Effective Assessment Practices in the English Language Curriculum – Part 2: Listening

What Makes Listening Difficult for Students?

What is Listening?

Listening as a Process

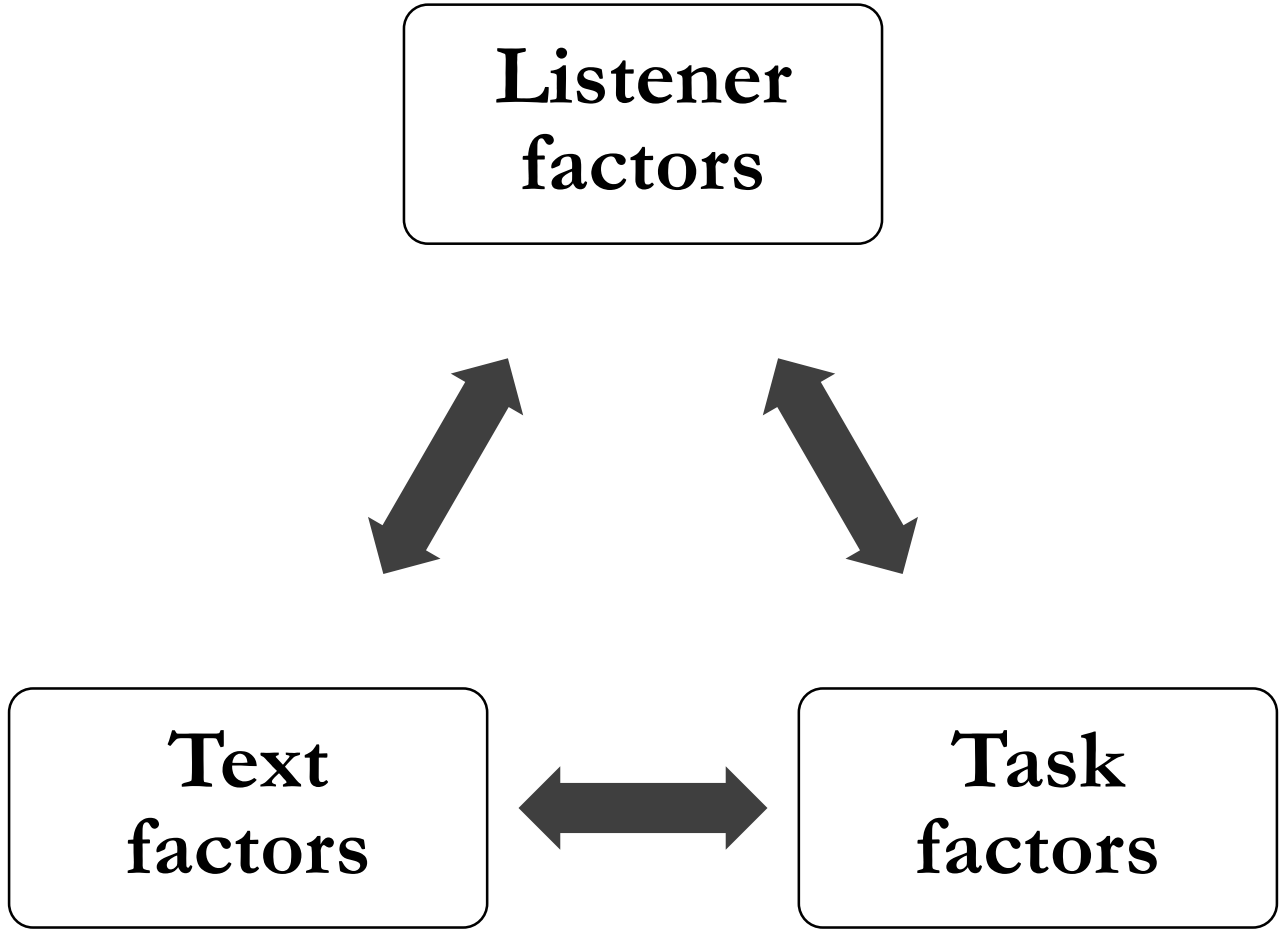
Hearing/
Receiving

Understanding/
Attending

Remembering/
Perceiving

Evaluating/
Interpreting

Feedback/
Responding


Listener factors
Text factors
Task factors

The framework helps inform ...

Teachers' diagnosis

students' reflection

learning goals for students

Unpacking Formative Assessment

How can we describe students' listening performance?

