

Listening and Reading

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes

LISTENING

Task 1

For items **1-10** listen to a business journalist talking about how businesses are increasingly having to accept responsibility for the impacts that result from their activities and decide whether the statements (**1-10**) are **TRUE (A)**, or **FALSE (B)** according to the text you hear. You will hear the text **TWICE**.

1. CSR is a department in a company responsible for sustainable development and climate change.
A. True **B. False**
2. During Industrial Revolution in Europe companies were more ethical and environmentally-friendly than now.
A. True **B. False**
3. There were no immediate victims among people as the tanker went aground in a remote territory.
A. True **B. False**
4. The tanker spilled about 11 million gallons of oil.
A. True **B. False**
5. The accident affected all indigenous people of Alaska.
A. True **B. False**
6. The damage to visiting tourism was as big as to recreational fishing in Alaska.
A. True **B. False**
7. People who suffered in the accident got their compensation in 2008.
A. True **B. False**
8. Initially the court ruled the company to pay 5 billion dollars.
A. True **B. False**
9. The accident decreased the settlement of people living in the area.

A. True

B. False

10. Modern companies are implementing risk management strategies to prevent critical events.

A. True

B. False

Task 2

For items **11-15** listen to the conversation. Choose the correct answer (**A, B** or **C**) to answer questions **11-15**. You will hear the text **only ONCE**.

11. What is NOT TRUE about Ben's friends?

A. They've been living in France about 10-12 years.

B. They have moved to the countryside.

C. They have chosen south-east of the country.

12. What do Ben's friends do for a living?

A. Buy and sell houses.

B. Run a chain of small hotels.

C. Organise walking holidays.

13. Ben's friends' business is

A. seasonal.

B. extremely profitable.

C. unsuccessful.

14. Ben thinks his friends fitted in well as soon as

A. they got to know people in the area.

B. they gave birth to their baby.

C. attended all the festivals and events in the area.

15. What changes have the couple brought to the area they live now?

A. Renovation of bars and restaurants.

B. More visitors.

C. Free food on a regular basis.

INTEGRATED LISTENING AND READING

Task 3

Read the text below, then listen to an interview with an international student doing his Master's degree in Russia. You will notice that some ideas coincide and some differ in them. Answer questions **16-25** by choosing **A** if the idea is expressed in **both** materials, **B** if it can be found **only in the reading text**, **C** if it can be found **only in the audio-recording**, and **D** if **neither** of the materials expresses the idea.

Now you have **10 minutes to read the text.**

International Students Tell Us What It's Like to Study in Russia

Back in July 2022 I was lucky enough to go on a week-long trip to Russia to attend the *Island 10-22* higher education conference in Moscow, spending half of the trip in Moscow and the other half in St Petersburg. In both cities I met and chatted with a diverse range of international students from different countries. Why did they choose to study in Russia, and what advice would they give to international students considering it? Read on to find out what they had to say on their experiences.

So, first things first: why choose Russia rather than any other study destination? What does Russia offer that other countries don't? One major attraction mentioned by several students was the diversity of the country. For example, Osei Richard from Ghana told us: "I wanted to meet new people, it's a new experience and a new culture. I really liked Russian culture, and Russians seem to be nice and frank people. The education is also one of the best for me."

Nawar, from Syria, said he was attracted by the extra resources and investment into scientific research in Russia, explaining, "I decided to go abroad to have better opportunities. I chose Russia in particular because it offers more opportunities for students like me, and because life in general is cheaper in Russia, compared to Europe or America. And they also provide scholarships to international students, so I can study here for free."

We heard very mixed opinions on how affordable it is to study in Russia. Osei Richard found Moscow very expensive, describing people in the capital as “crazy about money”, whereas in St Petersburg, Sarah and Mathias from the US said they found it very affordable and less stressful. Himanshu, from India, who is pursuing a PhD at the Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology, said, “The only problem is housing, especially in Moscow, which is very costly. But the university provides dormitories at a very low price, which is fantastic.”

If languages aren't your forte and you'd prefer to study in Russia in English, the good news is that many universities now offer English-taught courses, especially at postgraduate level. But if you do study in English, how easy is it to get by in Russia with little to no knowledge of Russian? Nawar told us: “When I came here, I couldn't speak Russian, and I didn't meet many people who spoke English. But people were very helpful and tried to help me in every step during my first days. They were generous and very kind.” Himanshu, from India, added: “After six months I knew the basics to communicate with people, such as how to ask for directions. For everyday life that was sufficient.”

Now listen to the interview and then do the tasks (questions 16-25), comparing the text above and the interview. You will hear the text TWICE.

16. The student thinks people in Moscow are obsessed with money.
17. The student thinks people in Russia are unsmiling.
18. The student chose to study in Russia to understand the Russian mentality.
19. The student thinks that Russians are helpful.
20. The student chose to study in Russia because it was affordable.
21. International students always have to pay for their education in Russia.
22. International students, bad at languages, can study in English in Russia.
23. The Russian language reflects the Russian way of thinking.
24. It took a student half a year to learn how to navigate in basic Russian.
25. The student thinks Russia is similar to Canada.

