

ACADEMIC SKILLS

Teacher's notes

Concentrate while listening

Warm up

Ask students if they have heard of mindfulness and what it is (being completely present in the moment). Tell them it can help a lot with their concentration. Try one (or both) of these techniques with the class:

Mindful observation

- 1 Choose an object close to you, and focus on watching it for a minute or two.
- 2 Don't do anything else but notice the object. Relax into watching it. Look at it as if you are seeing it for the first time.
- 3 Explore every aspect of its shape visually (don't touch it).

Mindful listening

- 1 Choose a piece of music you haven't heard before, and listen to it for one or two minutes.
- 2 Close your eyes and get lost in the journey of the sound.
- 3 Listen to how the different instruments and/or voices combine. Separate each sound in your mind.
- 4 Don't form any opinion or judgement about it (like or dislike). Don't think; hear.

Using the Factsheet

There are three possible ways to use the Factsheet:

- 1 Give students the **Factsheet** before the lesson, so they can read it at home and come to the lesson prepared to do the **Worksheet**. If you use this approach, start the lesson by checking that all students have read and understood the **Factsheet** and answer any questions.
- 2 Give students the **Factsheet** at the beginning of the lesson and start by working through it with the students.
- 3 Focus on the **Worksheet** in the lesson, then give students the **Factsheet** at the end of the lesson, so they can take it home and keep it as a reference or revision tool.

Theory to practice

Answers

- 1 Students' own answers.
- 2 1 e 2 b 3 a 4 c 5 d

Using the Worksheet

Practice

- 1**  **01** Look at the pictures below. Which activities do they represent? Listen and match the pictures to the letters (a–e).

- Ask students to explore the photos. Do they know the names of all the activities?
- Ask students what they are listening for (names of activities). Play the recording, students answer. Elicit answers.

Answers

- 1 c
- 2 e
- 3 a
- 4 d
- 5 b

Transcript

a

A At the weekend I go to an art class.

B Oh, yeah? When is the class?

A On Saturday mornings. It's a really good course.

- b**
A At the weekend I play football in the park.
B Oh, yeah? Who do you play with?
A A group of friends from college. It's really good fun.
- c**
A I like cooking at the weekends.
B Oh, really? What kind of food?
A Something quick – some pasta or chicken.
- d**
A I usually go camping in the summer holidays.
B That's interesting. Where do you go?
A To a national park near Barcelona. It's really beautiful.
- e**
A I really like rock climbing.
B Really? What do you like about it?
A It's really exciting.

2 ▶ **02 Listen to Yoshiko's day. Close your eyes and picture her doing the things that are described.**

- Tell students they are going to listen to someone's routine. Ask them to form pictures in their mind.
- Ask them to close their eyes and visualize what is being said. Play the recording once.

Transcript

Yoshiko is a university student in Tokyo. She gets up at quarter to six. She never has time for breakfast. She takes the train to Tokyo at six forty-five. She lives five minutes from the station, so she leaves home at about six thirty. The train journey takes 40 minutes, and then there is a ten-minute subway ride. She gets to college at about ten to eight. First, she goes to the computer room to check her emails. Then, at about eight fifteen, she meets her friend Toru for coffee. At quarter to nine she goes to the lecture theatre. She likes to have half an hour to read her notes before the first lecture at nine fifteen.

3 ▶ **Picture the story in your mind again and put these activities in order (1-7). Then listen again and check.**

- Refer students to the task. Students remember the visualization and order the sentences. Play the audio again for students to check.

Answers

- a** 2
b 4
c 7
d 3
e 1
f 5
g 6

4 ▶ **03 Now listen to a presentation about workplace mistakes and complete the notes.**

- Ask students to read through the notes, and elicit what they think each mistake is about. Ask students to think about what type of information is missing. Don't provide any information at this stage.

TIP

Ask students to read the tip. Ask them to listen and follow the notes with their pencil as they listen.

- Play the recording twice; students listen and complete the notes. Elicit answers.

Answers

- 1 10
800
174,000
- 2 2,000
12th
5
- 3 UK
km
125

Transcript

To make you feel better, here are three of the most expensive workplace mistakes in history. This is Ronald Wayne. In 1976, Wayne – along with Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak – founded a technology company called Apple. At the start, Wayne owned 10% of the company. However, after less than two weeks, Wayne changed his mind. He found Jobs and Wozniak difficult. He didn't want to work with them. So, he sold his share of the company back to them for just \$800. Maybe you know the rest of the story ... In its first year, Apple's sales were \$174,000. And that was just the start. Today, after the amazing, global success of products like the Apple Mac and the iPhone, the company has profits of around \$50 billion every year. Whoops! Poor Ronald Wayne.

On June 10th 2000, a new footbridge – the Millennium Bridge – opened in central London. The design was very modern, and the bridge cost £18 million. Unfortunately, on June 12th, something went wrong. When a lot of people walked on the bridge at the same time, it wobbled from side to side. To 'wobble' is to move unsteadily. It wasn't dangerous, but people were getting seasick! Two days after it opened, the bridge closed. After a few weeks of testing, Arup – the engineering company that built the bridge – fixed the problem by adding dampers to the structure. It cost them £5 million, but they never built a wobbly footbridge again.

And finally. In 1999, a team of engineers from Lockheed in the UK were working with NASA in the USA on a spacecraft to orbit Mars. Everything went well, and the spacecraft launched successfully. Unfortunately, soon after take-off something went wrong. The spacecraft disappeared. No-one could understand why. The problem was this: the UK team worked in miles for its distance calculations, but the NASA team always work in kilometres. What a simple mistake! Happily, no-one was on board the spacecraft. But the mistake cost NASA \$125 million. You see? Even rocket scientists make silly mistakes.

5  **Take turns to ask each other the questions below. Follow these steps:**

- Form pairs. Ask students to read the questions and think about their answers.
- Go over the three-step technique and demonstrate it with one of the students.
- Students take turns asking each other the questions and answering them.

Reflect

6 Reflect and discuss the questions below.

- In the same pairs, ask students to discuss the questions.
- Have a class discussion to round up the task. Important points include:
 - a Different kinds of concentration: more spread out for general comprehension, or focused on specific details.
 - b Why they felt distracted and how they dealt with it. In Exercise 5, for instance, there would have been a lot of other students talking. Did they manage to focus only on their partner?
 - c If/how they managed to find the right part of the task after getting lost.
 - d How easy it was to form mental images.
 - e If body language was important to understand their partner.

Over to you

7 Complete the table below with the strategies you saw in this unit. Compare with other students in your group.

- Students remember the strategies they have seen (if necessary, they can refer to the **Factsheet**) and fill the table.
- In small groups, students compare tables. Encourage them particularly to discuss strategies they placed in different columns.