

## GESE – Sample listening tasks

### Advanced stage (Grades 10-12)

The following document contains some sample listening tasks for Grades 10-12. Please note these are example tasks and will not be used in a real examination.

#### Grade 10

The examiner will introduce the Listening phase by saying:

I'm going to read you three short passages and after I've finished each one, I'd like you to either suggest a suitable ending or answer a question. I'll then move on to the next passage. Are you ready? These two passages are incomplete. When I stop, I'd like you to tell me in just a few words how you think the passage finishes.

#### Grade 10 Type 1 listening tasks

1. Fresh, home-grown vegetables make for a healthy diet. That's why I spend hours working in my garden growing my own. But once I consider the costs, such as seeds, equipment and hours worked, I'm unconvinced of the economic benefits. Every year I lovingly plant seeds and nurture my delicious vegetables. However, I do realise that growing my own vegetables is...  
**Expected response: expensive (or equivalent).**
2. New research shows that young people who have grown up using smartphones can type faster with their thumbs on these devices than most people can on their laptops. Researchers gave volunteers a typing test and found teenagers could produce 40 words per minute on their phones. Meanwhile, other people in the study typing on their laptops were...  
**Expected response: slower/unable to match this (or equivalent).**
3. One man got so irritated by unrealistic reviews online, he decided to create a fake restaurant. He posted pictures of food photographed in his garden shed and claimed customers had to have a reservation. His friends then gave superb reviews of it. His non-existent restaurant was soon classified as the premier restaurant in London. It just shows we shouldn't...  
**Expected response: believe/trust online reviews (or equivalent).**
4. Perhaps you haven't heard of the activity called 'plogging', but it's becoming increasingly popular. Basically, it consists of going jogging while picking up litter and putting it into plastic sacks. As a workout, it provides variation of body movements by adding bending and stretching to the main action of running. It's a win-win situation, being good for both health and...  
**Expected response: the environment (or equivalent).**
5. There's been some new research on mosquitoes. Apparently, they can detect a human's presence 50 metres away. Mosquitoes pick up the scent of the carbon dioxide we exhale and then follow that, until they get close enough to sense the warmth of our bodies. Researchers say trying to escape from them is...  
**Expected response: pointless/impossible/very difficult (or equivalent).**

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6. For many years it was believed that reading books too closely caused short-sightedness. This idea had seemed even more convincing after the introduction of compulsory schooling. But it's now thought that the long hours in the classroom, which deprived children of daylight, was the key factor. So, eyesight might improve if children...

*Expected response: go/went outside more (or equivalent).*

7. People assume that the finest perfumes are created by assembling multiple sweet-smelling fragrances. But perfume makers have discovered that the best ones have trace amounts of foul-smelling scents, such as old food or wet leather. These unexpected smells make a perfume more interesting. Indeed, without them, the scent would lack appeal. So, it appears that unpleasant smells in perfume are...

*Expected response: essential (or equivalent).*

8. When we hear cows making a 'mooring' noise, they may all sound the same to us humans. But according to research, cows use these sounds to express a range of emotions to each other. Researchers found cows use their 'mooring' sounds to convey everything from excitement to distress. So, the tone varies to let the other cows know how...

*Expected response: they are feeling (or equivalent).*

9. Although we're very close, my sister and I aren't alike. We've been going on holiday together for ages at least twice a year, and once the date's fixed we follow the same old pattern. Well before departure, she's washed and ironed her clothes, bought her foreign currency and guidebook and packed her stuff, whereas I never get ready until...

*Expected response: the last minute/the night before (or equivalent).*

10. You can do almost anything with mobile phones nowadays, so much so that some people never seem to take their eyes off them. I quite often see people wandering down the street or even crossing the road, tapping away at them, completely oblivious of what's happening around them. I'm just surprised that this doesn't lead to more...

*Expected response: accidents/crashes/collisions (or equivalent).*

The examiner will introduce the final Listening task by saying:

After I've read this passage, I'll ask you a question about what you've heard.

Grade 10 Type 2 listening tasks

1. There seem to be moves towards phasing out cash as a way of paying for things. As a result, we're seeing fewer cash machines because digital payments are becoming the norm. But a cashless society could make people's spending habits worse. That's because cash involves handing over a valuable possession, which serves as a mental restraint on our extravagance. It's psychologically far easier to spend virtual money than actual cash.

