



# International Clock Talk

## 1 Unit



### FOCUS FOR LISTENING

**International Clock Talk** is about the confusion that can arise when people from different cultures around the world, with different views about time, interact with each other.



### FOCUS FOR CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS

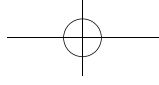
Play the part of either a student in Beijing or a student in New York and discuss the similarities and differences between your experiences in **The Best of Both Worlds**.



### FOCUS FOR SPEAKING PRACTICE

In **World Clock**, discuss how people from different countries feel about time, as you role-play.





# Warming Up



Now you will hear a broadcaster introduce the program “International Clock Talk”. Decide whether the following statements are T (true), F (false) or NG (not given) based upon the information you hear.



- ( ) 1. People have been invited to the radio program to discuss different views of time.
- ( ) 2. There is likely to be conflict during the radio show because everyone is late.
- ( ) 3. People who arrive at the last moment are unhappy about the radio program.

# Listening



## Understanding Short Conversations

Now you will hear ten short conversations. A question will follow each conversation. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.



- 1 A. Because they are all in the same country.  
 B. Because they are all from the same culture.  
 C. Because they have already discussed their views.  
 D. Because there is no time difference in the country.

- 2 A. Making foreign friends in different ways.  
 B. Coping with all the problems caused by foreigners.  
 C. Thinking just like foreigners about problems.  
 D. Dealing with how foreigners think about time.

- 3 A. Learning more Australian traditions.  
 B. Telling Australians what he's used to.  
 C. Relaxing more when dealing with Australians.  
 D. Getting mad every time he is kept waiting.

- 4 A. They are very serious about time.  
 B. They notice time differences.  
 C. They feel people care too much.  
 D. They don't think time matters much.

- 5 A. Because he knows he's in another country where rules are different.  
 B. Because he has made a habit of it since moving to another country.  
 C. Because he is used to being late in his own country.  
 D. Because he thinks people in this country are always late.



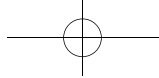
- 6 A. He never worries about being late.  
 B. He appreciates being late for meetings.  
 C. Germans don't turn up late for meetings.  
 D. Germans don't care if he's late.

- 7 A. They are more relaxed about time.  
 B. They are more likely to be annoyed if people are late.  
 C. They relax more often than before.  
 D. They are more likely to tell the truth about time.

- 8 A. Because she had been in the restaurant for 15 minutes.  
 B. Because she had been there for two hours which she thought was too long.  
 C. Because she had to meet someone for a meal in 15 minutes.  
 D. Because she hoped to meet someone from her country on time.

- 9 A. Brother and sister.  
 B. Mother and son.  
 C. Father and daughter.  
 D. Close friends.

- 10 A. Two hours.  
 B. Four hours.  
 C. Three and a half hours.  
 D. Two and a half hours.



## Understanding a Long Conversation

Now you will hear a long conversation followed by five questions. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.



Questions 1 to 5 are based on the conversation you have just heard.

### New Words:

Swede 瑞典人  
stiff 严谨的

1

- A. They take taxis more often than others.
- B. They keep themselves busier than others.
- C. They are the most serious people.
- D. They are the most time-conscious people.

2

- A. More than five minutes.
- B. About five minutes.
- C. About two minutes.
- D. No more than two minutes.

3

- A. Because everything seems to happen on time.
- B. Because everyone is too stiff and serious.
- C. Because they are the most caring people in the world.
- D. Because people in Sweden are always right.

4

- A. Stiff and serious.
- B. Kind and caring.
- C. Serious and different.
- D. Ordinary and stressful.

5

- A. They get stressed because they are always late.
- B. They are always late because life has too much stress.
- C. They are not very time-conscious and are often late.
- D. They have a habit of being different and kind.

TAXIS



## Understanding a Passage

Now you will hear a passage followed by five questions. Listen carefully and choose the best answer from the four possible choices.

Questions 1 to 5 are based on the passage you have just heard.

1

- A. Meetings are too long and too frequently held.
- B. People often come to work late.
- C. Employees don't attend meetings on time.
- D. The company president has too much responsibility.

