UNIT 6: FOLLOWING A LECTURE OR TALK

Following a lecture or talk

In this unit you will practise:

- identify main ideas
- understanding how ideas are connected
- understanding an explanation
- completing a summary
- short-answer questions

1. Identifying main ideas

Test Tip: At the start of each talk, you will be told who the speaker is and why they are talking. You won't be tested on this, but you can use this information to get a clear idea of the situation. This can help you to concentrate and follow the information in the talk.

1.1. Listen to part of a talk by Paul, an Australian palaeontologist (a scientist who studies dinosaurs and fossils). To help practise keeping track of the talk, put the phrases below in the order you hear them.

- The very first field trip 1 went on
- It's an ancestor of the modern Australian wombat
- I found a funny-looking piece of rock
- an old professor studying dried-up dinosaur bones
- I immediately changed courses
- I had to do a compulsory unit on extinction

1.2. Which of the following describes the main topic of the talk? Listen again and choose the correct answer

1. Important lectures Paul has given
2. Describing the process that led to Paul's current role
3. Explaining how ancient Australian animals became extinct

The questions in the IELTS Listening paper focus on the **main points** of the talk. In between the points, the speaker may also mention things that are not directly related to the main purpose of the talk.

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1.3. Listen to the talk again and complete the summary below with ONE WORD ONLY.

Summary
Paul was interested in the **(1)** .....so took an ecology course at university. The course included a section on **(2)** ..... and an interesting lecture caused him to quickly change his degree. Paul says working in palaeontology can be difficult and he describes the conditions as **(3)** ..... However, the discovery of a **(4)** .....from an ancient animal made him realise he had made the right choice.

2. Understanding how ideas are connected

The topics and language in Listening Sections 3 and 4 are more complex. Here are some examples of the information you may hear.

A. the methods used in a particular study

B. the effects of an action

C. the reason an action was carried out

D. the conclusions that can be drawn from research

E. the findings of an experiment

2.1. Listen to four extracts from Listening Sections 3 and 4. Decide what type of information above (A-E) you hear in each.

1. ..... **2.** ..... **3.** ..... **4.** .....

2.2. Listen to the second part of Paul's talk. Answer questions 1- 4 with NO MORE THAN TWO WORDS.

1. What information does Paul get from the machine he mentions?
2. What did the government recently give Paul?
3. What modern-day problem does he say ancient animals can help with?
4. What two causes of mega-fauna extinction does Paul hope to study?

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3. Understanding an explanation

Test Tip: Don't be worried if you see technical terms in the Listening questions. These will usually be explained to you.

3.1. Read the two multiple-choice questions below. Use the information in the questions to complete the notes on the right. The listen to the two extracts and answer the questions by choosing the correct answer, A, B or C.

1. What did the researchers find in their experiments on mice? **A.** A lack of exercise made them appear older **B.** Their cells remained the same as they aged. **C.** Their cells were unaffected by changes in diet.	The talk is most likely about research done on **(1)** ..... The talk will probably mention **(2)** ....., ... and .....
2. What new discovery have scientists made about pigeons? **A.** They use the Earth's magnetic field to navigate. **B.** Their beak plays an important role when flying. **C.** A part of their ear helps them find their way.	During this talk, we will probably hear about what we already know about **(3)** ..... as well as some **(4)** ..... information. I need to listen for whether pigeons use the **(5)** ....., or their **(6)** ..... or ..... to stop them getting lost.

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