IELTS BACKGROUND - GRAMMAR & LISTENING
LESSON 11

SKILL	CONTENT
GRAMMAR	✓ Comparison 1: Comparatives ✓ Double comparatives
LISTENING	✓ Listen to conversations ✓ Listen to short talks

We recommend the rule 1:2:1, which means 1 hour for reviewing past lessons, 2 hours for homework and 1 hour for extensive reading and listening (with materials close to the topics in class).

NOTES

LIVEWORKSHEETS

LIVEWORKSHEETS

A. GRAMMAR

Comparison 1 (cheaper, more expensive etc.)

A Study these examples:

How shall we travel? Shall we drive or go by train?

Let's drive. It's **cheaper**.
Don't go by train. It's **more expensive**.

Cheaper and **more expensive** are *comparative* forms.

After comparatives you can use **than** (see Unit 107):
- It's **cheaper** to drive **than** go by train.
- Going by train is **more expensive than** driving.

B The comparative form is **-er** or **more** ... .

We use **-er** for short words (one syllable):

cheap → cheaper **fast** → faster
large → larger **thin** → thinner

We also use **-er** for two-syllable words that end in **-y** (**-y** → **ier**):

lucky → luckier early → earlier
easy → easier pretty → prettier

For spelling, see Appendix 6.

We use **more** ... for longer words (two syllables or more):

more serious **more often**
more expensive **more comfortable**

We also use **more** ... for adverbs that end in **-ly**:

more slowly **more seriously**
more easily **more quietly**

Compare these examples:

- You're **older** than me.
- The exam was quite easy – **easier** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **faster**?
- I'd like to have a **bigger** car.
- Last night I went to bed **earlier** than usual.

- You're **more patient** than me.
- The exam was quite difficult – **more difficult** than I expected.
- Can you walk a bit **more slowly**?
- I'd like to have a **more reliable** car.
- I don't play tennis much these days. I used to play **more often**.

You can use **-er** *or* **more** ... with some two-syllable adjectives, especially:
clever **narrow** **quiet** **shallow** **simple**
- It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere **quieter** / **more quiet**?

C A few adjectives and adverbs have irregular comparative forms:

good/well → better
- The garden looks **better** since you tidied it up.
- I know him **well** – probably **better** than anybody else knows him.

bad/badly → worse
- 'How's your headache? Better?' 'No, it's **worse**.'
- He did very badly in the exam – **worse** than expected.

far → further (*or* **farther**)
- It's a long walk from here to the park – **further** than I thought. (*or* **farther** than)

Further (*but not* farther) can also mean 'more' or 'additional':
- Let me know if you hear any **further** news. (= any more news)

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

105.1 **Complete the sentences using a comparative form (older / more important etc.).**

1 It's too noisy here. Can we go somewhere quieter ?
2 This coffee is very weak. I like it ..... .
3 The hotel was surprisingly big. I expected it to be ..... .
4 The hotel was surprisingly cheap. I expected it to be ..... .
5 The weather is too cold here. I'd like to live somewhere ..... .
6 My job is a bit boring sometimes. I'd like to do something ..... .
7 It's a shame you live so far away. I wish you lived ..... .
8 I was surprised how easy it was to get a job. I thought it would be ..... .
9 Your work isn't very good. I'm sure you can do ..... .
10 Don't worry. The situation isn't so bad. It could be ..... .
11 I was surprised we got here so quickly. I expected the trip to take ..... .
12 You're talking very loudly. Can you speak ..... ?
13 You hardly ever call me. Why don't you call me ..... ?
14 You're standing too near the camera. Can you move a bit ..... away?
15 You were a little depressed yesterday, but you look ..... today.

105.2 **Complete the sentences. Use the comparative forms of the words in the box. Use than where necessary.**

big	crowded	~~early~~	easily	high	important
interested	peaceful	~~reliable~~	serious	simple	thin

1 I was feeling tired last night, so I went to bed earlier than usual.
2 I'd like to have a more reliable car. The one I have keeps breaking down.
3 Unfortunately her illness was ..... we thought at first.
4 You look ..... . Have you lost weight?
5 I want a ..... apartment. We don't have enough space here.
6 He doesn't study very hard. He's ..... in having a good time.
7 Health and happiness are ..... money.
8 The instructions were very complicated. They could have been ..... .
9 There were a lot of people on the bus. It was ..... usual.
10 I like living in the country. It's ..... living in a town.
11 You'll find your way around the town ..... if you have a good map.
12 In some parts of the country, prices are ..... in others.

