



UNIT 7: CONTRASTING IDEAS

Contrasting ideas

In this unit you will practise:

- signposting words
- comparing and contrasting ideas
- using notes to follow a talk
- table completion
- notes completion

1. Signposting words

For Listening Section 4, you will hear a talk by a student or an expert on an academic subject.

Speakers often use signposting words to move from one topic to another, or to help connect their ideas.

Test Tip: A shift in topic often indicates that you should move on to the next question. Use signposting words (as well as headings) in the notes to help guide you through the topics and the questions.

1.1. Listen to six short extracts from different Listening Section 4 talks. Complete the extracts below.

1. OK,the late 19th century, when a great deal of changes were taking place.
2. Now,....., I wanted to give you some background information.
3. So, some possible reasons for this.
4., I'd like to talk about some future projects.
5. So, did we reach?
6. I'llwhat this machine can do.

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1.2. Match the extracts 1-6 in 1.1 to uses A-C below.

- A. to start off a topic
- B. to change to a new topic
- C. to finish off a topic

1.3. Here are some words you might hear in a talk. Match words 1-8 to their synonyms A-H.

1. results	A. background
2. definition	B. benefits
3. challenges	C. solutions
4. history	D. findings
5. advantages	E. conclude
6. disadvantages	F. meaning
7. answers	G. drawbacks
8. summarise	H. problems

2. Comparing and contrasting ideas

Sometimes, the focus of a talk will be comparing or contrasting (saying what is the same or different about) several different things.

The information may be organised as a table that you need to complete.

Test Tip: The information in a table is always read from left to right. The different examples will be described in order. Notice that there is often a title or a heading at the top of the table to give you more information.

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2.1. You are going to do a table completion task. First, study the table. Then listen and complete the table with ONE WORD ONLY.

Plants that changed the world			
Plant	Origins	Positives	Negatives
Potatoes	Central and South America brought to (1) by the Spaniards in 16 th century	It led to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes in (2) • people moving to another country to find new (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Ireland, the (4) became dependent on potatoes. • Disease led to mass (5)
Tobacco	The Americas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It played an important role in US history. • Known as the first (6) crop in the US. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Led to increases in slavery • Became a cause for (7)
(8)	China	Helped bring about independence in the US	The (9) imposed on it became a key event in American Revolution.
White Mulberry	China	It started (10) between East and West.	It led to increases in the spread of disease.

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3. Using notes to follow a talk

The headings in a set of notes can help you in the same way as the headings in a column.

3.1. Listen and complete the notes with **ONE WORD ONLY**.

Plants that changed the world

Prehistory: flowering plants

- arrived about 130 million years ago
- became an essential source of (1)

2737 BC: tea

- discovered in China, played a key role in USA, China & UK
- led to financial problems in Britain - a Chinese ruler insisted all tea was paid for with (2) which had to be sourced from other countries

202 BC: White Mulberry

- in demand from 202 BC when it was essential in the production of (3)
- trade routes led to the spread of different (4) but also made more people ill and encouraged the exchange of dangerous products (e.g. (5)

16th century: the potato

- originated in Central and South America, brought to Europe by the (6)
- it was rapidly accepted because it was cheap and contained lots of (7)
- helped prevent one specific (8)
- 1845-1849 - large-scale failure of potato crops led to a million deaths in Ireland and the (9) of another million people