

Cambridge Certificate of Proficiency in English Listening Test.
SAMPLE TEST.

*I am going to give you the instructions for this test.
I shall introduce each part of the test and give you time to look at the questions.
At the start of each piece you will hear this sound:*

— *** —

*You will hear each piece twice.
Remember, while you are listening, write your answers on the question paper. You will have
five minutes at the end of the test to copy your answers onto the separate answer sheet.*

*There will now be a pause. Please ask any questions now, because you must not speak
during the test.*

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

Now open your question paper and look at Part 1.

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

*You will hear three different extracts. For questions 1 – 6, choose the answer (A, B or C)
which fits best according to what you hear. There are two questions for each extract.*

Extract One.

PAUSE 15 SECONDS

— *** —

Strolling along a deserted beach, I saw a bottle dusted with sand and found a message curled inside. An exciting moment! But messages in bottles are not new here. The earliest dates back to eighteen sixty when ships used them to keep those on land informed of their progress. None too reliable when your ship is sinking!

But the local museum is launching a project using bottled messages, not just to promote the whereabouts of the islands and attract tourism. Islanders are being invited to include maps and information about the islands themselves. Bottles have been collected from local beaches and are, though not in the traditional sense, being recycled. Primarily and more ambitiously, the project is set to identify tidal movements. Not by science or satellite systems, but by hurling these bottles back into the sea!

The hope is that people will reply to these messages through the more traditional postal system. Islanders will gain pen pals and new visitors, and the final whereabouts of the bottles will enable scientists to track their paths.

And all this from bottles discarded on a beach!

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

— *** —

REPEAT EXTRACT ONE

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

Extract Two.

PAUSE 15 SECONDS

Presenter:

Last year, Tim Fitzgerald exhibited photographs of his family, but in the current exhibition, which he shares with two other visual artists, he focuses solely on landscapes. What's your impression of them?

Critic:

I'm not sure he has what it takes to move beyond his family. Last year's images of his nearest and dearest were very moving, weren't they – there was a wonderful close-up of his sister's face, almost like an abstract. But these landscapes... they're not impressive or particularly articulate.

Presenter:

I know he invokes the influence of several famous painters. You didn't find any of that in his landscapes?

Critic:

No. I think he **has** produced a couple of strong images, but there's no sign of them in the current show and I'm at a loss to know why. It's a very random choice. And also, four small photos in a large gallery feel very sparse. You can see it was an attempt to draw you in, but for me it backfired. You need more impact to raise the curtain on the exhibition – it's not as if it's the last room, it's the first, and you move on to other artists' works...

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

— *** —

REPEAT EXTRACT TWO

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

Extract Three.

PAUSE 15 SECONDS

— *** —

One of my own thoughts about this piece is the idea that you're letting yourself go, abandoning yourself. For me, that's certainly what happens to me. When you're really immersed in it, you're no longer self-conscious, you're absolutely the recipient of the sound. For me it's not even as if it conjures up a specific event. At one point, I was playing it all the time – in supermarket queues, walking into work – having that sound in my ears gave me a world and a space that was very different. My family got pretty fed up. Certainly my husband winces at my corny tastes. I don't know if corny's the right word, but a colleague once said to me she would have expected something less banal. I find that rather sad. OK, so it's a piece that obviously works for many other people too, but that doesn't mean to say it should be denigrated, just because you don't have to have great sophistication in music to appreciate it.

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

— *** —

REPEAT EXTRACT THREE

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

That is the end of Part 1.

Now turn to Part 2.

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

You will hear a nutritionist talking about the production and uses of mastic, a spice that is found in the Mediterranean area. For questions 7 – 15, complete the sentences with a word or short phrase.

You now have forty-five seconds in which to look at Part 2.

PAUSE 45 SECONDS

— *** —

I want to talk to you today about a spice which is not very well known outside its home territory, and that is mastic. Mastic is a resinous substance which comes from a tree of the pistachio nut family and it is one of Europe's oldest spices. In fact, in its heyday it was considered so precious that armies quite literally fought over the islands where it was grown so that their masters would have the right to control its cultivation and sale.

Let's take a look first at how mastic is produced. The mastic tree itself resembles an olive to the untrained eye but is not quite as large. In a process which is rather similar to the collection of rubber, growers cut the bark of the tree so that the tree then has to exude a sticky sap or resin to heal the wound, and this sap is mastic. The sap needs to harden in order to be of any use and strangely this only happens in the Mediterranean area. Efforts have been made in the past to transplant and cultivate the tree in other parts of the world, but so far without success.