105.3 **Read the situations and complete the sentences. Use a comparative form (-er or more ...).**

1 Yesterday the temperature was six degrees. Today it's only three degrees.
It's colder today than it was yesterday.

2 The journey takes four hours by car and five hours by train.
It takes ..... by car.

3 Dan and I went for a run. I ran ten kilometres. Dan stopped after eight kilometres.
I ran ..... Dan.

4 Chris and Joe both did badly in the test. Chris got 30%, but Joe only got 25%.
Joe did ..... Chris in the test.

5 I expected my friends to arrive at about 4 o'clock. In fact they arrived at 2.30.
My friends ..... I expected.

6 You can go by bus or by train. The buses run every 30 minutes. The trains run every hour.
The buses ..... the trains.

7 We were very busy in the office today. We're not usually so busy.
We ..... usual in the office today.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

5 Comparison 2 (much better / any better / better and better / the sooner the better)

A

Before comparatives you can use:

much **a lot** **far** (= a lot) **a bit** **a little** **slightly** (= a little)

- Let's go by car. It's **much cheaper**. (*or* **a lot cheaper**)
- 'How do you feel now?' '**Much better**, thanks.'
- Don't go by train. It's **a lot more expensive**. (*or* **much more expensive**)
- Could you speak **a bit more slowly**? (*or* **a little more slowly**)
- This bag is **slightly heavier** than the other one.
- Her illness was **far more serious** than we thought at first. (*or* **much more serious / a lot more serious**)

B

You can use **any** and **no** + *comparative* (**any longer** / **no bigger** etc.):

- I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting **any longer**. (= not even a little longer)
- We expected their apartment to be very big, but it's **no bigger** than ours. *or* ... it isn't **any bigger** than ours. (= not even a little bigger)
- How do you feel now? Do you feel **any better**?
- This hotel is better than the other one, and it's **no more expensive**.

C

Better and better / more and more etc.

We repeat comparatives (**better and better** etc.) to say that something changes continuously:

- Your English is improving. It's getting **better and better**.
- The city has grown fast in recent years. It's got **bigger and bigger**.
- As I listened to his story, I became **more and more convinced** that he was lying.
- These days **more and more people** are learning English.

D

The ... the ...

You can say **the** (sooner/bigger/more etc.) **the better**:

- 'What time shall we leave?' '**The sooner the better**.' (= as soon as possible)
- A: What sort of box do you want? A big one?
  B: Yes, **the bigger the better**. (= as big as possible)
- When you're travelling, **the less luggage** you have **the better**.

We also use **the** ... **the** ... to say that one thing depends on another thing:

- **The warmer** the weather, **the better** I feel. (= if the weather is warmer, I feel better)
- **The sooner** we leave, **the earlier** we will arrive.
- **The younger** you are, **the easier** it is to learn.
- **The more expensive** the hotel, **the better** the service.
- **The more** electricity you use, **the higher** your bill will be.
- **The more** I thought about the plan, **the less** I liked it.

E

Older and **elder**

The comparative of **old** is **older**:

- David looks **older** than he really is.

You can use **elder** (*or* **older**) when you talk about people in a family. You can say (**my/your** etc.) **elder sister/brother/daughter/son**:

- **My elder sister** is a TV producer. (*or* My **older** sister ...)

We say 'my **elder sister**', but we do not say that 'somebody is elder':

- My sister is **older** than me. (*not* elder than me)

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Exercises

106.1 Use the words in brackets to complete the sentences. Use **much / a bit** etc. + a comparative form. Use **than** where necessary.

1 Her illness was much more serious than we thought at first. (much / serious)
2 This bag is too small. I need something ..... (much / big)
3 I liked the museum. It was ..... I expected. (much / interesting)
4 It was very hot yesterday. Today it's ..... (a bit / cool)
5 I'm afraid the problem is ..... it seems. (far / complicated)
6 You're driving too fast. Can you drive ..... ? (a bit / slowly)
7 It's ..... to learn a language in a country where it is spoken. (a lot / easy)
8 I thought she was younger than me, but in fact she's ..... (slightly / old)

106.2 Complete the sentences using **any/no** + comparative. Use **than** where necessary.

1 I've waited long enough. I'm not waiting any longer.
2 I'm sorry I'm a bit late, but I couldn't get here .....
3 This shop isn't expensive. The prices are ..... anywhere else.
4 I need to stop for a rest. I can't walk .....
5 The traffic isn't particularly bad today. It's ..... usual.

