

EAP Listening Exam Preparation

Listening Exam Audio Script

Tutor (male voice): Hello, Emma. You're a bit late this morning.

Emma: Yes, sorry, ⁰I thought your room was on the next floor. You've moved office, haven't you?

Tutor: That's right. Haven't I emailed you my new office room number?

Emma: No, I don't think so, but that's okay, I saw the notice on your old office door and finally found your new room.

Tutor: Oh, great. Anyway, let's see what you've got. Have you done the primary research for this ¹business studies project yet?

Emma: Yes, I have, I gathered all the data I need. But I'm afraid I haven't finished writing the results up yet.

Tutor: ¹That's okay, because that's what I want us to talk about today. We can discuss the different sections of your project report in detail. Now, what was your final title?

Emma: (reading) It's: *The Performance of Small Business Start-ups in the City*.

Tutor: Right. Can you just remind me how you went about this research project?

Emma: Sure. ²I found ten small businesses which had opened this year and interviewed the owners.

Tutor: And how did you choose the ten?

Emma: Well, that was difficult. In the end ³I went for variety – a sandwich shop, a stall in the market, a taxi firm, a picture framer; all sorts, really. I wanted to have a good mix of service and product businesses.

Tutor: So have you transcribed all these interviews?

Emma: No, I'm afraid I haven't. I did start, but it takes too long to write out a thirty minute interview.

Tutor: Well, ⁴I think you can now see one of the drawbacks of this research method. It's easy to be overwhelmed by information from interviews. So how will you organise your findings?

Emma: I want to look at what factors they all have in common, and I thought of a few, including previous experience, capital available, expectations, and performance. In other words, ⁵I will look at how their business plan compares with their results in the first six months.

Tutor: I'm surprised they were all willing to talk about their performance. Businesses aren't usually keen to tell you how they're doing.

Emma: ⁶When I interviewed them, we agreed not to use their real names in the report, so, for example, it's just *Firm A, a taxi service*.

Tutor: Fair enough. So what conclusions have you been able to draw from your research so far?

- Emma:** Well, I realised it wasn't easy to generalise. But I did ⁷divide the survey participants into 3 groups, ⁸based on their overall performance. Of course, I can't say that our survey is definitive - it's only a small one - but one thing which I saw really clearly is that there seems to be a strong link between ⁹previous experience and ¹⁰business success. For example, the sandwich shop owner, who's doing really well, had previously worked in a small business for two years.
- Tutor:** Ok, this sounds good. And do you think you'll be able to finish this report by the deadline? ¹¹You've only got 5 days left and it seems you've got quite a lot of writing to do...
- Emma:** Oh, I'm absolutely certain; I'll finish on time.
- Tutor:** Ok, great. Please remember to ¹²include the interview questions, won't you?
- Emma:** Of course.
- Tutor:** Well, I guess that's all for today. I must say your research sounds really interesting.

SECTION TWO

Mark (restaurant manager): Hello. I'm Mark and I'm the restaurant manager here. I'm going to take you all on a tour of the premises in a minute, but before that just a few words of introduction.

We have a good reputation for fast and friendly ¹³service, because that's exactly what our customers are looking for when they come to eat here. So, what should you do when customers first come in? Any ideas? Well, you greet them with a ¹⁴smile! Even if it's late and you're tired, you still make them feel welcome. Remember, 'a smile goes a long way'! Don't let someone sit at a table without greeting them and giving them the ¹⁵menu. Speaking of which.... When you go home today you're all going to take a ¹⁶menu with you, and I want you to study it so you know it inside out, all 32 main dishes and 12 desserts! You must also remember the wide variety of hot drinks and the 8 kinds of ¹⁷cold beverages that are on the menu.

Now, a few words about taking the orders. When you come into work the ¹⁸first thing you do is go into the kitchen and have a word with the cook. We offer two specials every day, and you need to know what they are and what they're made of. In fact, ¹⁹you need to know what's in all of the dishes we serve. People may say, 'Oh, I can't eat anything with nuts', or maybe they're allergic to dairy products, so your job is to help them choose something they can eat. Some of the Italian names on the menu may confuse customers, so again you've got to explain what everything is.

Well, if you've worked in restaurants before you probably know the most difficult thing is coping with a sudden rush. If ten people walk in off the street we can't feed them instantly. So you ²⁰make it clear that their meals may take twenty minutes to arrive, and then they won't moan. Then when the food is ready you apologise again for the delay – ²¹apologies don't cost anything!

Just one more thing before I show you round – dress code. Personal appearance is very important in a job like this. Everyone will be given a little badge with your name to show you're on duty. This also helps our customers to identify their server more easily. Although we don't ask you to wear a uniform, we do expect everyone to wear dark colours: that's a dark shirt and trousers for men, and a dark blouse and a skirt or long trousers for women. ²²Absolutely no jeans, even if they are black. You should also remember that you will be on your feet all the time, and to make sure you have sensible footwear, but no matter how comfortable they are ²³you are not allowed to wear trainers. It's all part of looking professional.

