# Unit 3 Getting the message across

## Listening Section 3

**1** **Look at all of the tasks. What are the speakers talking about? Circle A, B or C.**

A a dissertation the student is planning

B a dissertation the student is writing

C a dissertation the student has completed

**2** **Now listen and answer Questions 1–10.**

**Questions 1–4**

*Choose **TWO** letters, **A–E**.*

**Questions 1–2**

*Which **TWO** areas of work did Beth include in her dissertation?*

A retail
B banking
C call centres
D tourism
E translation

**Questions 3–4**

*Which **TWO** aspects of the dissertation were impressive, according to the tutor?*

A summary of academic research
B analysis of videos
C observation of live interactions
D interviews
E analysis of data on the outcomes

**Questions 5–8**

Which comments do the speakers make about each section of the dissertation?

*Choose **FOUR** answers from the box and write the correct letter, **A–F**, next to Questions **5–8**.*

**Sections of Dissertation**

5 Dealing with Complaints .....
6 Collaborating with Colleagues .....
7 Interacting with Managers .....
8 Giving Instructions .....

A There is not enough evidence.
B The conclusion is confusing.
C It highlights a real problem.
D It is particularly well organised.
E There are too many examples.
F It includes new ideas.

**Questions 9–10**

*Answer the question below.*

*Write **NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS** for each answer.*

*Which **TWO** aspects of communication does Beth emphasise in her conclusion?*

9 ..... 10 .....



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## Vocabulary

Student's Book unit 3, p28

**1 Complete this paragraph about a piece of college work with the words in the box. You may need to form a plural noun for some gaps.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| evaluation | extract | weakness |
| finding | ~~assignment~~ | structure |
| assessment | feature | |

I've just done a big (1) assignment concerning language skills in various countries. To do this, I read short (2) ..... from various long reports and I had to list the (3) ..... of various research projects. I paid careful attention to the (4) ..... of my report because it had to be well organised in clear sections. One of my (5) ..... is that my work is sometimes not clear and well organised. When we've completed a piece of work, we are encouraged to do self- (6) ..... to see if we find anything we can improve in our work, and then we have a system of peer (7) ..... and comment on each other's work. One of the main (8) ..... of my work is a comparison between the number of people who are literate and the number who can't read or write in various countries.

*Teach, learn or study? Find out or know?*

**2 Correct the underlined verbs if necessary. Put a tick (✓) above the verb if it is correct.**

1 Could you learn (teach) me how to change this picture on my computer?
2 Researchers have found out exactly why this happens.
3 I learnt a lot from doing that course.
4 I haven't been able to know much information on this topic.
5 I handed in my work last week but I don't learn what mark I got.
6 We had to learn hard because we had to write lots of essays.
7 If I study hard, I'm sure I'll do well.
8 Nobody taught me how to do this, I found out for myself.

## Key vocabulary

**3 Complete the second sentences with one word so that they are similar in meaning to the first sentences.**

1 How languages are learnt is an interesting subject.
Language acquisition is an interesting subject.
2 English isn't his first language.
He isn't a ..... speaker of English.
3 It took me about five hours.
It took me more or ..... five hours.
4 This kind of work isn't easy for me.
I don't ..... this kind of work easy.
5 She doesn't belong to the Drama Club any more.
She no ..... belongs to the Drama Club.
6 I think he's trying to lose weight.
I think he's on a ..... .
7 It's important to include statistical evidence in your work.
The ..... of statistical evidence in your work is important.
8 The important thing is that you get a good degree.
What ..... is that you get a good degree.



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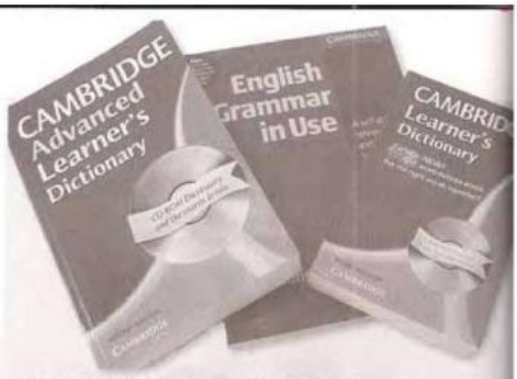
## Reading Section 3

**1 Read through the article briefly and look at the second task, Questions 5–9.**

In which paragraphs of the text will you find the information that you require to do this task?

**2 Now read the article carefully and answer Questions 1–14.**




# STRICTLY ENGLISH

***British newspaper columnist Simon Heffer talks about his new book, 'Strictly English: the Correct Way to Write ... and Why It Matters', aimed at native speakers***

For the last couple of years I have sent a round-robin email to my colleagues at this newspaper every few weeks pointing out to them mistakes that we make in our use of the English language. Happily, these are reasonably rare. The emails have been circulated on the Internet – and are now available on the paper's website – and one of them ended up in the inbox of a publisher at Random House about this time last year. He asked me whether I would write a book not just on what constituted correct English, but also why it matters. The former is relatively easy to do, once one has armed oneself with the *Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* and some reputable grammar books by way of research materials. The latter, being a matter for debate, is less straightforward.

