

# Chapter 2

# Listening Comprehension



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## 1. The Listening Comprehension Exam

### Need to Know:

The Leaving Cert Spanish Listening Comprehension exam lasts **40 minutes**. Higher and Ordinary Level candidates listen to the same passage, but the exam questions are very different.

In both levels **all questions are asked in English and must be answered in English**.

Do **not** write with a **pencil**.

The distribution and percentage of the marks for the Listening Comprehension exam varies depending on the level taken. See the following tables:

LEAVING CERTIFICATE HIGHER LEVEL		
LISTENING COMPREHENSION EXAMINATION	80 marks (20%)	40 minutes

LEAVING CERTIFICATE ORDINARY LEVEL		
LISTENING COMPREHENSION EXAMINATION	100 marks (25%)	40 minutes

The examination consists of **SEVEN SECTIONS**:

1. Anuncio
2. Diálogo
3. Diálogo
4. Descriptivo
5. Descriptivo
6. El tiempo
7. Una noticia

Each part is played **three times**.

The pauses after some segments and the sections are clearly marked in your exam paper. They are designed to provide you with enough time to think and write your answers. Use the pauses to get ready for the next question.



### Preparation:

- **Practise** a little bit **everyday**.  
Listening is probably the language skill which needs most concentration. You will improve only through lots of regular practice.
- **Be persistent and patient** and you will see progress.
- It is difficult to understand a word you do not know, therefore you should **increase your vocabulary**:
  - Listen and read the **transcripts** at the same time, and double-check words that you don't understand by using the transcripts.
  - **Replay** and look for new words and expressions.
- Pay attention to **pronunciation**. Match the words you hear with their written form.
- If you struggle with this section of the exam, it is advisable to start by listening to audios you can mostly understand and gradually increase the difficulty.



Go to [mentorbooks.ie/resources](https://www.mentorbooks.ie/resources) for links to a wide variety of sources to practise your listening.

## Exam Strategies:

### Apply listening strategies:

- 1. Warm up before you listen! Read the title of the passage and the questions** before the audio starts. By doing so you will have an idea of what to expect in the exam and can **anticipate some vocabulary**.
2. Do you have any **previous knowledge** of the topic you are listening to? Use it! You will then be able to **predict** some words or expressions likely to be used.
- 3. Underline keywords in the questions.** This will give you an idea of **which words you should pay attention to:**
  - a. **Where?** = you are expecting to hear a place, a city, any location.
  - b. **Who?** = you may look for a person, a group of people, teenagers, etc.
  - c. **Why?** = a reason, an explanation, etc.
  - d. **How many?** = a quantity, a number.
  - e. **When?** = a date, a time, numbers, parts of the day, a moment in time, a season of the year, etc.
  - f. **What?** = think of vocabulary related to the topic.
4. You don't have to understand every single word. It is important **to focus on what you can understand** and not on what you can't understand. If you don't understand one or two words, don't panic. Keep listening, **the words you can recognise will help you fill the missing information**. You can **guess** new words and unfamiliar expressions **from the context**.
5. Even if some listening excerpts may appear initially challenging, remember that the difficulty is always **in the question not the text**.

## Techniques for succeeding in the Listening Comprehension exam:

- You will listen to every passage three times.
  - **First listening: Don't write** the answers during the first listening. Instead, listen actively and **take notes**. Try to understand the general idea and context.
  - **Second listening:** Now, you will have more time and information to write the answers.
  - **Third listening:** Check your answers and make any necessary changes.
- Attempt **all** questions. Never leave a blank. If you can't find an answer, try to make an educated guess.
- Always **write as much information** as you can, especially if the question states 'Give full details'. You will not be penalised for writing extra words.
- Be specific** with your answers, always include details: **short curly** hair, **beautiful narrow** road (not just *hair* or *road*).
- Revise weather and weather forecast vocabulary**, as you already know it will be in the exam. (See page 113, Weather Vocabulary.)  
Again, be specific: strong winds **from the north**.