SECTION THREE

Tutor: Okay, so today we're going to take a look at how the Internet is affecting cultures around the world. In particular, I want you to consider the question of Westernisation – is the Internet a one-way medium for Westernisation? Maybe Lucy, would you like to start us off?

Lucy: Well, I don't think the Internet is a force for good, really. I'd say it's causing the domination of other cultures by the West. Most of the information on the net is English and a lot of it is just popular culture– it makes the ²¹young people who use the net in other countries forget about their own cultures and try to imitate the West.

Simon: Well, I agree that it exposes people around the world to a lot of Western pop culture, but that's inevitable when so much of it is in the English language. But it's not just pop culture – ²⁴there is also academic information out there. I mean, most scientific information on the net is written in English, too. But I disagree that it's a bad thing. ²⁵There are obvious benefits from having this greater worldwide sense of sharing in a common global culture. You know, more people can agree about important things like human rights and so on.

Lucy: But that's a different thing, Simon. ²²I agree that common values are a good thing, but they don't have to be spread exclusively by the Internet. Besides, it helps to promote Western culture at the expense of other cultures, which is unfair – ²³it makes western businesses stronger at the expense of local businesses too.

Simon: That's true, Lucy, but unfairness does not just come from the Internet. ²⁶Unfair advantages are a part of life. Inequality was there before the Internet, so the Internet itself is not the reason that non-western cultures are under pressure.

Lucy: Yeah, but, I mean, it's not the only language on the net, I know, but there's so much English, it's virtually an English-language environment, so you have no choice but to use English most of the time. ²⁷People around the world think that they've got to learn English just to get ahead. English speakers, and Western culture in general, get an unfair advantage.

Tutor: Simon, You have a lot of friends who don't speak English as a first language – what do they think about this?

Simon: Well, I've never heard them complain. ²⁸They use the net in English and they make websites in their own languages. It's not like Lucy seems to think - they don't just accept Western culture passively. They just use the language, that's all. Perhaps being bilingual even gives them an advantage.

Lucy: I'm sorry, Simon, ²⁹I doubt if the majority of your friends see it that way, to be honest. The fact is you've probably never actually asked them. It's not as simple as you seem to think at all. ³⁰It's a serious matter for now and the future.

Tutor: Okay, you two, enough for now. That was very interesting and... (fade out)

SECTION FOUR

Speaker: Good morning, everybody. Today I'm going to speak about a very topical issue, the need for renewable energy. Energy experts predict that by the end of this century we will have used all of the ³¹world's coal and gas reserves, reserves that took 200 million years to develop.

With fossil fuel reserves running low, the search is on for alternative sources of energy. ³²The use of renewable energy is nothing new, however. In 1086, for example, there were actually 5,600 watermills in England each generating 2kw of energy. With the advent of cheap coal these watermills fell into disuse though. But now, there has been a revival of old ideas, and certain renewable fuel sources are making a comeback.

³³ **Wind turbines are now a common sight in several European countries.** Some people say the turbines are ugly and cause 'visual pollution'. To minimise their visual impact they can be located out at sea as long as the sea is not too deep. One major drawback though is, obviously, that when there's no wind, no electricity is generated.

Tidal flow schemes are another method of power generation. ³⁴ **An example of tidal flow is the Gulf Stream.** Its currents flow from Florida to the North West of Scotland at speeds of 1.5 metres per second. There are problems, however, converting this kinetic energy into electricity.

Like tidal flow schemes, tidal barrages harness the power of the sea. They are built in coastal areas where there is a large variation between high and low tides. Tidal barrages are large dams that fill with sea water when the tide comes in. When the tide goes out the water is released, and as it escapes it generates electricity.

³⁵ **Unfortunately, the number of locations where tidal barrages can be built is limited** since they can have ³⁶ **a considerable impact on local marine ecosystems.**

There has also been a regeneration of interest in the use of biofuels. These fuels come from a wide range of materials from wood to plant or animal waste. Firewood is a good source of energy ³⁷ **but the wood does have to be cut and transported, and then the trees need to be replanted.** Methane gas can be produced from plant and animal waste materials but production rates are slow. Bio diesel, for use in transport and machinery, can be produced in several ways, for example from maize or from the by-products of wheat production. The potential for biofuel production is great. At the moment, however, there are problems as ³⁸ **current production levels fall far short of the levels required to replace fossil fuels.**

In terms of solar power, ³⁹ **a large amount of capital is required to set up a solar power system.** At the moment photovoltaic cells are still not very efficient at converting solar power to electricity. ⁴⁰ **It takes 5 to 6 years for such a system to become cost-effective.** If these cells could be made more efficient, however, experts have calculated that 4% of the earth's desert areas could supply all of the world's energy needs.