Basic Competency (BC) Descriptors for English Language (Reading) at the End of KS3

Listening

BC Descriptors	Examples *(The examples listed below are not prescriptive or exhaustive.)*
Discriminating between common words with a small range of vowel and consonant sounds# (KS)	
Recognizing repeated expressions in short and simple literary / imaginative spoken texts (ES)	• *The old ma* *The*
Using a small range of strategies to understand the meaning◆ of short and simple texts* on familiar topics which are delivered slowly and clearly in familiar accents (IS, KS, ES)	• • • u sn pro • unde staten g a / use of intonation (questions,

HKDSE Level Descriptors (Listening) at the end of KS4

Level 5

Listen

texts are identified.
aluated. The development of a
are fully understood.

ir purposes understood when delivered
English in familiar accents in a wide range of

ied information is extracted from spoken texts. Figurative

sound patterns
Speakers' attitudes and intentions are identified based on features of stress and intonation.

Integrated Skills

- All Data File instructions are interpreted and followed appropriately.
- Relevant information is located and transferred appropriately from complex texts.
- Contrasting views and attitudes in complex written texts are evaluated.
- The content is complete and relevant to the writing task/purpose.
- There is a wide range of written sentence structures, and the use of language structures, spelling and punctuation is highly accurate.
- Register, tone and style are appropriate, and appropriate features of the genre are used.
- The organization is wholly coherent.

Summative

Listening – ATM 1	Listening - ATM 2	Listening - ATM 3	Listening - ATM 4	Listening - ATM 5	Listening - ATM 6	Listening - ATM 7	Listening - ATM 8
Understanding key words in some short simple texts	Understanding some information, ideas and feelings in short simple texts, using some listening strategies as appropriate	Understanding information, ideas and feelings in some simple texts, using some listening strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a small range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of listening strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of listening strategies as appropriate	Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of listening strategies as appropriate	Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of listening strategies as appropriate	Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in complex texts, using and integrating a range of listening strategies as appropriate

Formative

1. Language development strategies, generic skills, and positive values and attitudes are essential to English Language learning and form an integral part of the curriculum.

2. Learners are exposed to a variety of text types and listening purposes (e.g. listening for academic development, listening for interpersonal communication) to develop their listening skills for real-life applications.

3. Selection of a wide range of texts of appropriate length, difficulty, topics (including environmental issues) and text types should be introduced to help learners become familiar with the characteristics of spoken English over time.

4. The development of some basic listening strategies does not necessarily depend on the mastery of the previous ones. Learners should be encouraged to develop:
   - being attentive,
   - activating prior knowledge,
   - anticipating the likely development of spoken texts, and
   - being selective while listening (e.g. discriminating relevant from irrelevant information based on individual circumstances or task requirements).

5. The interplay between tasks and texts is a factor for consideration when teachers design a range of tasks for learners to demonstrate their understanding of the texts. In principle, task demand increases with text complexity as learners progress in the development of listening skills and strategies. To cater for learner diversity, simple tasks can be included for complex texts to cultivate learners' confidence, and difficult tasks for simple texts to stretch their abilities.

6. Classroom interactions are crucial to the development of listening skills and strategies, particularly at the early stage of learning. Teacher support is essential to helping learners process the text and demonstrate their understanding during the learning and teaching process. As learners progress, the amount of support provided is gradually reduced to promote learner independence.