**Q: According to the speaker, what is likely to happen if cash is no longer available?**

**A: We are more likely to spend more (or equivalent).**

2. There's another craze in town. You can go to some fancy café and get a 'selfieccino' – a cappuccino with an image of your face on the top. Customers send a photo to the barista, and this image is uploaded to a machine that reproduces it on the froth. It may seem a novel idea, but I suspect it's just so people can post yet another selfie on social media.

**Q: What does the speaker think about this new trend?**

**A: It's ridiculous/showing off (or equivalent).**

3. Now that space travel is a possibility, it's become the latest, must-have luxury for the super-rich. I suppose it may seem an exciting idea – conquering the last frontier, or some such pipedream. But I suspect the appeal is more basic. They seem to be saying: 'Look at the amazing experiences I can have because of all my money.' That may be true, but they're welcome to it.

**Q: According to the speaker, what is the true appeal of space travel to the rich?**

**A: They do it to show off (or equivalent). (Do NOT accept 'exciting' or 'pipedream'.)**

4. This month, the public finally got to see the latest film in the sell-out series about the nation's favourite dragons. This third animation featuring the fantasy creatures was predicted to be a big hit, given the record-breaking performance at the box office of the first two films. And yet, the box office receipts for the opening week have been surprisingly modest.

**Q: How does the new film compare with the earlier ones?**

**A: It didn't sell as many tickets/not as many people went/didn't do as well financially (or equivalent). (Do NOT accept 'it's not as good'.)**

5. I'll never forget one of my early theatre shows as an actor, when I came on stage still wearing my old sweatshirt, rather than the right costume. My face still goes red at the thought. It was freezing backstage, so naturally I'd put it on, and just forgotten about it. But when I made my dramatic entrance, not only the audience but also the cast burst out laughing!

**Q: How does the speaker feel about the episode they are describing?**

**A: Embarrassed (or equivalent). (Do NOT accept a general negative term, eg bad.)**

6. There's an old saying that we should eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a small child. Some recent research into the human body clock by nutritional scientists appears to support this notion. It indicates that attempting to digest larger quantities of food when the body is winding down for the day is far from ideal for the body's rhythms and functions.

**Q: What does recent research suggest about evening meals?**

**A: They should be smaller/lighter/we should eat less (or equivalent).**

Grade 10 Type 2 listening tasks continued

7. Nowadays, most people in the UK drink tea made with bags, rather than brewing leaves in a pot in the traditional way. This change happened more by luck than design, thanks to an enterprising tea merchant. In 1908, he decided to promote his business by sending the tea in small silk bags to potential customers. He never imagined they'd actually use them to brew the tea in!

**Q: What is surprising about the invention of teabags?**

**A: It happened by accident (or equivalent).**

8. I'm an avid reader and when I first discovered electronic books, I was really excited. Having access to several novels on my e-book reader was so convenient, especially when I was travelling. However, I was talking to a friend recently about books that have made a strong impression on us over the last few years. Interestingly, I realised that it was the traditional paper books that we remembered most vividly.

**Q: What point is the speaker making about electronic books?**

**A: You don't remember reading them as well (or equivalent).**

9. My tutor taught me the format to use. First you have to state what you'll be writing about. Then, you give a general background before you move on to the body of the work. For each paragraph I make an introductory point, followed by an explanation and an example. Finally, the conclusion is basically a summary of everything I've discussed in the main part.

**Q: What activity is the speaker describing?**

**A: Writing an essay/dissertation (or equivalent).**

10. It was a bit of a challenge coming back from the coast last weekend, to say the least. Because of the freezing fog, there was almost zero visibility through the windscreen. There was ice everywhere too, which meant we kept slipping and sliding all over the place. Some people didn't keep their distance either, despite all the public safety campaigns we've had.

**Q: How does the speaker feel about the driving conditions?**

**A: They were dangerous/difficult (or equivalent).**

Grade 11

The examiner will introduce the Listening phase by saying:

I'm going to read you three short passages and after I've finished each one, I'd like you to either suggest a suitable ending or answer a question. I'll then move on to the next passage. Are you ready? These two passages are incomplete. When I stop, I'd like you to tell me in just a few words how you think the passage finishes.