READING

Task 4

Read the text and answer questions **26-40** below.

The Sound of Silence

After realising how much I talked and interrupted other people, I decided I needed to make a drastic change. Starting to listen changed my relationships – and made me happier. (Ioan Jones)

(A) I like to talk as much as the next man – and men like to talk. A now-famous study by the University of California, noted that, in a series of recorded public conversations between men and women, 48 interruptions occurred, 46 of which came from men. Men in public spaces, according to research, talk more than women, talk over women, and talk down to women, contributing to the rise of neologisms such as manologuing, bropropriating and mansplaining. So, aware that men tend to dominate and disrupt, aware that the world at large feels unbearably loud, aware that I, too, often add to that noise, I decided to learn to keep my mouth shut – starting in the general hellscape of social media.

(B) I have often felt compelled, on seeing an idiotic post, to point out its idiocy, as though I alone had noticed it. It's a compulsion encouraged by the reward-based models of social media platforms. Users think of an interesting thought or response (trigger), send a post (behaviour), receive likes and re-posts (reward). Dopamine arrives as part of the feedback loop and we repeat the cycle. I've had social media for the majority of my life. It seemed obvious that, as I slouched into my mid-30s, I needed a cleanse.

(C) Talking less in real life proved a tougher ordeal. My family are rough around the edges, my friends are on the wrong side of unruly: the people I love seldom get each other to finish sentences. My communication coach told me that the compulsion to talk often stems from the desire to escape silence, "Most people speak to avoid discomfort – not because they have something essential to say." That rang true: the urge to avoid awkward silences has always felt urgent. "You express yourself, which is good, but then feel the need to defend what you have just expressed, then defend that against an imagined response, then apologise for talking

too much, then apologise for apologising.” She then offered advice: “People who can tolerate uncomfortable silences are typically better listeners. Be an active listener”.

(D) That meant practice, embracing real-world silence despite every fibre of my British being pushing me to discuss the weather. I noticed two responses to my newfound silence: most people ranted – bless them – or I faced unimaginable awkwardness. I stood by a bus stop with my mum’s friend and lasted roughly 20 seconds until I finally broke: “Weather’s weird, isn’t it?” I said. I’m still practising. Suffering awkward silences has been an odd learning curve: horrific at first, only slightly less horrific later on, still horrific now but perhaps not as horrific.

(E) Talking less is not just about limiting the compulsion to talk. It’s also about changing the ways in which we converse. One of my main problems was conversational narcissism: the art of bringing every discussion back to me. I’m very good at it. I started to notice my interruptions, the creative ways I managed to bring the conversation back to my favourite topic: me. I noticed how, instead of listening, my mind would embark on wild and weird adventures, fighting against the odds to relate everything back to my experience. My wife recalled the time that I said, to my embarrassment: “That reminds me of me.”

(F) I started practising more active listening. Active listening has become a buzzword, abused by droves of middle managers, corporate gurus and lifestyle coaches. Listening, to them, depends on the right sort of nod, mirrored questions and choreographed body language, always in pursuit of a goal: to make a sale, gain a promotion, secure a date, and so on. It is listening as performance. Emphasis remains on the outcome, not the process. But active listening, in its initial form, focuses on the talker.

(G) All my efforts have not been fruitless. A couple of months passed and I noticed that my contributions at work have become more impactful and my appetite for collaboration has increased. My wife and I, after an initial unnerving period, in which she found my quiet vaguely haunting, now seem to communicate in more fruitful ways, largely based on my conscious use of support rather than shift responses. “I appreciate you asking more questions,” she said. I have found, in general, with friends and family and strangers, that the compulsion to talk has reduced, the itch to interrupt has lessened, the capacity to listen has grown. And the rest, as Hamlet said, is silence.

Questions 26-40

In which part of the text is the following mentioned?

26. a personal tendency to prolong remarks in order to justify them
27. fewer but more thoughtful remarks that produced stronger effects
28. expressions emerging from gender dominated interactions
29. a popular term being overused in professional and self-help contexts
30. the same imperfection common among relatives and companions
31. thoughts often wandering toward finding personal connections
32. feeling less urge to speak over others and being better able to pay attention
33. a resolution to speak less beginning with online platforms
34. opposite reaction to one's quietness
35. a mechanism that encourages repeated engagement online
36. a style of interaction often centered on oneself
37. an urge of immediate response to online content
38. data showing the frequency of conversation disruptions
39. a suggestion that excessive speech may be driven by unease rather than necessity
40. resisting a cultural impulse to talk about trivial topics

TRANSFER ALL YOUR ANSWERS TO YOUR ANSWER SHEET