ATM = Attainment Milestone

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Understanding key words in some short simple texts	**Understanding some information, ideas and feelings in short simple texts, using some listening strategies as appropriate**	**Understanding information, ideas and feelings in some simple texts, using some listening strategies as appropriate**	**Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a small range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of listening strategies as appropriate**	**Understanding and inferring information, ideas and feelings in a range of simple texts, using and integrating a small range of listening strategies as appropriate**	**Understanding and inferring information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of listening strategies as appropriate**	**Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in a range of texts with some degree of complexity, using and integrating a range of listening strategies as appropriate**	**Understanding, inferring and interpreting information, ideas, feelings and opinions in complex texts, using and integrating a range of listening strategies as appropriate**
Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • recognise some consonant and vowel sounds (e.g. pen, cat, hot) • recognise some words by distinguishing word boundaries • recognise some formulaic expressions for classroom interaction (e.g. Good morning) • follow simple classroom instructions with the support of non-verbal cues (e.g. gestures, illustrations) • follow simple songs and rhymes and perform actions	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • identify familiar words by recognising some consonant and vowel sounds • locate key words in some texts (e.g. conversational exchanges) • follow simple activity instructions by using knowledge of simple cohesive devices • follow predictable narrative texts by recognising key words and phrases • recognise the intonation of simple utterances (e.g. questions, statements and commands) • recognise that audio clues (e.g. tone) convey meaning	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • recognise some features of connected speech such as linking (e.g. four eggs) • extract specific information in texts (e.g. announcements) by identifying relevant meaningful chunks • follow simple directions by using knowledge of simple cohesive devices and prepositional phrases • follow the sequence of events in narrative texts • understand speakers' feelings by using semantic and syntactic clues • recognise the sound effects (e.g. onomatopoeia, rhymes and alliteration) in simple texts	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • work out the meaning of some words and phrases by using semantic and syntactic clues • extract specific information by using knowledge of text structures • identify main ideas by using semantic and syntactic clues • infer the identity of speakers in some social situations (e.g. borrowing books in the library) by using semantic clues • understand narrative texts by forming sensory images of characters, settings and events	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • work out the implied meanings of some utterances by using semantic and syntactic clues • identify supporting details for main ideas by using knowledge of cohesive devices and formulaic expressions • infer the purpose and intended audience of texts by using knowledge of stylistic features in texts • infer speakers' feelings by using semantic clues and knowledge of tone and intonation • record and organise information and ideas using some written and graphic forms • recognise features of connected speech (e.g. sentence stress)	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • work out the meaning of some idiomatic expressions (e.g. a piece of cake) by using semantic and syntactic clues • follow the development of main ideas and make connections between them by using syntactic clues and knowledge of text structures • identify speakers' views and arguments by using knowledge of sentence stress and intonation • deduce information and ideas by using semantic and syntactic clues • identify opinions by recognising common expressions (e.g. I believe, in my opinion) and using syntactic clues	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • draw conclusions from directly stated information, ideas and opinions • compare alternative views and arguments (e.g. equal opportunities, law and order) by using written and graphic forms • distinguish between facts and opinions by using semantic and syntactic clues • infer speakers' views and attitudes by using semantic and syntactic clues	Pointers *Learners can, for example,* • work out the multiple meanings of words and expressions (e.g. word puns) by using semantic and syntactic clues • infer the mood of a situation from intonation and semantic clues used • analyse ideas, views or arguments by using knowledge of stylistic features in texts (e.g. repetitive structures, emotive language) • infer speakers' intentions by using semantic and syntactic clues and knowledge of sentence stress and intonation

NB

The listening strategies included in some of the pointers provide examples on how these strategies can help learners construct meaning and interpret texts. They are by no means exhaustive or prescriptive.

They serve as reference for teachers in planning and developing tasks for the learning-teaching-assessment cycle.

LPF

LPF – Listening

How LPF Works – 2022 Paper 3A Task 4 Q47-50

LPF Pointers:

- extract specific information in texts (e.g. announcements) by identifying relevant meaningful chunks [ATM 3] ✓
- follow simple directions by using knowledge of simple cohesive devices and prepositional phrases [ATM 3]
- record and organise information and ideas using some written and graphic forms [ATM 5] ✓
- follow the development of main ideas and make connections between them by using syntactic clues and knowledge of text structures [ATM 6] ✓

The LPF helps inform ...

levels of listening abilities of students

feedback for students

learning goals for students

Assessment for Learning and Assessment as Learning to Bridge the Gap

Where am I now?

- ✓ The factors framework
- ✓ The LPF

How can I close the gap?

Where am I going?

- ✓ The factors framework
- ✓ The LPF

How?

Designing Listening Activities to Bridge the Gap

Pre-listening

Suggestion 1:
Activate students' schemata

- Practise steps for analysing listening topics & task requirements. E.g..
  - Instructions
  - Headings/sub-headings
  - Layout (e.g. table, flow chart)