Grade 11 Type 1 listening tasks

1. In popular culture, drivers of expensive cars aren't nearly as considerate as other drivers. New research suggests the stereotype has some factual basis. The research team monitored pedestrians at crossings to compare how often drivers of expensive and inexpensive cars would stop for them. It didn't matter who the pedestrians were; it was the type of vehicle that mattered. Indeed, it was the drivers of cheaper cars who stopped at pedestrian crossings...  
**Expected response: more frequently/more often (or equivalent).**
2. Have you ever heard of gastrophysics? Well, it's assessing how perceptions of taste are affected by the things around the food. In one study, a bowl of tomato soup was rated by diners. Diners enjoyed the bowl of tomato soup the most when it was served with a simple red and white checked table-cloth underneath. Less lighting made the soup taste saltier, while serving it with heavy spoons made it taste better. It seems environmental factors make...  
**Expected response: the taste seems different (or equivalent).**
3. My friend has recently taken up knitting. She gets enormous satisfaction from producing beautiful garments for her friends. However, what really infuriates her is when the ball of wool twists up and gets knotted. And that's where I come in. For me, untying those maddening little knots releases the frustration and stress of the day. So, it could be said that her new hobby benefits us both. She has found an outlet for her creativity, and I find it quite...  
**Expected response: relaxing/therapeutic (or equivalent).**
4. It's quite common for children to talk out loud to themselves. Interestingly, researchers have studied children who complete tasks in silence and compared them to children who talk to themselves while they're doing things. Initially, you'd think the silent workers are concentrating better and so learning more deeply. However, it's the children who give a kind of running commentary on what they're doing and chatter away to themselves that are the...  
**Expected response: better learners (or equivalent).**
5. People living in the Stone Age had such physically demanding lives that their bodies were significantly stronger than ours. This would probably have been the result of endless agricultural labour. The scientists scanned the arm bones of people living 7,000 years ago and compared them with those of the current British Olympic rowing team. Even with today's improved diet and the rowers' advanced training techniques, the team's arms were...  
**Expected response: weaker/not as strong (or equivalent).**

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Grade 11 Type 1 listening tasks continued

6. When we learn to swim, we're usually told to keep our fingers together while moving through the water and to imagine our hands are like paddles. But new research suggests that advice is wrong. You'll be able to swim faster if you keep your fingers slightly apart, as this increases the surface area to propel yourself through the water. The extra speed generated would be negligible to a casual swimmer, but for a competitive swimmer, it...

**Expected response: might make all the difference/might mean winning the race/would be significant (or equivalent).**

7. For most people, a real pleasure in life is being able to deactivate the alarm clock and look forward to not having to get up the next morning. People love having a lie-in at the weekend – they delight in putting off chores. But not me. I get fretful if I'm not up at the usual time. I seldom pull my covers over my head and give in to the cosiness of my bed. At the weekend, my alarm...

**Expected response: goes off at the usual time (or equivalent).**

8. Football has changed over the years. My memory is of action-packed games with goals coming in quick succession, where spectators hardly managed to sit down between goals. This may be a slight exaggeration, but certainly, scores are no longer so high. Playing is of a better quality now and football is less of an attacking, more of a defending, game. This has its benefits, but it's different. Nowadays, in contrast to the past, the excitement comes because the goals are...

**Expected response: rare(r)/less frequent (or equivalent).**

9. We all know that if food looks good and smells good, we're more likely to want to eat it. The smell of freshly-baked bread is irresistible, and a beautifully-presented dish can be literally mouth-watering. But, more surprisingly, scientists at a leading university have discovered that sound is equally important. High-pitched tunes played on the piano make things taste sweeter and low brass sounds make things taste bitter. Eating, it seems, is an experience which involves nearly all of our...

**Expected response: senses/faculties (or equivalent).**

10. When you become an expert in your field, it becomes increasingly difficult to convey your message, particularly to those who have never come across the subject before. Because you have a vast store of advanced knowledge, it's challenging to put the clock back and imagine what it's like to be starting out. In my view, it becomes harder to teach rather than easier. With such a gap in level, it is difficult to put yourself in the shoes of a...