2

- A. To have more important meetings at work.
- B. To think of the right words to use in advising his people.
- C. To employ people from many different countries.
- D. To tell people they must come to meetings on time.

3

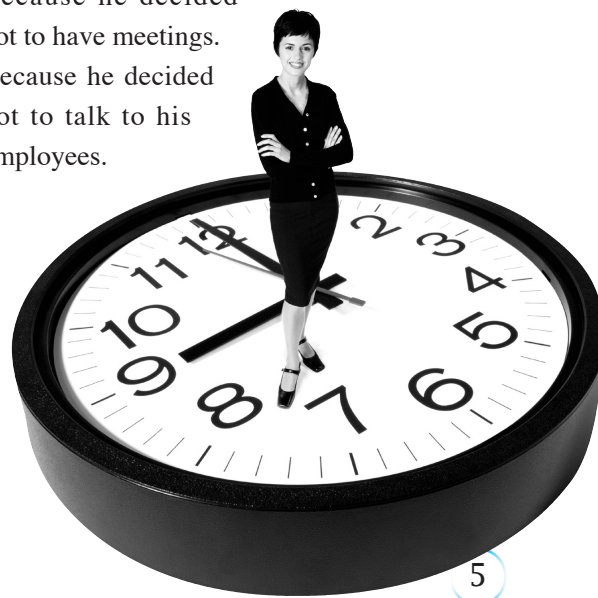
- A. Because it causes meetings to run late into the night.
- B. Because it means people spend time waiting for latecomers.
- C. Because it means the president has to repeat his explanation.
- D. Because it causes workers to do things that are unimportant.

4

- A. He considered his feelings and thought about his problems.
- B. He thought about whether he should say something.
- C. He planned how he was going to tell his workers.
- D. He wrote out the different habits of different peoples.

5

- A. Because no one approved of his ideas.
- B. Because no one appeared at the meeting.
- C. Because he decided not to have meetings.
- D. Because he decided not to talk to his employees.



5

# Understanding a Movie Dialog

**Task 1** Now listen to a dialog from the movie *The Sixth Day* and fill in the blanks according to what you hear.

**Secretary:** Natalie's on Line One.

**Adam:** What's up, honey? You look 1) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Natalie:** Oh, Adam, I just talked to the vet and made them... they had to put Oliver to sleep.

**Adam:** What? He wasn't even that 2) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Natalie:** Oh, I know. But apparently he had some kind of, I don't know... highly infectious canine virus or something. And, and they had to put him down. It's the 3) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Adam:** Oliver was licking Clara's face this morning.

**Natalie:** Don't worry, because I asked the same thing, and the virus is 4) \_\_\_\_\_ to humans. So um... So she's fine.

**Adam:** This is going to 5) \_\_\_\_\_ her heart, and you know that.

**Natalie:** No, it won't. I want you to go down to RePet... and get Oliver 6) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Adam:** I'm not going to have some freak of science sleep in my daughter's bed.

**Natalie:** Oh, Adam, for heaven's sake. It's not dangerous.

**Adam:** No, yes, no, no. Oliver can live on in our 7) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Natalie:** She's only eight. She won't understand that, honey.

**Adam:** Look, it's the 8) \_\_\_\_\_ process of life. You're born, you live and you die. She has to learn about it some day.

**Natalie:** Yeah, but she doesn't have to learn about it on your 9) \_\_\_\_\_. It's hard...

**Adam:** I really 10) \_\_\_\_\_ that, honey.

**Natalie:** Will you do it?

**Adam:** No.

**Natalie:** Thank you, darling. And Clara thanks you too. I love you. Bye, bye.

**Adam:** But I won't do it. No, no, no, listen. Natalie, I just won't...



### New Words:

vet 兽医

infectious 传染性的

canine 犬科的

virus 病毒

lick 舔

RePet (影片中) 克隆宠物的机构

freak 怪物

**Task 2** Now listen to the movie dialog again. Read the words while listening, and try to improve your pronunciation, stress and intonation by imitating what you hear.

