

AURAL COMPREHENSION

MINI LESSONS IN LISTENING COMPETENCY

The following listening comprehension exercises were developed by students in the Brigham Young University-Hawaii Campus BATESL program.

“Eggs Up”

By Mark James

There are many different ideas for short listening exercises. One idea is the use of recipes. One must be careful about the choice however. The recipe must not require too many ingredients, six being a good limit. It may prove much more difficult for students who are not familiar with cooking to remember the content. One must also bear in mind that students in some countries may not be familiar with many of the ingredients used in America. When teaching on location in foreign countries, it might be wise to use local recipes that require ingredients with which the students are familiar.

When teaching English in the United States, recipes may also serve as a cultural lesson in American cuisine. One such recipe is printed below.

The instructor should read the recipe, followed by several questions. These questions may be true or false, multiple choice, or fill in. They should be phrased in such a way that they do not parrot the phrasing of the listening exercise so they test the overall comprehension of the student and his ability to draw conclusions.

Instructor reads:

“This is a recipe to make enough Egg Nog for six people.

“6 eggs, beaten

“1/4 cup granulated sugar

“4 1/4 cups cold milk

“nutmeg.

“First combine the beaten eggs with the sugar, and beat for one minute. Add cold milk and stir well. Then pour the mixture into six glasses and top with a pinch of nutmeg on each.”

The instructor should now read the questions.

“Question One. In this recipe, how many eggs are used? (a) one-half dozen, (b) one dozen, (c) two dozen, or (d) six dozen.

“Question Two. Egg Nog is most likely to be served in (a) plates, (b) cups, (c) bowls, or (d) saucers.

“Question Three. Approximately how much nutmeg is put on each serving? (a) a teaspoon, (b) more than a teaspoon, or (c) less than a teaspoon.

“Question Four. True or False: Egg Nog is sweet.”

“I Did It”

By Jon Williams

The instructor should distribute a sheet of regular sized typing paper (approximately 8½ by 11 inches) to each student. Then he/she should start to read. Caution the students that the instructions will be read only once.

Instructor reads:

“Step One. Fold your sheet of paper into thirds.

“Step Two. Make a two inch vertical line in the middle of the top third of the piece of paper.

“Step Three. In the second third of the paper, about three inches from the right hand edge, make another vertical two-inch line. Join the two ends of that line with a semicircle to the right of the line.

“Step Four. Repeat step two, only this time in the second third of the paper.

“Step Five. Repeat step three, only this time begin with another vertical line two inches from the left hand edge.

“Step Six. Repeat step two, only this time in the bottom third of the paper.

“Step Seven. Again repeat step two, two inches to the right of the previous line.

“Step Eight. Make a straight horizontal line about two inches long. The center of the line should touch the top of the line you drew in step seven.

When completed your drawing should look like this.

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DID
IT**

“Keep Tuned”

By Jonathan S. Durrett

This exercise was written for a group of Japanese students studying English at BYU-Hawaii Campus. It follows the conventional form of reading followed by questions. A creative teacher will be able to write many exercises similar to this one in order to test and hone aural skills. The difficulty level of the questions can be tailored to the abilities of the students. To be successful, readings should be kept topical and meaningful.

1. Tell the class to listen very carefully to the following reading. Explain to them that this is typical of something they might hear on

television. Tell them to be prepared to answer questions

“Good afternoon, television viewers. For your Saturday afternoon TV viewing pleasure, at 1.00 there will be live tennis coverage from Wimbledon. See Chris Evert defend her World Championship crown in her exciting finals match against Britain’s Virginia Wade.

“At 3:00 it will be John Wayne in *True Grit*.

“At 4:30 it will be *Wild Kingdom*, where we will be learning all about the American grizzly bear.

“At 5:30 Coach Dick Tomey will host highlights from the University of Hawaii-Idaho football game.

“And at 6:00 we will join Barbara Tanabe and the *Evening News*.”

2. Ask the following questions:

“A) What program can we watch to learn about the daily happenings or world affairs?

“B) What time is the news?

“C) What program can we watch to see a movie?

“D) Which programs can we watch to see a sporting event?

“E) What program can we watch to learn about the American wilderness?

“F) What time does the *Wild Kingdom* come on?”

3. Reread the selection, explaining that your questions will be more detailed after the second reading. Then ask the following questions.

“A) What is done at Wimbledon?

“B) At what time can you watch the Western?

“C) What program can we watch to see a pretaped sports event?

“D) What does Barbara Tanabe do?

4. Discuss the questions and give a final reading.