**Expected response: student/pupil/beginner/person with no knowledge of the subject (or equivalent).**

The examiner will introduce the final Listening task by saying:

After I've read this passage, I'll ask you a question about what you've heard.

**Grade 11 Type 2 listening tasks**

1. People get really excited when I tell them about my job working as a film extra. They think it's all glamour and prestige: meeting top actors, dressing up in fantastic costumes and appearing in the blockbusters. But it's not like that. I really like my job but often the scenes I participate in are edited out. What's more, I spend a lot of time waiting around in uncomfortable clothes, and as extras, we're discouraged from interacting with the actors. Maybe I'll become an actor myself one day!

**Q: What point is the speaker making about their job?**

**A: It's not glamorous/not exciting (or equivalent).**

2. Welcome to our introduction to Cantonese cooking. Many of you are hoping to recreate some of those wonderful dishes you have tasted in your favourite restaurants. While this is of course the goal we are aspiring to, we want you to take a more gradual approach to developing your skills and knowledge. It's important to first perfect the core cooking methods. Here we are focusing on the basic dishes and the techniques that will help you to develop a range of exciting Cantonese meals.

**Q: What is the main message the speaker gives about the first cooking class?**

**A: Start simple/get more complex later (or equivalent).**

3. It's undeniably fascinating to study the movements of bees. This plays an important part in studies of animal communication, since we've discovered that the way these insects waggle their bodies actually signals precise information about the location of food supplies. In the 1970s, a zoology professor won the Nobel Prize for science for his research into honeybee communication. Fifty years' work may deserve some recognition, but this level of excitement surprises me, when the significance of the bees' dance was noted by an ancient Greek philosopher, centuries before.

**Q: Why is the speaker surprised that the research received a Nobel Prize?**

**A: Because it was nothing new (or equivalent).**

4. Some economists have suggested that share prices move entirely randomly. This seems to have been borne out by an experiment involving a cat called Felix. The cat managed to beat a panel of experienced investment experts from a variety of top firms in picking stock market winners over a one-year period. His method was simply to throw a toy mouse on a grid of numbers which represented different companies. News of this research comes at a difficult time for the investment industry as consumer confidence has rarely been lower.

**Q: What is the speaker implying about investment experts?**

**A: That it takes no special skill/experience to do their job (or equivalent).**

5. Many people think being a DJ is an easy ride – it's just a case of putting the needle on the record. Actually, as a professional DJ, you are responsible for raising the spirits of large crowds of people. Also, you need to have an encyclopaedic knowledge of entire catalogues of music from a range of genres and technical knowledge so you can mix tracks. What's more, it's so competitive that to get anywhere you really need to create your own individual style.

**Q: What is the speaker's attitude to the role of a DJ?**

**A: Admiring/appreciative/DJs are underrated/it is not as easy as people think (or equivalent).**

## Grade 11 Type 2 listening tasks continued

6. I was initially rather puzzled by the concept of a working holiday. I mean, surely holidays are when you get to put your feet up and soak up the sun? Who'd want to spend their hard-earned rest milking cows on a farm, or helping renovate a derelict building? What a waste of precious downtime. However, thanks to the persuasive powers of my oldest child, I've just come back from a fortnight's break doing just that. I'm exhausted, but I have to say it's forced me to eat my words.

**Q: What does the speaker now think of working holidays?**

**A: He/she thinks they are a great idea/good way to spend time (or equivalent).**

7. Many companies pride themselves on having excellent customer service and are constantly gathering all sorts of feedback from their consumers. What this often means is that they've put communication systems in place either through their website or on social media so they can pick up on consumers' comments. It's all done in the name of efficiency but at the expense of personal contact. The result of this is that any direct connection with customers is in danger of becoming a thing of the past.

**Q: What does the speaker think about the way companies communicate with customers nowadays?**

**A: It's not a substitute for speaking to customers/it's a shame that they no longer speak to customers/it's impersonal (or equivalent).**

8. Nowadays, there are many websites where people can hire out their car, their home or almost any other possession to other users. The sites promote themselves as being part of a new co-operative culture whose users are motivated by a desire to share their possessions. I suspect that this may not be uppermost in the minds of many. The ability to connect with people so easily has numerous financial benefits. I think this has contributed more to the success of such sites, rather than their expression of a growing community spirit.