**Task 3** Now play the roles of Adam and Natalie.



# Speaking



## Practicing Conversational Skills



### Useful Expressions



Read the following expressions for talking about maximum quantities. Try to learn them by heart.

Asking About  
Maximum Quantities

What's the maximum speed I can drive on this highway?

What's the maximum sitting capacity of this stadium?

What's the highest temperature in this region?

How soon will we arrive there?

How long will you stay in Shanghai?

70 kilometers per hour.

No more than 80 kilometers per hour.

It's 10,000.

It can get as high as 50 degrees Centigrade in summer.

No later than 10:00 pm.

Before 8:00 am.

In no more than 30 minutes.

At most a week.

Almost/Nearly a week.

Talking About  
Maximum Quantities

Read the following expressions for talking about minimum quantities. Try to learn them by heart.

Asking About  
Minimum Quantities

What's the minimum pay per hour these days?

What's the per-person minimum expense for the dinner?

What's the least we have to pay for watching cable TV?

What's the lowest temperature here in winter?

How far do we still have to walk?

No less than 5 dollars an hour.

It's set at 5 *yuan*.

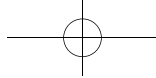
The minimum charge is 5 dollars a month.

It could be as low as 20 degrees Centigrade below zero.

At worst it can be 20 degrees Centigrade below zero.

I'm afraid at least 5 miles.

Talking About  
Minimum Quantities



Read the following expressions for talking about comparisons. Try to learn them by heart.

Asking About Comparisons

How would you compare this year's classes with last year's?

What do you think of his second movie in comparison to his first?

How is the food there in comparison to where you come from?

Is this computer as good as mine?

Is fashion in America similar to that in Mexico?

They're almost the same as last year's.

It's much more exciting than the first one.

They have as many vegetables.

They're very similar.

They're very alike: They're both spicy.

No. I don't think it's any better.

No. It's no better than yours.

Sure!

No. There are quite a few differences.

Talking About Comparisons

Read the following expressions for talking about contrasts. Try to learn them by heart.

Asking About Contrasts

What do you think of rock music in contrast to opera?

How does the weather in California contrast with that on the East Coast?

In what way are Chinese women different from Japanese women?

Could you tell me the differences between these two rooms?

How much larger is the population of Shanghai than our hometown?

Rock music is much more popular among young people.

Winter temperatures in California are much higher than on the East Coast.

Usually Japanese women..., while Chinese women...

Sure, this is more spacious but more expensive, whereas that one is smaller and cozier.

About three times larger.

Talking About Contrasts



Model Dialogs



**A:** What does the National Minimum Wage Act provide for?

**B:** It ensures that the minimum wage for an adult employee is 7 euros per hour.

**A:** How much do you earn a week?

**B:** About 300 euros.

1

Maximum and Minimum Quantities

**A:** What is the maximum speed for cars on this road?

**B:** 120 kilometers an hour.

**A:** What about the minimum speed?

**B:** 80 kilometers an hour.

3

**A:** How much money is allowed for entertaining guests when on official business?

**B:** The standard is \$25 per person.

**A:** What, even for entertaining senior executives? What is the maximum expense for lunch per-person then?

**B:** \$35.

2

Comparisons and Contrasts

1

**A:** Who are more time-conscious, Americans or Arabs?

**B:** On the whole, I think Americans are.

**A:** So, do you think American culture is better in this respect?

**B:** No, I don't think so. I think Arab culture is as good as American culture.

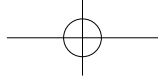
**A:** We believe that if we treat people decently, they will do the same to us in return.

**B:** Yes, but some people ignore this idea.

**A:** Really? I think the majority of people believe in the concepts of love, harmony, and peace.

**B:** But, in some parts of the world, they don't.

2



## Situational Conversations



### *The Best of Both Worlds*

#### Purpose:

Practice talking about maximum and minimum quantities, comparisons and contrasts.

#### Directions:

Work with a partner. One of you will take the part of A, and the other B. A and B are former classmates. A is currently studying IT in New York, while B is studying Business Management in Beijing. Make up short conversations based on the following situations, using appropriate expressions for talking about maximum and minimum quantities, comparisons and contrasts.

