking IELTS annually, it is one of the fastest growing English tests in the world, trusted and accepted by over 4,000 organisations and faculties worldwide, and is a great alternative to TOEFL.

## The Listening Test

### Key facts:

- 30 minutes plus 10 minutes to transfer your answers
- Four sections
- 40 questions in total

### ▶ Sections one and two: Social needs

Section one is a conversation between two people dealing with an everyday topic, such as booking a plane ticket or choosing a restaurant. In Section two, you will hear one person talking about a topic of general interest, for example, a talk on the radio about getting enough exercise.

### ▶ Sections three and four: Education and training

Section three is a conversation between a group of people, possibly students or teachers talking about a tutorial or seminar. In Section four, you will hear one person talking. This could be an extract from a lecture or training programme.

### ▶ Preparation

The test features a variety of accents (such as British, Australian and American) so listen to as many different varieties of English as possible. This should include everyday conversations that you may hear in TV serials and films, as well as more direct formal English, such as news reports and documentaries.

### ▶ Exam Tips

- Listen to the introduction to each question carefully. It will give useful information about the situation and the topic.
- You have time to look through the questions before the recording starts. Do this, and predict what kind of information you need to listen out for.
- Make sure your answers fit grammatically.
- Check your spelling carefully (British and American spellings are both acceptable).

CREDIT: HARRY HAYNES, BRITISH COUNCIL, TAIPEI



The British Council, Taipei

PHOTO: CATHERINE THOMAS, TAIPEI TIMES

### Key Vocab.

**Variety:** The weather in California is great, although there isn't much variety. It's sunny almost every day.

**Conservation:** Careful conservation of classic architecture is vital if we don't want to lose it forever.

**Ecosystem:** Coral reefs are one of the most important marine ecosystems on earth. Countless kinds of organisms can be found there.

**Breeding ground:** Slums are a breeding ground for crime.

**Consumer:** As a consumer, you have to stand up for your rights. If your new DVD player doesn't work properly, just take it back to the shop.

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- We support learners and teachers of English in Taiwan.
- We provide English language courses.
- We offer access to UK examinations — including IELTS.

## EXAMPLE TASK: SECTION 3

### Sentence Completion

For this type of task, you have to complete sentences which summarise the recording, and complete the gaps with actual words that you hear in the dialogue.

▶ Complete the sentences below.

Write **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

Conserving fish: Notes

1. Buy a \_\_\_\_\_ of fish to take the pressure off a select few species.
2. Avoid eating fish sold as \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Buy \_\_\_\_\_ fish.
4. Try to find out how your fish was caught by asking the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. If you are buying farmed fish, opt for those which have been farmed in \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Try to include herring, in order to prevent it from being converted into nothing more than \_\_\_\_\_.
7. Keep asking questions of retailers. \_\_\_\_\_ eventually translate into supplier action.

(ADAPTED FROM WWF FISH CONSERVATION TIPS)



PHOTO: CATHERINE THOMAS, TAIPEI TIMES

### Dialogue

Two friends are discussing a university lecture on conserving fish. Toby was unable to go to the lecture, so Chris is telling him about it. This extract is from the end of their conversation.

**Toby:** Well I must say, conserving fish sounds like a really major issue. I had no idea of the scale of the problem. Did they give any advice on what individual people can do to help?

**Chris:** Er ... yeah. They did, actually. At the end of the lecture, they explained some guidelines that shoppers should think about when they buy fish to eat.

**Toby:** Oh, right. Can you remember what they were?

**Chris:** Yeah. I made some notes. Hang on. I've got them here. Let me see. Well, the first thing they said is that it's important to buy a variety of different fish.

**Toby:** A variety? Why?

**Chris:** Well, if people do that, it takes the pressure off any particular species, like, say, blue-fin tuna, which might be endangered.

**Toby:** Oh, of course. I suppose it protects the whole ecosystem better.

**Chris:** Yup. The next thing they said was that you shouldn't buy anything which is sold as 'baby fish'.

**Toby:** Yeah, I've heard that eating smaller fish can destroy whole fish stocks.

**Chris:** That's right. So anyway, when you do buy fish, make sure they are locally caught. Oh, and another thing, remember to ask the retailer how they were caught.

**Toby:** What difference does that make?

**Chris:** Well, some ways of fishing, like trawling, are really destructive to the marine environment. Thousands of fish get caught in the fishing nets and are just thrown away!

**Toby:** That's terrible. I've read that a lot of the fish we eat now is actually farmed. Did they say anything about that? I mean, farming fish has got to be less damaging to wildlife, hasn't it?

**Chris:** Not necessarily. Apparently some fish farms are breeding grounds for diseases which can then be passed on to wild fish. This is a particular problem for salmon farms which can produce a lot of parasites. The advice is, if you buy farmed fish, make sure it has been farmed in open-sea conditions. They say it's much less likely to spread disease.

**Toby:** OK. There really is a lot to think about. Is that it?

**Chris:** There were a couple more points. One is to include herring in your diet. Apparently this stops it from being converted into animal feed.

**Toby:** Animal feed? Interesting.

**Chris:** But the main thing is, we should all keep up to date with the latest information, and keep asking retailers lots of questions. They say, in the end, consumer concerns lead to action by the suppliers.

**Toby:** Got it! Now I can enjoy eating fish, and do my bit for the environment.

- Answers
1. variety
  2. baby fish
  3. locally caught
  4. retailer
  5. open-sea conditions
  6. animal feed
  7. consumer concerns