**Q: What does the speaker say about why people use these websites?**

**A: They want to make/save money (or equivalent).**

9. I don't know where I'd be if I couldn't buy stuff over the internet, but all that added convenience comes at a price. You've got to make all your purchases upfront, so you can't rule out the possibility of identity theft. You just have to take certain precautions. One thing you can do is just go to sites you've heard of. Of course, you might be tempted by a bargain somewhere else, but you may well be ordering counterfeit or even non-existent goods.

**Q: What is the speaker's attitude towards online shopping?**

**A: You have to be careful/cautious (or equivalent).**

10. In developing the processing of plastics, we should be guided by nature. The amount of waste in nature is minimal and almost everything is reused. Your unwanted belongings need not be burnt or buried but should be re-formed for use by industry instead. You shouldn't just be a consumer. In future, you will need to dispose of an object with a view to it being transformed into something else. Hopefully, my ideas will make you reconsider what you do with objects you might otherwise discard with household waste.

**Q: What is the speaker's purpose?**

**A: To persuade/encourage people to recycle (plastic) (or equivalent).**



Grade 12

The examiner will introduce the Listening phase by saying:

I'm going to read you three short passages and after I've finished each one, I'd like you to either suggest a suitable ending or answer a question. I'll then move on to the next passage. Are you ready? These two passages are incomplete. When I stop, I'd like you to tell me in just a few words how you think the passage finishes.

Grade 12 Type 1 listening tasks

1. Apparently cats only make the high-pitched crying sound known as a miaow when they communicate with humans. With fellow cats they express their moods and requirements by using scent, body language and facial expressions. However, humans are not tuned in to recognising these messages. So, cats have worked out that they need to be more explicit. Remarkably, cats don't just miaow in one tone. They have developed a range of sounds which reflect their various requirements more precisely. Cat owners subconsciously learn to understand these variants and respond accordingly. They know exactly what their cat needs by...  
**Expected response: the tone/type of the miaow (or equivalent).**
2. In the world of international business, companies frequently select staff to travel abroad based on their qualifications. For example, the best-qualified engineer or IT consultant is chosen for an overseas project. However, this doesn't always work, as qualifications aren't the only thing needed. An international businessperson needs to be friendly, open and warm. In addition, they should also be sensitive to significant cultural differences. These qualities are inherent, a part of the person. Therefore, it's clear that when selecting staff to do international business, companies should consider not only their qualifications but also, their...  
**Expected response: personality/social skills (or equivalent).**
3. In my view technology plays too great a part in sporting achievement. Take shoes for example. High-tech trainers are making running more efficient – potentially by a winning margin. So, my point is: should a world record be down to superior technology or to athletic prowess? I suggest we should consider all footwear as a technological aid and standardise it completely. That would be the most effective way of assessing an individual's true sporting ability. Think how much fairer that would be! So, if we want an equal race, I think all competitors should run...  
**Expected response: in the same shoes (or equivalent).**
4. A hot topic of discussion at the moment is creativity and how to increase it, especially when it comes to workplace design. Instead of isolating workers in cubicles and small offices, most modern workspaces consist of large communal areas. This is to promote openness and collectivity. This is all very exciting and I'm sure for some it works quite well, but shouldn't we be considering different styles of working? Not everyone works in the same way. I know that for me to be creative I need to...  
**Expected response: be alone/on my own (or equivalent).**

Grade 12 Type 1 listening tasks continued

5. You might have heard of fast fashion, which for some generations became the norm, with no regard for the environment. People were forever buying the latest clothes as they didn't want to be seen wearing the same thing twice in photos. However, there now seems to be a backlash against this wasteful trend because people are becoming more aware of the impact fast fashion is having on the planet. The in-thing these days is to post photos of yourself on social media wearing clothes that don't...

**Expected response: cause environmental damage (or equivalent).**

6. It's often said that children shouldn't spend so much time on computer games, as it's better for them to play outside to develop their social skills. I played computer games as a child and I feel they aided me in many ways, such as honing my problem-solving skills. This has helped me to achieve my goals in the real world. Thinking of my professional goals, for example, as a sort of game or puzzle has helped me to plan calmly and logically. So perhaps parents should...