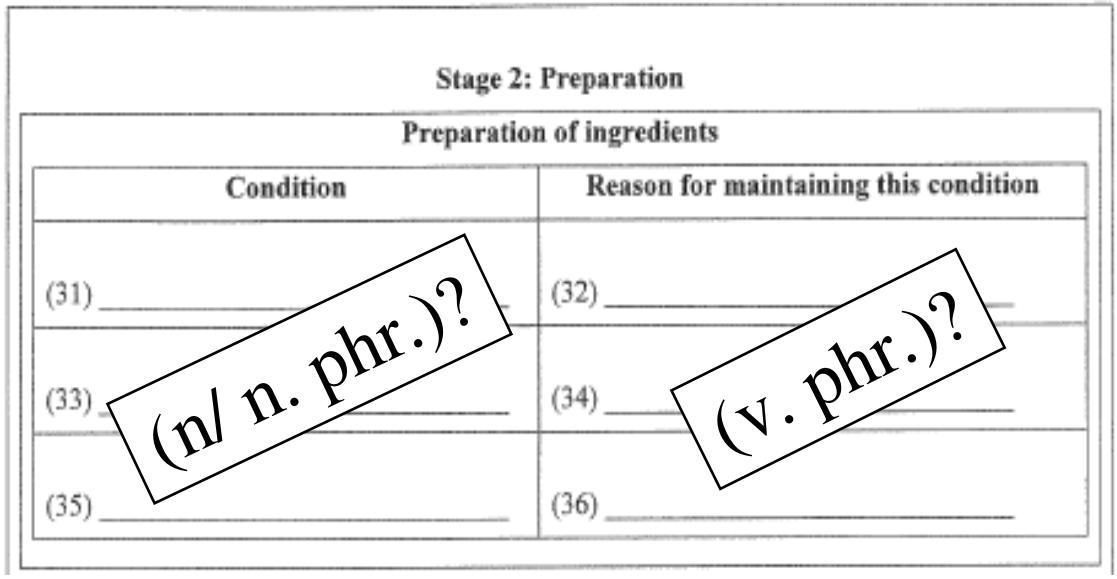
The 3Ws Approach

Highlight keywords in the situation

Who?	**(Your role)**
Why?	**(Purpose)**
What?	**(Text-type + topic/content)**

Task 3
Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

- Draw students' attention to lexical items/syntactic clues
  - e.g. Synonymy/ paraphrasing



Stage 2: Preparation

Preparation of ingredients

Condition	Reason for maintaining this condition
(31) _____	(32) _____
(33) _____	(34) _____
(35) _____	(36) _____

(n/ n. phr.)?

(v. phr.)?

Source: Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

Underlying Principle 4

- activating prior knowledge,
- anticipating the likely development of spoken texts, and
- being selective while listening (e.g. discriminating relevant from irrelevant information based on individual circumstances or task requirements).

TOP-DOWN APPROACH

Interpreting meaning through use of

- background knowledge; or
- previous knowledge of the situation, context, and topic

BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

Interpreting meaning through

- decoding the sounds of a language into words, clauses, sentences, etc; and
- using one's knowledge of grammatical or syntactical rules

Suggestion 2: Provide topical input with audiovisuals to supplement students' prior knowledge

PICTURES → VIDEOS

Examples:
Verbs: brew/drip/pour
Utensils: filter/grinder/coffee maker

Suggestion 3:
Prime students by connecting texts and tasks

Mock up spoken text that students are likely to listen → Bridge the gap between the topic and the task

- **medicine**
- **bubble tea**
- **coffee**

Summary

During pre-listening tasks, teachers can

- ✓ identify students' weaknesses and set goals
- ✓ give more focused feedback
- ✓ design specific tasks to fill the learning gaps

Where am I going?

Where am I now?

How can I close the gap?

Suggested teaching ideas:

- **A**ctivate students' schemata
- **P**rovide topical input with audiovisuals to supplement students' prior knowledge
- **P**rime students by connecting texts and tasks

While-listening

Could you identify the problems faced by this student?

Task 3: Q.31-39
Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

Note-taking

- MAIN IDEAS
- SUPPORTING DETAILS
- SUMMARY OF IDEAS

Suggested activities to develop listening skills & strategies

Developing the Skill of Anticipation	Adopt focused listening
Understanding the Main Idea or Main Theme	Use a radio/TV/Internet news bulletin
Extracting Specific Information and Ideas	Listen to the weather forecasts of different cities
Processing Meaning	Use listening texts which include paraphrases and repetitions

Summary

Note-taking skills

Developing exams skills

Where am I going?

Building world knowledge

Where am I now?

Forming listening habits

How can I close the gap?

Post-listening

What do you usually do?

Usually…

01

Check the answers

02

Ask students what went wrong

03

Locate common mistakes and elaborate on the with reference to the markers' report, if any

What did students learn?