## Common mistakes made in the exam:

- Writing down the **first thing** you hear.
- Misunderstanding the questions due to **not reading carefully**.
- Omitting** information.
- Not being **specific** in your answers.
- Answering in Spanish.
- Not translating **Spanish words** such as *patio*, *tortilla*, *siesta*, *fiesta*.
- Literal translation:** *clases particulares* = grinds (**not** particular classes)  
*vagón* = carriage (**not** wagon)  
*colegio* = school (**not** college = universidad)

See page 185, False Friends.

## 2. Listening Comprehension Practice

Put into practice **the exam strategies and techniques given on pages 82 and 83.**

- In this chapter there are **two Sample Listening Comprehension Exams** to practise. You will learn how to answer exam questions and how to provide the current amount of detail.
- Some questions will require you to **write a number of words**.
- Other questions will need **a sentence** for an answer.
- For some questions, you may be asked to **discriminate** from a lot of non-relevant information.
- The official exams may not specify the amount of detail you need to write. Aim to provide **as much as you can**.



Go to [mentorbooks.ie/resources](https://mentorbooks.ie/resources) to check the **Marking Schemes**.

- The Marking Schemes will help you to identify as clearly as possible how marks are allocated in **Sample Exam 1** and **Sample Exam 2**. These Marking Schemes reflect how marks could possibly be allocated in an official exam.
- You should try to **answer the questions first**, then check and compare your answers.
- **Reflect** on why you got marks or lost them based on all the recommendations given.
- Remember that the **Marking Schemes** show some possible answers, but any equivalent alternative will be accepted.
- The **transcripts** are provided for **Sample Exam 1** on pages 93-99 and for **Sample Exam 2** on pages 106-112. You can see how the sections where you can find the answers have been highlighted.

### 3. Sample Exam 1

#### 1. Anuncio

##### Exam:

This should be played **three times** right through with a **long pause after the SECOND hearing.**

**UNA APP QUE CANCELA AUTOMÁTICAMENTE LAS SUSCRIPCIONES  
(AN APP WHICH CANCELS ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS AUTOMATICALLY)**

- (a) **Why** do platforms offer a free trial period?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (b) **What** problem do clients face when the free service month ends?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (c) **What** will people be able to do with this new app? **Give three details.**  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (d) **Who** could save money with this app?  
\_\_\_\_\_

##### Exam technique:

- 1. Read the title of the Listening Comprehension and the accompanying questions. The title is given in English also.**

Do you know anything about this topic? Cancellations of services online? Free trials? It's very possible that you or people you know have used a free trial period for some kind of service. Brainstorm your ideas.

- 2. What can you anticipate after reading questions (a), (b), (c) and (d)? Some words or some ideas? Underline or highlight the key words.**

Here are some general suggestions for this **Anuncio**:

- (a) **Why?** If you have some knowledge about it, you will be able to predict some answers for question (a) and if you haven't, you can still guess some vocabulary.
- (b) **What?** You may have experienced what happened. If not, think of potential problems.

- (c) **What?** Study the title: ‘cancels all subscriptions automatically’. Now, listen carefully, you need to provide two details and that means you are expected to write more specific information in addition to what you can understand from the title.
- (d) **Who?** The answer refers to types of people. Think of vocabulary to describe personality.

Compare **your** predictions with the **suggested predictions** offered at the end of Sample Exam 1, page 92.

- 3. **Listen three times** and **answer the questions** following the recommendations and tips on pages 82 and 83.
- 4. **Check** your answers with the **Marking Scheme** and **read the transcript, listening simultaneously to the audio.**
- 5. Write down any **new words and expressions** and add them to your notes.



## 2. Diálogo

### Exam:

This should be played **three times**: first right through, then in two segments with a **long pause after each segment**, and finally, right through again.

**ALEIX PUIG, CONCURSANTE DE MASTERCHEF**  
(ALEIX PUIG MASTERCHEF CONTESTANT)

- (a) **What** happened two months ago? **Give full details.**

---

- (b) **What** is Aleix going to do with the money he won?

---

- (c) Mention **what** Aleix usually does in his personal life. **Give four details.**

---

**PAUSE**

(d) **What** does sport mean to Aleix?

---

(e) **What** is Aleix doing in July and August?

---

### Exam technique:

#### 1. Read the title of the Listening Comprehension and the accompanying questions.

Have you heard of this TV programme? Do you like cooking? What are these shows like? What are the contestants like? Brainstorm your ideas.