- ① A and B are talking about the credits of their universities.
- ② A and B are talking about the speed limit in Beijing and New York.
- ③ A and B are comparing the teaching methods in China and the United States.
- ④ A and B are comparing Beijing and New York.
- ⑤ A and B are contrasting Chinese and Americans' attitude toward time.
- ⑥ A and B are contrasting Chinese and American food.

#### *Sample Dialog:*

**A:** Jerry, it's so great to see you again! How is Beijing?

**B:** Wow, you look great Jennifer! Er, Beijing, it's very exciting. It's opened my eyes to the differences in the way people do business around the world.

**A:** Really, like what?

**B:** Well, you know how everything in America seems to focus on the actual product or what needs to be accomplished. That's not the case in China. There's a lot more emphasis on getting to know who you are dealing with.

**A:** Oh, you mean people think relationships are more important than getting things done.

**B:** Not exactly, they just think that without a good business relationship nothing can get done.

**A:** I guess that's a better way to put it.

**B:** Right. And there are many people from other parts of the world on the course and they also seem to stress relationships as much as or more than we do in the United States.

## Pair Work

### World Clock

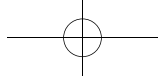
Work in pairs. Play the parts of people from different countries and discuss whether people should live by plans and deadlines. The result of the discussion will be reported to the whole class.

#### Sample Dialog:

- A:** Sometimes it gets me down how we are slaves to the clock.
- B:** Maybe you're a slave, but I'm not. In your country, the United States, people think they must follow rigid schedules. But in my country, Brazil, people are much more relaxed.
- A:** I'd be surprised if anybody can be really relaxed about time. We all have to get our work done.
- B:** You'd really have to visit Brazil to understand how things are there. We do have to work, but we're much more relaxed about it.
- A:** I look forward to doing that one day. Living by the clock causes me a lot of stress.

#### Relevant Ideas:

- We are/are not slaves to the clock.
- Time is/is not a resource.
- Time is/is not money.
- Time is/is not the enemy.
- The efficient use of time should/should not be emphasized.
- Time is/is not unlimited and unending.
- Opening exchanges are/are not necessary for a business call.



# Listening and Speaking

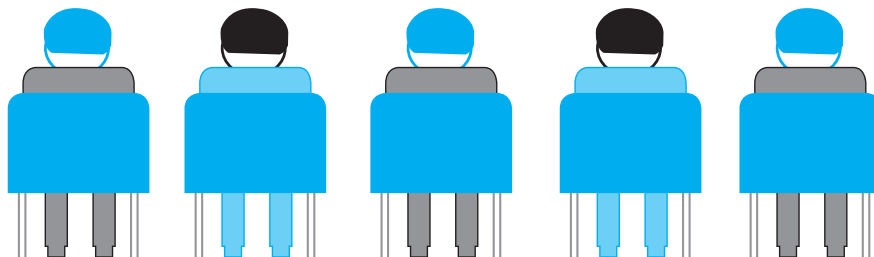


## Story-retelling



**Task 1** Now you will hear a story. Listen carefully and fill in the blanks while listening.

- ① In his home country, the U.K., students would often \_\_\_\_\_ him.
- ② In his third day of classes, he asked a student a question. The student just gave the professor \_\_\_\_\_.
- ③ It was obvious that the student didn't understand the question, so he \_\_\_\_\_.
- ④ Later that day, after talking to other people at the school, he discovered that often Japanese students don't \_\_\_\_\_, even when they don't understand something.
- ⑤ In the months that followed, the professor learned how to encourage his students to speak up more. And he, \_\_\_\_\_, changed his teaching style so his students could gradually understand more. But it took \_\_\_\_\_ work.



**Task 2** Now work in pairs and retell the story with the following sentences as the beginning of each story. Each of you in turn gives two sentences of the story and all sentences must be logically connected.

- ① I'm a philosophy student in Japan. One day I had a new professor from the U.K. I didn't understand...
- ② I'm a philosophy professor from the U.K. One day I discovered that my students didn't understand me, so...