**Expected response: encourage the playing of computer games/let their children play computer games (or equivalent).**

7. Recent research into employee satisfaction showed that fewer than half of us are happy in our workplaces. I fully expected the reason for this to be about salaries. However, what employees actually want is to be heard. Staff feel satisfied if they know that their boss values their opinions and takes them into consideration when making decisions. They have the gratification of their ideas being taken on board and potentially contributing to the financial success of the company. Obviously good management needs strong decision makers. But to create a positive working environment, managers also need the ability to...

**Expected response: listen (or equivalent).**

8. Some supermarkets offer us an unbelievable number of products. It can be up to 50,000 in some stores. However, psychologists believe that we prefer fewer shopping choices because there's less risk of confusion and anxiety. In a recent study, one group of customers was presented with a choice of 20 types of coffee and another group with just six. Of those given an abundance of options, only 5% were prepared to make a purchase compared with 50% of those offered fewer varieties. So, it seems if supermarkets give us so many products to choose from, we...

**Expected response: won't buy so much/will buy less (or equivalent).**

9. I made up my mind I wanted to be an astronomer when I was very young. I found the night sky and the idea of space fascinating. I read as much as I could about it – I thought, this is it! It was mind-blowing. But when I went to university, this was turned upside-down. I couldn't bear listening to the lecturers droning on and on. And above all, I hated having to memorise all those facts for exams. It put paid to my enthusiasm. Before long, all the wonder I'd felt in astronomy was...

**Expected response: gone/lost/dead (or equivalent).**

10. Some fascinating research was carried out about the effects that birth order among brothers and sisters has on our lives. According to statistics, the oldest child is the most conscientious, has a higher IQ and even higher earnings than his or her siblings. However, the youngest child supposedly ends up having greater wit, charm and the ability to get on with people. This seems to hold true for a number of people I know, but I suppose these sorts of statistics should always be taken with a pinch of salt. For example, in my family it's the youngest whose salary is...

**Expected response: higher/the best/the largest (or equivalent).**

The examiner will introduce the final Listening task by saying:

After I've read this passage, I'll ask you a question about what you've heard.

### Grade 12 Type 2 listening tasks

1. The belief that you can use houseplants to purify the air in your home is based on false evidence. This idea can be traced back to a NASA study, which found that in airtight chambers, like on a space station, plants were very effective at absorbing toxins. But in normal homes and offices, stale indoor air is released with the usual everyday opening of doors and windows, meaning that most toxins are dissipated before plants have a chance to absorb them. Researchers have calculated you'd have to have nearly 700 plants in an average-sized house to have the same effect as opening just two windows.

**Q: Why has the research into houseplants removing toxins in the air been misleading?**  
**A: Because the initial research wasn't done in the home/was done in a space station (or equivalent).**
2. In many parts of the world you're expected to keep your garden tidy. In particular, you should attend to the grass on your lawn, which must be kept short. If you were to let your grass grow wild, the neighbours will think badly of you, and in some countries, it is even against the law! But in fact, an immaculate lawn is just a green desert. By not cutting the grass you'll allow plants, insects and animals to flourish. Not only this, but it won't be necessary to waste water on your lawn or use air-polluting petrol in machines to keep your garden neat.

**Q: According to the speaker, what is the overall effect of keeping your grass cut short?**  
**A: It's environmentally unfriendly/damaging (or equivalent).**
3. The vast majority of people pay lip-service to the idea of developing and exploiting alternative energy sources. If we don't, they freely admit, future generations will struggle to cope with the resulting environmental problems. In reality, though, whenever the merest suggestion of a wind farm is mooted anywhere near their own local area, voices are raised in protest, petitions are drawn up, and cries of 'not in my backyard' echo resoundingly in noisy meetings or in the letters columns of national newspapers. The government's hands remain tied, and nothing gets built. It is just human nature.