#### 2. What can you **anticipate** after reading questions (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e)?

Some **words or some ideas**? Underline or highlight the **key words**.

All of the key words here are **what**. So you should focus on what Aleix does, likes, thinks, will do, did, etc.

Here there are some general suggestions for this Diálogo:

- (a) Something important happened in the past, related to the Masterchef competition – you know he won the competition when you read question (b).
- (b) Possible plans he has for the future now that he has some money.
- (c) The words ‘usually’ and ‘personal life’ will probably lead you to vocabulary on daily routine, hobbies, habits, etc.
- (d) Feelings, sensations, reactions that sport can have on Aleix.
- (e) You can expect to listen to a selection of activities, maybe specific to summertime.

Compare your predictions with the suggestions offered at the end of Sample Exam 1, page 92.

#### 3. Listen three times and answer the questions following the recommendations and tips on pages 82 and 83.

#### 4. Check your answers with the **Marking Schemes** and read the **transcript**, listening simultaneously to the **audio**.

#### 5. Write down any **new words and expressions** and add them to your notes.



Go to [mentorbooks.ie/resources](http://mentorbooks.ie/resources) for suggested Marking Schemes.





### 3. Diálogo

Before listening and while listening, apply the exam strategies and techniques from pages 82 and 83.

This should be played **three times**: first right through, then in two segments with a **long pause after each segment**, and finally, right through again

#### **ROSA MENÉNDEZ, LA PRIMERA MUJER PRESIDENTA DEL CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVESTIGACIONES CIENTÍFICAS**

(ROSA MENÉNDEZ, FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT OF THE SUPERIOR COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH)

(a) What helps Rosa manage the Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas?

\_\_\_\_\_

(b) How do centres outside of Madrid view the central Headquarters of the Institution?

\_\_\_\_\_

(c) Why is research so important? **Give full details.**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**PAUSE**

(d) What is the percentage of female scientists working at this institution?

\_\_\_\_\_

(e) Which research results are important in Spain and why?

(i) Which? \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Why? \_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. Descriptivo

Before listening and while listening, apply the exam strategies and techniques from pages 82 and 83.

This will be played **three times**: first right through, then in two segments with a **long pause after each segment**, and finally, right through again.

#### **BULNES ES PROBABLEMENTE UNA DE LAS ALDEAS MÁS REMOTAS DE ESPAÑA**

(BULNES IS PROBABLY ONE OF THE MOST REMOTE VILLAGES OF SPAIN)

(a) Give **two details** about the location of Bulnes.

---

(b) How can you access the village?

---



---

PAUSE

(c) What feelings will people experience in this high mountain village?

---

(d) What can you expect to see, eat, do when you visit Bulnes? **Give full details.**

(i) To see (**two** details): \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) To eat: \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) To do: \_\_\_\_\_



## 5. Descriptivo

Before listening and while listening, apply the exam strategies and techniques from pages 82 and 83.

This should be played **three times**: first right through, then in two segments with a **long pause after each segment**, and finally, right through again.

### ELEGIR UN MÁSTER O UN POSGRADO

(CHOOSING A MASTERS OR POSTGRADUATE COURSE)

- (a) What do you have to consider when looking for a postgraduate course? **Give three details.**

---

---

- (b) What is important when choosing a **centre** to study a postgraduate course? **Give two details.**

---

---

**PAUSE**

- (c) What should you expect from the admission process? **Give three details.**

---

---

- (d) What else will increase the value of your Masters?

---



## 6. El Tiempo

Before listening and while listening, apply the exam strategies and techniques from pages 82 and 83.

This should be played **three times** right through with a **long pause after the SECOND hearing.**

(a) What is said about temperatures this weekend? **Give full details.**

---

(b) What will conditions be like in Galicia? **Give full details.**

---

(c) What is the weather forecast for the Balearic Islands? **Give full details.**

---



## 7. Una Noticia

Before listening and while listening, apply the exam strategies and techniques from pages 82 and 83.

This should be played **three times**: first right through, then in two segments with a **long pause after each segment**, and finally, right through again.

### LA POLICÍA DE BARCELONA REEMPLAZA LA ROPA DE LOS BAÑISTAS SI SE LA ROBAN EN LA PLAYA

(BARCELONA POLICE REPLACE SWIMMERS' CLOTHING IF STOLEN AT THE BEACH)

(a) How many kits have been given to victims of theft and what do they contain?