I suppose my own interest in language started at school. Having studied French, Latin and Greek, I saw clearly how those languages had exported words into our own. When I studied German later on, I could see even more clearly why it was the sister tongue and what an enormous impact it had had on English. I saw that words had specific meanings and that, for the avoidance of doubt, it was best to use them in the correct way. Most of all, I became fascinated by grammar, and especially by the logic that drove it and that was common to all the other languages I knew. I did not intend in those days to earn a living by writing; but I was keen to ensure that my use of English was, as far as possible, correct.

Studying English at university forced me to focus even more intently on what words actually meant: why would a writer choose that noun rather than another and why that adjective – or, in George Orwell's case, often no adjective at all. Was the ambiguity in a certain order of words deliberate or accidental? The whole question of communication is rooted in such things. For the second part of my degree I specialised in the history of the English language, studying how words had changed their meaning and how grammar had evolved. Language had become not just a tool for me, but something of a hobby.

Can English, though, ever be fixed? Of course not: if you read a passage from Chaucer you will see that the meaning of words and the framework of grammar has shifted over the centuries, and both will continue to evolve. But we have had a standard dictionary now ever since the OED was completed in 1928, and learned men, many of whom contributed to the OED, wrote grammars a century ago that settled a pattern of language that was logical and free from the danger of ambiguity.

It is to these standards that I hope *Strictly English* is looking. Our language is to a great extent settled and codified, and to a standard that people recognise and are comfortable with. All my book does is describe and commend that standard, and help people towards a capable grasp of the English tongue. We shall always need new words to describe new things; but we don't need the wrong word to describe the right thing, when the right word exists. Also, English grammar shouldn't be a matter for debate. It has a coherent and logical structure and we should stick to it.

Some groups of people – state officials, academics, lawyers, certain breeds of scientist – talk to each other in a private language. Some official documents make little sense to lay people because they have to be written in a language that combines avoidance of the politically incorrect with constant use of the contemporary jargon of the profession. Some articles written by academics in particular are almost incomprehensible to those outside their circle. This is not because the outsiders are stupid. It is because the academics feel they have to write in a certain stilted, dense way in order to be taken seriously by their peers.

Many officials seem to have lost the knack of communicating with people outside their closed world.



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Some academics, however, are bilingual. If asked to write for a publication outside the circle – such as a newspaper – they can rediscover the knack of writing reasonably plain English. They do not indulge themselves in such a fashion when they write for learned journals. It is almost as though the purpose of such writing is not to be clear: that the writer is recording research in order to prove to peers or superiors that he has discovered something. It does not seem to bother such people that their style is considered ugly and barbaric by anyone of discernment. It is repetitious, long-winded, abstract and abstruse. Those who write in such a way probably will not easily be discouraged, unless what is considered acceptable within their disciplines changes.

The ideal style is one comprehensible to any intelligent person. If you make a conscious decision to communicate with a select group, so be it: but in trying to appeal to a large audience, or even a small one that you wish to be sure will understand your meaning, writing of the sort mentioned above will not do. This sort of writing used to be kept from the general public thanks to the need to find someone to publish it. The advent of the Internet means that it is now much more widespread than it used to be; and the fact that it is now so common and so accessible means that this sort of writing is having a harmful effect on the language and causing it to be corrupted.

**Questions 1–4**

*Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in the reading passage?*

*Write*

*YES* *if the statement agrees with the views of the writer*

*NO* *if the statement contradicts the views of the writer*

*NOT GIVEN* *if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this*

1 The mistakes made by his colleagues are minor ones.

2 It is difficult to explain why using correct English is important.

3 English grammar has a different function from the grammar of other languages.

4 Word order may be as important as the choice of words used.

**Questions 5–9**

*Complete the summary using the list of words, A–H, below.*

**The rules of English**

According to the writer, the English language should not be considered something **5** ..... , and this will always be the case. However, there have been accepted reference books for over a century that were produced by **6** ..... people, and these have established a system for the language that enables people to express themselves in a completely clear way.

In his own book, the writer aims to describe and support the established rules of the language that are in **7** ..... use and that people are accustomed to. He also wants his book to be **8** ..... as a way of improving people's ability at the language. He believes that there is no reason why someone's use of vocabulary should not be correct and that grammar should not be a **9** ..... subject. In his view, a system of grammar rules exists and people should always obey those rules.

| | |
|---|---|
| A simple | E knowledgeable |
| B general | F compulsory |
| C controversial | G historic |
| D permanent | H useful |

**Questions 10–14**

*Choose the correct letter, A, B, C or D.*

**10** The writer says that some groups of people use a 'private language' because

A they do not want outsiders to be able to understand them.
B they want to show their superiority over other groups.
C they want to impress other members of their group.
D they do not want to use the same language as other groups.

**11** According to the writer, some academics are capable of

A making sense to people outside their group.
B writing very clearly for learned journals.
C changing the way they communicate within their own group.
D explaining other people's work to the general public.



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12 When discussing the writing of academics about their research, the writer emphasises

A his own lack of knowledge of the academic world.
B his desire to understand what they describe.
C his sympathy for some of the academics.
D his dislike for the style used in their writing.

13 The writer says that the kind of language used by academics in journals

A is becoming more widely understood by non-academics.
B is attracting a lot of criticism from other academics.
C will only change if they are forced to change it.
D appeals only to highly intelligent people.

14 The writer's opinion of the Internet is that

A it is making people more aware of the poor use of language.
B it is encouraging standards of language use to fall.
C it is enabling people to compare good and poor use of language.
D it is making it harder for good writing to get published.

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