Exercise walk-through

# 11.1

# Listening: discussions, arguments and media

English B2

ENGLISH B2 • EXERCISE SHEET

# 11.1 Listening: discussions, arguments and media

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 25 marks**

**KEY WORDS** position • concession • speculation • trial • sector

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# Objective

Follow a **discussion** or a media programme: identify each speaker's **position** and main **argument**, notice how they support it, and distinguish **facts**, **opinions** and **speculation**.

**You must be able to:**

- identify each speaker's position
- follow the main argument and the support for it
- distinguish fact, opinion and speculation
- recognise how a presenter manages a discussion

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- summarise both sides of a discussion fairly

## 1 Key knowledge and worked examples

### Key knowledge

| feature | language to listen for |
|---|---|
| position | I'm in favour of... / I'm against... / I have mixed feelings about... |
| support | The evidence shows... / For example... / In a trial... |
| concession | Admittedly... / That's a fair point, but... |
| speculation | It could... / This might... / I suspect... / Perhaps in the future... |
| presenter's moves | Let me bring in... / Can I push you on that? / We're running out of time. |

**Fact**: can be checked. **Opinion**: a judgement. **Speculation**: a guess about what might happen.

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## Source A: part of a radio discussion on a four-day working week

Presenter: Today we're discussing the four-day working week. Dr Sara Holm, you've studied the trials.

Dr Holm: Yes. In a UK trial in 2022, about sixty companies tried a four-day week for six months with no cut in pay. Most of them decided to continue afterwards, and many staff reported less stress. I'm in favour of trying it more widely.

Presenter: Let me bring in Mark Evans, who runs a small restaurant.

Mr Evans: Admittedly, the results look positive for office companies. But a restaurant has to be open when customers come. If my staff work four days, I'll need to hire more people, and I suspect many small businesses simply couldn't afford that.

Presenter: Dr Holm, can I push you on that?

Dr Holm: That's a fair point. It might not work in the same way for every sector, and the trials were voluntary, so the companies were probably the ones most likely to succeed.

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# Exercises 2.1·2.3

**2.1** Use Source A. State the position of (a) Dr Holm; (b) Mr Evans. [2]

**2.2** Use Source A. Give three facts Dr Holm reports about the UK trial. [3]

**2.3** Use Source A. Sort the statements in the table into fact, opinion or speculation. [4]

| statement | fact, opinion or speculation? |
|---|---|
| 1. About sixty companies took part. | |
| 2. I'm in favour of trying it more widely. | |
| 3. Many small businesses simply couldn't afford that. | |
| 4. It might not work in the same way for every sector. | |

# Exercises 2.1·2.3

**2.1** Use Source A. State the position of (a) Dr Holm; (b) Mr Evans. [2]

**2.1**

(a) in favour of trying a four-day week more widely; (b) doubtful / against it for businesses like his

**2.2** Use Source A. Give three facts Dr Holm reports about the UK trial. [3]

**2.2**

any three: 2022; about sixty companies; six months; no cut in pay; most continued; many staff reported less stress

**2.3** Use Source A. Sort the statements in the table into fact, opinion or speculation. [4]

| statement | fact, opinion or speculation? |
|---|---|
| 1. About sixty companies took part. | |
| 2. I'm in favour of trying it more widely. | |
| 3. Many small businesses simply couldn't afford that. | |
| 4. It might not work in the same way for every sector. | |

**2.3**

1 fact; 2 opinion; 3 speculation; 4 speculation

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# Exercise 2.4

**2.4** Use Source A. (a) Explain Mr Evans's main argument. (b) What concession does each speaker make? (c) Explain why Dr Holm says the voluntary nature of the trial matters. [6]

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**2.4**

(a) a restaurant must open when customers come, so shorter weeks mean hiring more staff, which small businesses may not afford; (b) Evans: the results look positive for offices; Holm: it might not work for every sector; (c) companies chose to join, so they were more likely to succeed; the results may be better than for all companies

# Exercise 3.1 (a)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(a)** “Let me bring in Mark Evans” is used to

- **A** end the programme
- **B** invite another speaker
- **C** disagree
- **D** give a fact

# Exercise 3.1 (a)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(a)** “Let me bring in Mark Evans” is used to

- **A** end the programme
- **B** invite another speaker
- **C** disagree
- **D** give a fact

(a) B

# Exercise 3.1 (b)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(b)** "I suspect..." introduces

- **A** a fact
- **B** speculation
- **C** a quotation
- **D** a statistic

# Exercise 3.1 (b)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(b)** “I suspect...” introduces

- **A** a fact
- **B** speculation
- **C** a quotation
- **D** a statistic

(b) B

# Exercise 3.1 (c)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(c)** "Admittedly, ..." introduces

- **A** a concession
- **B** a new topic
- **C** a joke
- **D** a summary

# Exercise 3.1 (c)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(c)** “Admittedly, ...” introduces

- **A** a concession
- **B** a new topic
- **C** a joke
- **D** a summary

(c) A

# Exercise 3.1 (d)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(d)** A trial in which companies chose to take part may

- **A** show results that are typical of all companies
- **B** show better results than average
- **C** prove nothing at all
- **D** have no participants

[4]

# Exercise 3.1 (d)

**3.1** *(Four choices, one correct. One mark each.)*

**(d)** A trial in which companies chose to take part may

- **A** show results that are typical of all companies
- **B** show better results than average
- **C** prove nothing at all
- **D** have no participants

[4]

(d) B

# Exercise 3.2

**3.2** Write a fair summary of the discussion in Source A (100 to 120 words) for a student news website. Report both positions, the key evidence, the concessions and one question that remains open. [6]

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**3.2** Write a fair summary of the discussion in Source A (100 to 120 words) for a student news website. Report both positions, the key evidence, the concessions and one question that remains open. [6]

### 3.2

One mark for each correct letter; a written answer earns marks for each clear, relevant point, as listed. Holm's position and evidence; Evans's position and argument; concessions; an open question; neutral, accurate reporting