

**AUTHENTIC LISTENING**

Listen to these extracts from *Erin McKean's TED Talk*, and repeat the sentences. Listen especially to the speed of her speech, and try to match her pace and intonation. (track 58)

- 1 Every language is just a group of people who agree to understand each other.
- 2 That rule lives in your brain. You never had to be taught this rule, you just understand it.
- 3 So we've been talking about this for a long time.
- 4 And I think that is, well, stupid.
- 5 'Motel' is a blend of 'motor' and 'hotel'.

**WATCH** Choose the best options.

- 1 **What is the main topic of this TED Talk?**
  - a Dictionaries are useful tools.
  - b English grammar is so complicated it's easy to make mistakes.
  - c It's OK to be creative with language.
  - d A lot of English words come from Japanese.
- 2 **According to McKean, what are the two types of rules language has?**
  - a old-fashioned rules and modern rules
  - b formal rules and informal rules
  - c rules based on Latin and rules based on German
  - d unconscious rules and learned rules
- 3 **What is McKean's attitude towards grammar rules?**
  - a They shouldn't stop people from inventing words.
  - b They help you decide whether a word is acceptable.
  - c They explain confusing patterns.
  - d They are the only rules we should follow.
- 4 **According to McKean, how are words like hats?**
  - a Both words and hats come in many forms.
  - b Both words and hats are used by humans.
  - c Both words and hats have "natural" and "learned" rules associated with them.
  - d You can find the word "hat" in the dictionary.
- 5 **How does McKean organize her recommendations about creating new words?**
  - a She begins by telling a story.
  - b She describes six ways to form new words and gives examples.
  - c She compares and contrasts word formation in English with other languages.
  - d She starts with simple words and ends with complex words.
- 6 **Why does McKean say, "OMG"?**
  - a to give a humorous example of a word formed with the first letters of a phrase.
  - b to show shock that the audience likes NASA.
  - c to emphasize her point that anyone can create new words.
  - d to demonstrate that she disagrees with formal grammar rules.

**Choose the correct option to complete the sentences.**

- 1 If you look at the word NASA, you'll / you would notice that the letters come from "National Aeronautics and Space Administration".
- 2 If we didn't borrow words from other languages, we don't have / wouldn't have the word "kumquat" in English.
- 3 If the word "brunch" did not exist, what do we call / would we call a late breakfast?
- 4 If you want a job making dictionaries, you should / should have become a lexicographer.
- 5 If you hadn't been taught what a "wug" was, you would still know / will still know how to form the plural, "wugs".
- 6 If you learn a language as a child, you understand / would understand some grammar rules unconsciously.
- 7 If you use unusual words when you speak, people will pay / paid more attention to what you say.
- 8 If we didn't create new words in English, how do we name / would we name new technologies?

**VOCABULARY**

Match the words (1-6) with the sentences that show their meaning (a-f).

1 get your meaning across	a It's always a good idea to use polite behaviour.
2 manners	b Miguel was very sad when his team didn't win the basketball tournament.
3 grab	c During the storm, the electricity company warned people that fallen power lines could seriously injure them.
4 heartbroken	d Lily works for her school newspaper; she decides what information should be included in each version.
5 edit	e When you know more words, you have more ways to explain your ideas.
6 electrocute	f When you say something surprising or unexpected, you can attract people's attention.