**Q: What does the speaker think of people who protest about alternative energy sources?**  
**A: They are hypocritical/they say one thing (and/but) do another (or equivalent).**
4. Students are typically organised on class registers alphabetically according to their last names. According to research, however, this may affect a child's life chances. A longitudinal study revealed that students with names beginning with letters closer to the beginning of the alphabet generally performed better. They had higher-prestige jobs and more money. These findings may be due to the taking of the register at the beginning of the school day to check whether students are present. Students with names further down may feel less noticed by the teacher. Ironically, the lead researcher was Professor Zax, spelt with a zed. She is a leading consultant at a famous university.

**Q: Why does the speaker emphasise the spelling of the professor's name?**  
**A: She's a professor/done well yet her name begins with a Z (or equivalent).**

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Grade 12 Type 2 listening tasks continued

5. Charles Darwin, the famous naturalist, referred to blushing as the most peculiar and human of all expressions. However, although we know that people's faces redden after a transgression or mishap, there was little data on why this physiological response evolved. Researchers now believe people who outwardly express embarrassment are perceived more favourably by onlookers. Blushing signals self-awareness and regret, which in turn fosters empathy in other people. For example, researchers in one study noted how people who cheated during a game were soon trusted again if they blushed. It seems, therefore, that it is a form of non-verbal communication that serves an important purpose.

**Q: According to the speaker, why does blushing play an important social role?**

**A: It forms a social bond/connection/empathy between people (or equivalent).**

6. You might think that the story of one particular football season, told by a Manchester United fan, would only sell to the supporters of that team. But, actually, the author of *My Football Season* manages to overcome this. Through a mixture of humour and the communication of drama, both on and off the pitch, plus a natural writing style, the book will attract fans of other teams. In fact, I'd go as far as to say anyone with an interest in the game. That's something I don't think I could have achieved, given the narrowness of the core idea, and I must say I'm rather in awe of the writer.

**Q: What does the speaker particularly admire about this book?**

**A: That the book will appeal to a wide range of people/all football fans/its wide appeal (or equivalent).**

7. Bird experts, or ornithologists, have observed how male birds will attract their mates in varying ways. Some utilise a stunning array of colourful feathers, while others have very tuneful singing voices. However, it is interesting that of all the diverse courtship rituals observed throughout the avian world, male birds tend to have one preferred approach particular to their species. For example, the peacock's plumage is famously striking, but its call is disappointingly monotonous. Conversely, nightingales have dull brown feathers, but sing for longer with a beautiful variety of notes. Developing distinct approaches to attracting mates is consistent with evolutionary research.

**Q: What is the usual relationship between a bird's feathers and its singing voice?**

**A: If it has a nice voice, the feathers will look dull (or vice versa) (or equivalent).**

8. As a novelist, when I'm working on a project, I spend time in libraries searching through archives, trying to get to know a period inside out through reading. I'd say it's research intensive and that's why it appeals to me. The main challenge is sifting through all the details and identifying parts that will conjure up the era for readers. You have to make a leap of the imagination to get inside the minds of the characters of the period. I've never been drawn to contemporary fiction. My motivation has always been to recreate life in a different time and make it vivid and authentic.

**Q: What kind of novels does the speaker write?**

**A: Historical novels (or equivalent).**

Grade 12 Type 2 listening tasks continued

9. I keep hearing new theories which support the idea that music can help you to study more efficiently. For example, some research claims that listening to the right kind of music when you study can help relax your mind, cut down on other distractions and enable you to concentrate better. Some people even say that listening to music with 60 beats per minute puts you in an alert state of mind, which can help you focus easily. I suppose this is possible, but surely anything that competes for your attention when you're trying to concentrate is a distraction.

**Q: What is the speaker's attitude to the idea that listening to music helps you study?**

**A: Sceptical/questioning/dubious (or equivalent)**

10. One of the mysteries that perplexed zoologists for a long time is why zebras have stripes. The most common theory up to now has been that the stripes make it more difficult for predators to single out an individual zebra from the herd. But it turns out that's not it. And they're not for decoration either. Like all members of the horse family, zebras are plagued by flies, which can make their lives a misery. So experiments were devised to see whether the stripes had any effect. Results have shown that plain black and plain white horses attract far more insects than two-tone zebras.

**Q: According to the passage, why do zebras have stripes?**

**A: To repel/keep away flies (or equivalent).**