The resin is then removed from the tree and, because it's so precious, people even pick up the dirt under the tree and ensure that every last tiny bit of mastic is harvested. The growers try to pick out any grit which might have become embedded in the mastic gum. They just use simple pins to do this; unusually for nowadays, there are no mechanical aids or gadgets to speed up the process. Everything is still done in the traditional, labour-intensive way, by hand. If you examine a small piece of mastic it will look like a white crystal, similar to sea salt. Poets have even mentioned mastic in their work, alluding to it rather romantically as 'silver tears', suggesting again how much it's valued.

Having harvested and cleaned the crystals, the growers often take the mastic from their trees, except for a small amount which they keep for their personal use, to a local co-operative, which contacts various commercial buyers and negotiates a decent price for the growers.

Now, what is mastic actually used for? In fact, its use can be traced back thousands of years. Archaeologists have found small lumps of mastic with the imprint of juvenile human teeth, suggesting that the earliest use of mastic was as a chewing gum for young people, something which still occurs today.

Nowadays it's also used as a flavouring in sweet things like biscuits and to great effect in ice cream. Its value here is that it also provides a stickier texture, which means that it takes longer to soften, a useful quality in the hot Mediterranean summers. Mastic can also be used to flavour liquids. For example, in some rural areas, small fires are lit and a few grains of

mastic dropped on the hot charcoal. Then pots are inverted on top so the clay picks up the flavour of the smoke and the mastic. Chilled water is then poured in, and when this is drunk it tastes very subtly of mastic.

Apart from its culinary uses, some mastic is also sold for other purposes. It can be used in shampoo, toothpaste and, indeed, for certain stomach ailments. In fact, it's this area that mastic producers are now looking towards to provide a wider use for their produce, now that natural herbs and spices are being investigated to provide the medical products of the future.

PAUSE 10 SECONDS

Now you will hear Part 2 again.

— *** —

REPEAT PART 2

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

That is the end of Part 2.

Now turn to Part 3.

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

You will hear a discussion in which two marine biologists, Gina Kelso and Thomas Lundman, talk about an award-winning television film they made about wildlife in Antarctica. For questions 16 – 20, choose the answer (A, B, C or D) which fits best according to what you hear.

You now have 1 minute in which to look at Part 3.

PAUSE 60 SECONDS

— *** —

Int.:

Today, we're talking to marine biologists Gina Kelso and Thomas Lundman, who you will recently have seen in their award-winning TV series about Antarctica. So, Thomas, what's it like to suddenly become a household name?

Thomas:

Well, we're being interviewed for all sorts of publications and programmes since our television series about the wildlife in Antarctica won a major award. I'm often asked if I've always been interested in marine wildlife, and I find that hard to answer. What about you, Gina?

Gina:

That's an easy one for me, Thomas. I grew up on African shores, where my father worked for an international company. I could swim by the age of four, snorkel at five. I guess I was destined for marine biology because I've always been as happy in the water as on land. I remember a particular evening when I was about eleven. It was dusk and I was snorkelling, and I came across hundreds of stingrays entwined together. It was extraordinary; another world, and that was the moment that decided me. Although I later went to school in the middle of England, I'd lie awake at night dreaming of the ocean. Fortunately, I got in to university to do zoology and went on to do research in marine biology.

Thomas:

And, like me, you've been in wildlife filmmaking for how long... about eight years now?

Gina:

Yeah, I knew it was what I wanted to do, but instead of following the normal route of joining a TV company as a researcher, I was lucky enough to be chosen to take part in that first wildlife programme we did together. Do you remember?

Thomas:

Yeah, where we made the first ever live broadcast under the sea. The practice run was very funny. I had to dive into a swimming pool and give a running commentary on some plastic plants that had been borrowed from a studio to make it look more realistic. Fortunately, the programme itself was a success and so one thing led to another after that, and we both moved more into the production side.

Gina:

And it was tough making this latest series in Antarctica, wasn't it?

Thomas:

Well, the series is introduced by a well-known naturalist, dressed in a thermal anorak with the hood drawn so tightly that you can only see his nose.

Gina:

And you get an idea of what conditions were like, but he was only the presenter – flown in to do his bit and flown back out again. We spent eight months there filming with a team of cameramen and researchers, living on a specially adapted boat.

Thomas:

I didn't think I'd stand a chance of working on the programme, because I imagined they'd be looking for rugged types and I'm more the quiet academic. So I was quite taken aback when they asked me. We went for the spring and then returned the following spring, because the winter would've been too cold. Even then, on the Antarctic peninsula it can drop to minus fifteen degrees.

Gina:

We were involved mostly with the underwater scenes. It's a lot warmer in the sea, but we still had to wear extra-thick wetsuits and thermal underwear. The thing about living in that remote research community was I missed hanging out with my friends.