106.3 Complete the sentences using the structure in Section C (... **and** ...).

1 It's getting more and more difficult to find a job. (difficult)
2 That hole in your sweater is getting ..... (big)
3 My bags seemed to get ..... as I carried them. (heavy)
4 As I waited for my interview, I became ..... (nervous)
5 As the day went on, the weather got ..... (bad)
6 Health care is becoming ..... (expensive)
7 Since Anna went to Canada, her English has got ..... (good)
8 As the conversation went on, Paul became ..... (talkative)

106.4 Complete the sentences using the structure in Section D (**the** ... **the** ...).

1 I like warm weather.
The warmer the weather, the better I feel. (feel)
2 I didn't really like him when we first met.
But the more I got to know him, ... (like)
3 If you're in business, you want to make a profit.
The more goods you sell, ... (profit)
4 It's hard to concentrate when you're tired.
The more tired you are, ... (hard)
5 Kate had to wait a very long time.
The longer she had to wait, ... (impatient / become)

106.5 Use the words on the right to complete the sentences.

1 I like to travel light. The less luggage, the better.
2 The problem is getting ..... and more serious.
3 The more time I have, the ..... it takes me to do things.
4 I'm walking as fast as I can. I can't walk ..... faster.
5 The higher your income, ... more tax you have to pay.
6 I'm surprised Anna is only 25. I thought she was ..... .
7 Jane's ..... sister is a nurse.
8 I was a little late. The journey took ..... longer than I expected.
9 We have a lot to discuss. We need to start the meeting ..... later than 9.30.
10 Don't tell him anything. The ..... he knows, the ..... .

any
better
elder
~~**less**~~
less
longer
more
no
older
slightly
the

LIVEWORKSHEETS

B. LISTENING

Directions: You will hear some **conversations** between two people. You will be asked to answer three questions about what the speakers say in each conversation. Select the best response to each question and mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D) on your answer sheet. The conversations will be spoken only one time and will not be printed in your test book

1. Where is the man working at?

(A) A telephone company
(B) A shipping company
(C) A heating gas company
(D) A bank

2. What does the man say about the woman's bill?

(A) The price has increased.
(B) The account number has been changed.
(C) The company made a mistake.
(D) The woman might have used a lot of gas.

3. What information is the woman requested to give?

(A) Her address
(B) Her account number
(C) Her phone number
(D) Her credit card number

4. Where does this conversation most likely take place?

(A) In front of a person's house
(B) Inside a person's living room
(C) In a restaurant
(D) In a car

5. What is the problem?

(A) Two houses share the same address.
(B) The man brought a wrong order.
(C) The man was late.
(D) The man has no change.

6. What is said about the Johnsons?

(A) They order food often.
(B) They love pizza.
(C) They have a lot of money.
(D) They have a large family.

7. What is this conversation about?

(A) Mr. Coleman's package
(B) Wrong address for packages
(C) Cathy's credit card limit
(D) Packages in the security office

8. Who is NOT receiving a package?

(A) Mr. Meyers
(B) Cathy
(C) Mr. Johnson
(D) Mr. Lee

9. What does Cathy say she will do?

(A) Pick up the packages herself
(B) Give all the packages to Mr. Lee
(C) Thank Mr. Meyers
(D) Talk to Mr. Lee

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Directions: *You will hear some* ***short talks*** *given by a single speaker. You will be asked to answer three questions about what the speaker says in each short talk. Select the best response to each question and mark the letter (A), (B), (C), or (D) on your answer sheet. The talks will be spoken only one time and will not be printed in your test book.*

1. What does the company offer?

(A) Help with online registration
(B) Directory assistance
(C) Financial advice
(D) Security service

2. What must callers do to speak to staff?

(A) Follow instructions
(B) Make an appointment
(C) Visit a downtown office
(D) Call during working hours

3. What number should callers press to leave a message?

(A) 3
(B) 5
(C) 6
(D) 8

4. Who most likely is Sandra Ross?

(A) A popular author
(B) A professional cook
(C) An office manager
(D) A store owner

5. What is implied about the dessert?

(A) It is a new item.
(B) The flavor is unusual.
(C) Many people like it.
(D) It takes a long time to make.

6. What can listeners receive?

(A) Samples of the dishes
(B) Special offers on kitchenware
(C) An invitation to the next show
(D) A free booklet of recipes

7. Who most likely are the listeners?

(A) Visitors at an exhibit
(B) Guests at a restaurant
(C) New workers at an orientation
(D) Participants at a conference

8. What must listeners do to buy food at the cafeteria?

(A) Pay cash
(B) Fill out a form
(C) Purchase coupons
(D) Contact staff

9. What does the speaker invite listeners to do?

(A) Help out at the counter
(B) Explore the facility
(C) Give suggestions for the menu
(D) Ask questions

LIVEWORKSHEETS