What did we teach?

Reflection questions	Purposes
○ What were you listening to?	➢ to confirm comprehension
○ What helped you from getting the correct answers?	➢ to elicit task knowledge[1]
○ What prevented you from getting the correct answers?	➢ to elicit task knowledge
○ What did you do to understand as much of the text as possible?	➢ to elicit strategy knowledge[2]

Goh & Taib (2006)

1 Task knowledge refers to factors affecting listening.
2 Strategy knowledge refers to methods attempted to gain comprehension of listening.

Reflections (Individual)

Students	Teachers
➢ raise students' metacognitive awareness with immediate retrospection	➢ help teachers identify students' strengths and weaknesses
➢ help students develop a habit of evaluation on their mental processes	➢ provide teachers a more wholistic picture of students' current situation

Self-report and discussions of reflections

➢ promote **collaborative learning** among students with report of observations and discussions

Goh & Taib (2006)

Reflection is also a key element in self-directed learning.

Feedback

What feedback do you usually give?

Giving Focused Feedback

- ✓ Focus on **one skill/question or two**
- ✓ Prepare **materials/learning activities** that help interpret the answer, e.g. list of question words, videos, tapescript, similar questions in other contexts
- ✓ Prepare/predict **before** lessons

2022 Paper 3A Task 4 Q41

We can look at the …

- ✓ question
- ✓ answer
- ✓ markers' report
- ✓ tapescript

Excerpt of the tapescript

Chunking

Using **bottom-up processing**, we can break it down into its components. This is referred to as "**chunking**." Here are the chunks that guide us to the underlying core meaning of the utterances by analysing the language features.

Post-listening

Strategies		Assessment for Learning
Reflection	Individual	Where am I now?
	Self-report & discussion	Where am I now?
Giving focused feedback – chunking (bottom-up)		How can I close the gap?

Application

Pre-listening

- Activating students' schemata
- Providing topical input with audiovisuals to supplement students' prior knowledge
- Priming students by connecting texts and tasks

While-listening

- Note-taking skills
- Developing exam skills
- Building world knowledge
- Forming habits

Post-listening

- Reflection
- Giving focused feedback – chunking

2022 Paper 3A Task 4

- How will you prepare your students for the task?
  Please discuss:
  - **pre**-listening activities, or
  - **post**-listening activities
- *Your group can decide:
  - the learning objectives of this activity
  - the ability of the students