Thomas:

But the Antarctic's a place of incredible beauty and even after working sixteen-hour days, there were still moments of peacefulness.

Gina:

But being with the animals for so long, we got to see things the other scientists hadn't. One guy's been studying fur seals for years – knows everything about them – but he's never seen them eat. He was thrilled when we were able to tell him about it. And if we'd had his input at the time, we would have realised the significance of what we'd seen and focused more on it.

Thomas:

Absolutely. And the highlight of the trip was the day we entered a bay carved into huge glaciers to find around forty humpback whales feeding. It was very quiet, and then we heard a soft explosion. It was the noise of the whales' blowholes. What they do is dive down, and as they start to come up again they release air bubbles from their blowholes. Then they swim round each other, trapping the krill they eat in a curtain of bubbles. So it's an extraordinarily effective piece of teamwork that really increases their feeding efficiency. We filmed them for ten days because we wanted a shot of them as they finished eating. We waited and waited and then one day they just suddenly stopped.

Int.:

And that's ...

PAUSE 10 SECONDS

Now you will hear Part 3 again.

— *** —

REPEAT PART 3

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

That is the end of Part 3.

Now turn to Part 4.

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

Part 4 consists of two tasks. You will hear five short extracts in which different people are talking about taking a gap year – the time which some young people take off from their studies to gain other experience. Look at Task 1. For questions 21 – 25, choose from the list (A – H) what each speaker did during their gap year. Now look at Task 2. For questions 26 – 30, choose from the list (A – H) which benefit of having a gap year each speaker mentions. While you listen you must complete both tasks.

You now have forty-five seconds in which to look at Part 4.

PAUSE 45 SECONDS

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Speaker One

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

I knew I'd be short of money if I didn't work before going to university, so I decided not to jet around the globe, and found a job in the nearest town instead. I had to live in because of early shifts, and only realised on about day two it meant I couldn't keep up my tennis – which was a blow, because I was a very keen player. But I got over it in the end, which just goes to show nothing's that important. Anyway, I was having too much fun with the rest of the staff to fret about it – I wonder if they're all still there? The worst part of the job was when guests complained, which they frequently did!

PAUSE 3 SECONDS

Speaker Two

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

Well, I took a gap year because I thought I hadn't seen enough of the world. I considered doing an overland trek across the Sahara, or helping out somewhere as a volunteer. Then I found a remote village in Kenya where they needed my skills – they're all football-mad there – and a Nairobi businessman agreed to pay me a living wage. I settled in OK, although I never got the hang of the language, and that year gave me some serious thinking time. I realised I didn't want to complete my course back home, even though I'd already spent quite a lot of money and time on it. It's all good experience anyway.

PAUSE 3 SECONDS

Speaker Three

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

The whole thing was a disaster from start to finish. I'd had a sort of feeling it might turn out badly. We didn't have the right training or equipment, and because there was no office back-up, we couldn't get news forwarded to our families. And the leader – well, I wonder how experienced he really was. He couldn't speak the porters' language at all. You could say our pioneering spirit was crushed by the time we got back to base camp! On the other hand, we did bond as a group, and I see a couple of them regularly and have done ever since that time. So perhaps it wasn't **all** bad.

PAUSE 3 SECONDS

Speaker Four

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

I know some agencies will organise your gap year and sort out, say, working for a charity, but I'd much rather do what I did – just go off on the spur of the moment and see where you end up. It was absolutely brilliant, even though it took all the money I'd saved up for it – the fare and the hotels and eating in restaurants were to blame for that. At least I know I can cope on my own now and that's a new thing for me. Sadly, I haven't managed to keep up with the people I met in all those different cultures – I'm not surprised though – that's life.

PAUSE 3 SECONDS

Speaker Five

PAUSE 2 SECONDS

I was told to stick to the script whether it was in French, German or Spanish. People don't even ask many questions – it got quite boring after a while, because I felt there wasn't any real communication between me and them. And if it's raining, you get wet just hopping on and off the coach. I didn't have high hopes before I started, although it certainly was a good way of earning some much-needed cash, and there were some nice people at head office, but in the end I did wonder if I couldn't have found something a bit more inspiring. How often *do* people get a year off in their lifetime?

PAUSE 10 SECONDS

Now you will hear Part 4 again.

— *** —

REPEAT PART 4

PAUSE 5 SECONDS

That is the end of Part 4.

There will now be a pause of five minutes for you to copy your answers onto the separate answer sheet. Be sure to follow the numbering of all the questions. I shall remind you when there is one minute left, so that you are sure to finish in time.

PAUSE 4 MINUTES

You have one more minute left.

PAUSE 1 MINUTE

That is the end of the test. Please stop now. Your supervisor will now collect all the question papers and answer sheets.