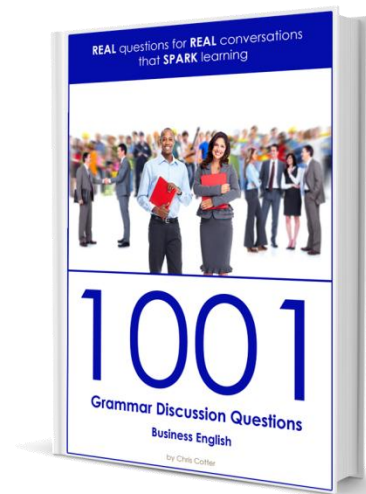
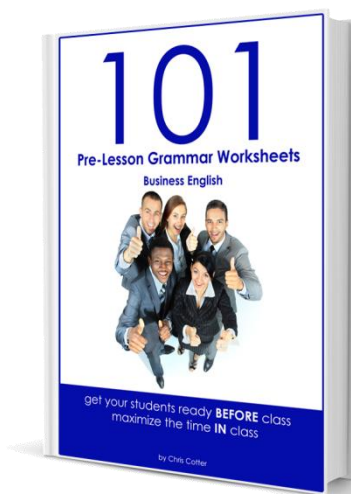
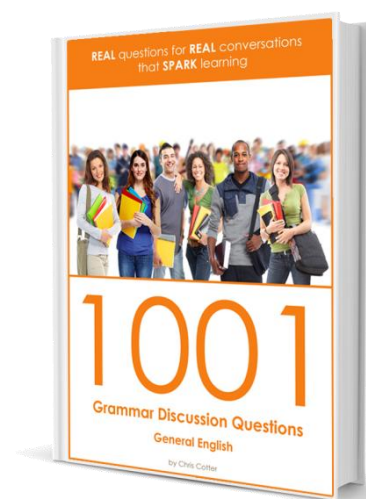
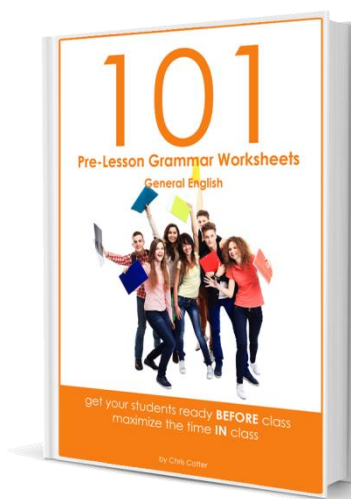
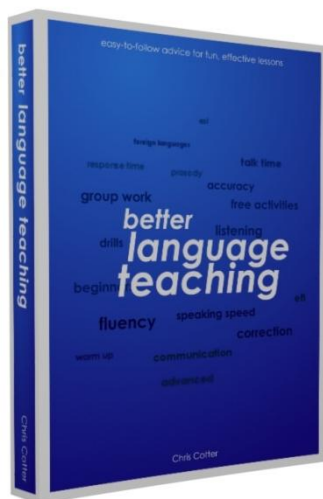


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Skill Builders: Listening – Studying the Future

Lower-Intermediate

DISCUSS

Discuss the following questions with a partner for at least five minutes.

- 1: What do you think the future will be like?
- 2: Will there be flying cars, robots, and colonies on Mars? Why/not?
- 3: Will there be wars, energy problems, and too many people? Why/not?

INSTRUCTIONS

- Step 1:** You will listen to an article on studying the future. The article is about four minutes long. Listen only, and don't worry about understanding everything.
- Step 2:** Read and understand the questions, then listen again. As you are listening, try to answer the questions in your head. Don't write the answers yet. Next, listen again and write the answers this time. Check your answers with a partner.
- Step 3:** Read the article. Check in your dictionary any unknown words. Now listen again. Can you understand more?
- Step 4:** Listen! Listen! Listen! Listen to the article on the train or in your free time. Each time you listen, you will slowly improve!

QUESTIONS

Answer the questions to check your comprehension. If you don't know an answer, don't worry. Skip it, then try to answer it when after you listen again.

- 1: According to the article, who studies the future?
- 2: What are some questions they ask based on the problems we have today?
- 3: What topics do futurists look at?
- 4: Why do futurists believe that all ideas are important?
- 5: According to the article, what is changing so quickly now?
- 6: Why do we need to understand what lies in our future?
- 7: According to the article, what do we need to do together?

the ARTICLE

Believe it or not, but there are people who study the future. They don't use magic. They don't have special abilities to see into the future. They don't just guess. These people look at the past and the present, then try to determine possible, probable, and preferable futures for humankind. They are called "futurists."

There are many important topics that futurists try to understand. They look at the challenges humans face on our planet today, and ask questions about tomorrow. For example:

- How can everyone have clean water in the future?
- How can global communication help everyone?
- How can we safely increase energy production?
- How can we balance limited resources and population growth in the future?

But futurists also want to understand how new developments will change society. They look at trends, discoveries, and developments in computers, energy, leisure, medicine, politics, robots, and space.

Their ideas may seem like science fiction. For example, there will be intelligent robots in every house by 2020 and a colony on Mars by 2025. In fact, these ideas may even seem unimportant, especially when there are more serious problems in the world today. But futurists believe that all of these ideas are important because they will affect everyday life in the future. For example, how would society change if every house had a robot to cook and clean? Would that affect leisure time? Would that affect how children are raised? Would that affect people's work habits? These questions are as important as other questions that focus on clean water, pollution, or energy production.

Humankind needs to know what could happen in the future, or so the futurists believe. The world changes very quickly now. People's attitudes and values are also changing quickly. Additionally, these changes are coming at a faster and faster pace. It's important to understand what lies ahead, so it then becomes easier to make the right decisions and take action now. It's important to understand that the choices we make today will have consequences for our children and our children's children.

Futurists believe that there are desirable futures and undesirable futures. We need to work towards the best one together.



Skill Builders: Listening – Studying the Future

Lower-Intermediate

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES (optional)

1: Which paragraph was the easiest to listen to? Which paragraph was the most difficult? Look at the vocabulary and sentence structure, then think why one paragraph was easy and another difficult.

2: Listen and write the sentences:

These people look at the past and the present, then try to... (paragraph 1)

They look at the challenges humans face on our planet today, and... (paragraph 2)

But futurists believe that all of these ideas are important because they... (paragraph 5)

It's important to understand what lies ahead, so it then becomes... (paragraph 6)

3: After reading the article, what do you think about futurists? Do you agree that it's important to study the future? Please explain.

ANSWERS

QUESTIONS

- 1: People who study the future are called "futurists."
- 2: Some questions are: How can everyone have clean water in the future? How can global communication help everyone? How can we safely increase energy production? How can we balance limited resources and population growth in the future?
- 3: They look at trends, discoveries, and developments in computers, energy, leisure, medicine, politics, robots, and space.
- 4: All ideas are important because they will affect everyday life in the future.
- 5: The world and people's attitudes and values are changing very quickly now.
- 6: It's important to understand what lies ahead, so it then becomes easier to make the right decisions and take action now.
- 7: We need to work together towards the best future.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES - Listen and write the sentences.

- ...determine possible, probable, and preferable futures for humankind.
- ...ask questions about tomorrow.
- ...will affect everyday life in the future.
- ...easier to make the right decisions and take action now.