Q.47-50 & 52
Task 4, Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

TOP-DOWN APPROACH

Interpreting meaning through use of

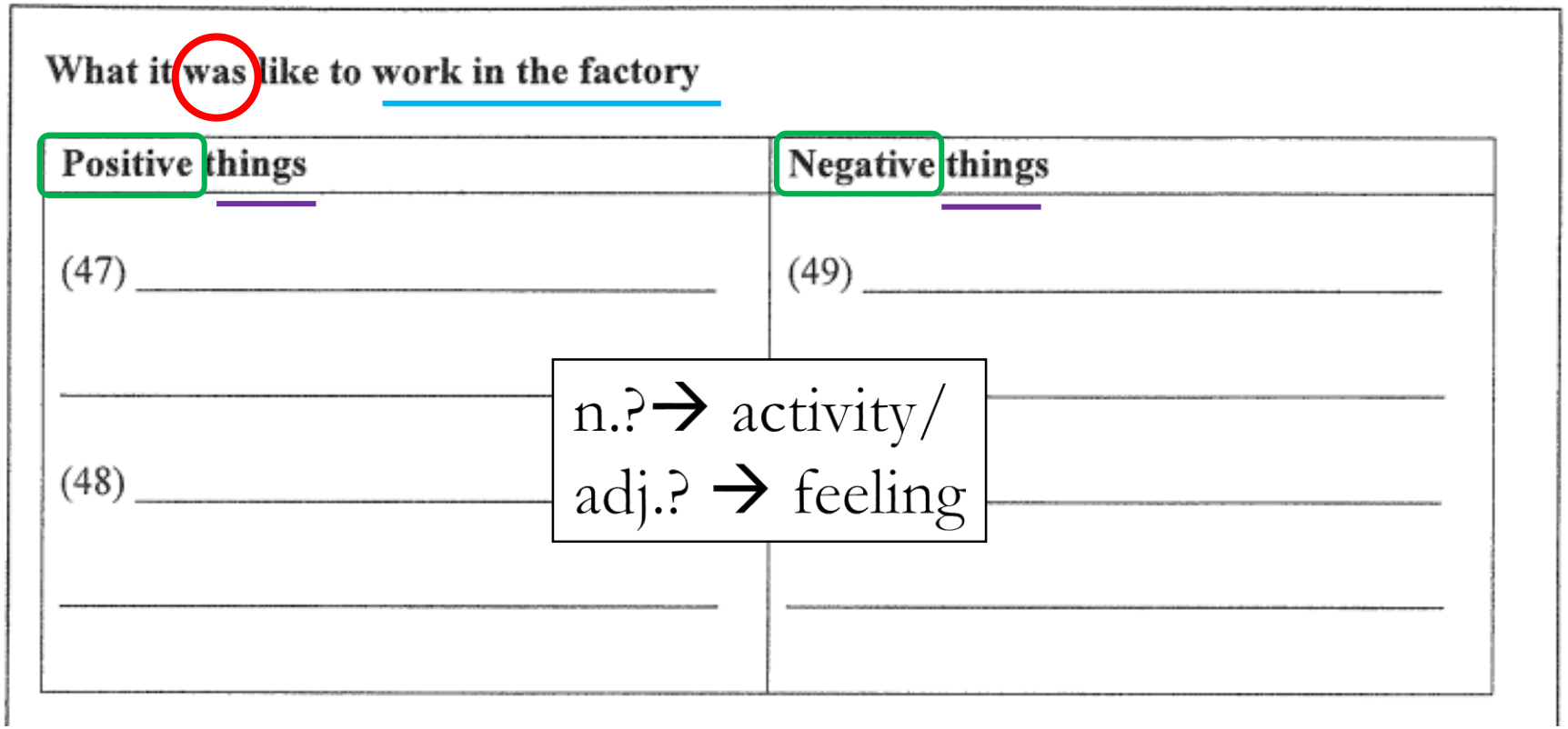
- background knowledge; or
- previous knowledge of the situation, context, and topic

BOTTOM-UP APPROACH

Interpreting meaning through

- decoding the sounds of a language into words, clauses, sentences, etc; and
- using one's knowledge of grammatical or syntactical rules

Bottom-up approach



Source: Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

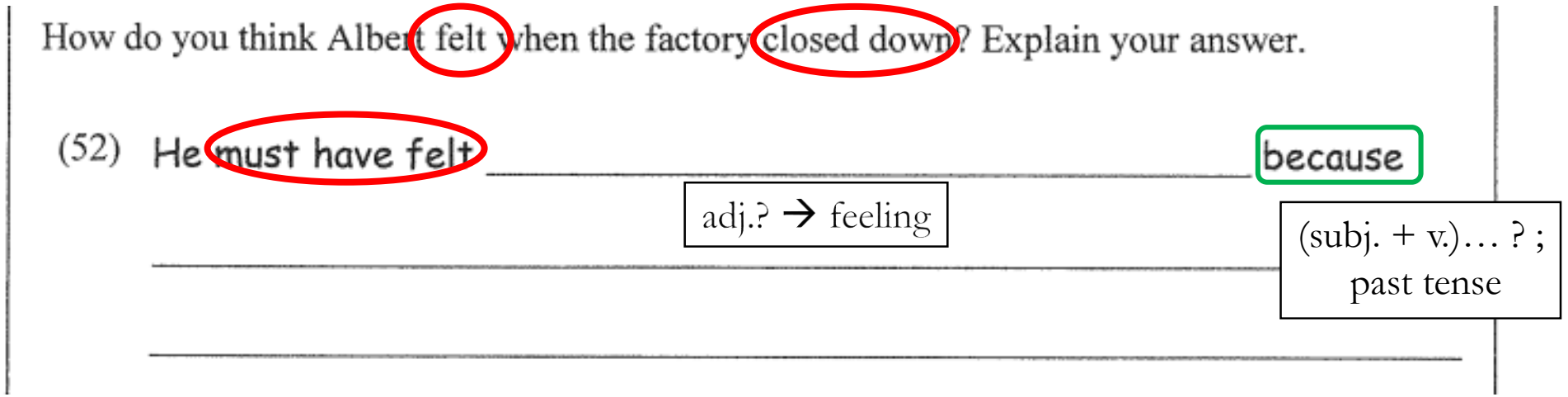
Tapescript

Q.47-50

- **Fill in the blanks→ ideas**
- **Categorise the ideas→ positive or negative**

Source: Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

Bottom-up approach



Source: Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

Tapescript

Q.52

- **Repetition**
- **Chunking**

Source: Part A, Paper 3, HKDSE Examination (2022)

One Step Further:
Self-directed Learning

Self-directed Learning

"Self-directed learners are able to take the initiative and responsibility for learning with or without the assistance of others. They would identify their learning needs, formulate goals, and choose resources and strategies for learning."