(i) \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) \_\_\_\_\_

**PAUSE**

(b) What do the police say about Barcelona?

---

(c) What are the police doing to improve crime control? **Give full details.**

---

(d) What else is the police putting effort into?

---

## Suggested Predictions for Sample Exam 1:

Compare your predictions with the predictions given below.

### 1. ANUNCIO: UNA APP QUE CANCELA AUTOMÁTICAMENTE LAS SUSCRIPCIONES

(AN APP WHICH CANCELS ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS AUTOMATICALLY)

By reading the title and questions, you can guess that there are problems with free trials services and this app may solve them.

How? Question (d) suggests saving money. What does this app offer for cancelling subscriptions and saving money? The questions will help you to anticipate the vocabulary and content. For example:

- (a) **Why?** To make sure you like the service, the service is good, it's worth the money, etc.
- (b) **What?** They don't cancel because they forget, they still get the service, they continue paying, they will lose the service, they don't want the service anymore
- (c) **What?** As described in the title, it is probably an app which will cancel their subscriptions automatically. But, how? Using new technologies, set up reminders to cancel services, pay the app to do that, using credit cards, virtual cards.
- (d) **Who?** People who are distracted, busy, etc. They don't have time / don't remember / forget.

### 2. DIÁLOGO: ALEIX PUIG, CONCURSANTE DE MASTERCHEF

(ALEIX PUIG MASTERCHEF CONTESTANT)

Even if you are not familiar with this TV programme, the title of this audio clearly refers to a contest related to cooking.

In general, the Diálogo audio tracks contain conversations and interviews with people.

They are usually not only about their professional career, so think of what vocabulary you could expect after reading the questions. For example:

- (a) He decided to participate. He was given the opportunity to participate in Masterchef, he won, etc.
- (b) He will buy a house, a car, etc. He will give money to his family. He will have his own business, etc.
- (c) To play football, tennis, to hang out with friends, go out to restaurants, do sports, go to the gym, cook, skiing, swimming, etc.
- (d) What feelings does he have for sport? Sport is important to him, it's good, it's relaxing, it makes him feel better, etc.
- (e) Going on holidays, to the beach, travelling (where?), working, cooking, relaxing, resting, spending time with his family, etc.

## Sample Exam 1. Transcript

### 1. Anuncio

#### UNA APP QUE CANCELA AUTOMÁTICAMENTE LAS SUSCRIPCIONES (AN APP WHICH CANCELS ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS AUTOMATICALLY)

Cada vez son más las plataformas que ofrecen un mes o más de servicio gratuito para que puedas **disfrutar de todo su contenido** y **decidas si merece la pena pagar por él o no**.

Tras finalizar el mes gratuito, si no quieres seguir pagando, tan solo tienes que darte de baja de la plataforma. Sin embargo, no todos **están pendientes de cuándo** caduca el periodo gratuito y **acaban pagando por un servicio que no quieren**.

Con el objetivo de que esto no vuelva a suceder, Joshua Browder ha creado *Free Trial Surfing*, una plataforma que se desligará de los distintos servicios por nosotros. Las personas que quieran **podrán disfrutar del mes gratuito de un servicio sin ofrecer los datos de su tarjeta de crédito o su cuenta bancaria** ya que la aplicación **utiliza un número de tarjeta de crédito virtual** asociada al nombre de la compañía de Browder. Cuando finaliza el periodo gratuito, **la aplicación dará de baja al servicio sin asociar el número de tarjeta de crédito virtual**.

Si eres **distráido o distraída**, esta aplicación te ahorrará unos cuantos euros.

#### Key Words:

<b>contenido</b>	contents	<b>cuenta bancaria</b>	bank account
<b>merecer la pena</b>	to be worth it	<b>tarjeta de crédito</b>	credit card
<b>estar pendiente de...</b>	to keep an eye out for	<b>tarjeta virtual</b>	virtual credit card
<b>caducar</b>	to expire, to lapse	<b>distráido/a</b>	absent-minded, forgetful
<b>acabar pagando</b>	to end up paying	<b>ahorrar</b>	to save