Use of e-resources

engaging students in an interactive mode of learning

allowing students to work at their own pace both inside and outside the classroom

Useful e-resources

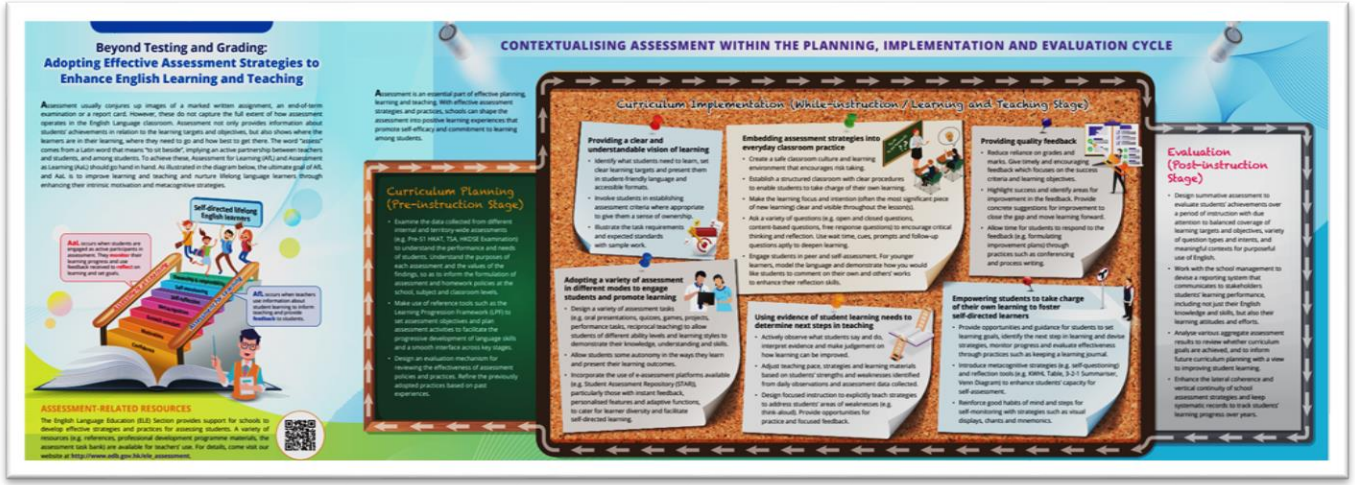
ELE Assessment Task Bank – Listening

Assessment Tasks for Senior Secondary – Listening

Reading | Writing | Listening | Speaking

Title	Files
Job	Q&A Booklet Data File Audio Recording
Advertising (Listening Tasks)	Q&A Booklet (No Data File) Audio Recording
Advertising (Integrated Tasks)	Q&A Booklet Data File Audio Recording
Consumerism	Q&A Booklet Data File Audio Recording
Staging a Play	Q&A Booklet Data File Audio Recording
Overseas School Trip	Q&A Booklet Data File Audio Recording

Leaflet on "Beyond Testing and Grading: Adopting Effective Assessment Strategies to Enhance English Learning and Teaching"



Listening Journal

Students choose a text to listen to.

Teachers provide a variety of templates (e.g. Venn diagram, mindmap, fishbone diagram, etc.).

Allow students the opportunities to match the logic and structure of the listening materials to the graphic organisers

Wrap up

Assessment for Learning – How to Answer the Three Guiding Questions

Seven Strategies of Formative Assessment	
Where am I going?	1. Provide a clear and understandable version of the learning targets. 2. Use examples of strong and weak work.
Where am I now?	3. Offer regular descriptive feedback. 4. Teach students to self-assess and set goals.
How can I close the gap?	5. Use evidence of student learning to determine next steps in teaching 6. Design focused instruction, followed by practice with feedback. 7. Engage students in self-reflection and provide opportunities for them to track and share learning progress.

Chappuis (2009)