**Lesson 5**

Evaluating

Evaluating your listening - that is, thinking about how well you have understood what someone has said- is an important strategy. It involves judging either general language progress or progress in any of the four skills: reading, listening, speaking and writing.

Listeners can check with the speaker to determine whether what they understood is really accurate. They can estimate what percentage of a listening passage has been understood. They can assess whether they are at the stage of listening comprehension they expected or wanted to be at this time. Students can consider whether their listening has improved since last week, or last month based on what they understand.

Evaluating also consists in deciding what was unclear and why it was unclear. **There are five factors that can make listening difficult:**

* The physical setting: for instance the acoustics may not help, or there may be background noise.
* The speaker: people have different accents and the listener must get accustomed to them.
* The subject matter: Listeners may or may not be familiar with the topic under discussion.
* The language: there may be gaps in the listener’s knowledge of the language that is being spoken.
* The listener: for example, you might be unable to take notes in a particular occasion because you are worried about something else and can’t concentrate. What other ‘internal’ listener factors do you think influence your success in listening?

***Evaluating your listening***

*Discuss your answers to these evaluation questions in small groups*

1. *How good is your listening, compared to that of other people in the class?*
2. *weaker than most*
3. *about average*
4. *better than most*
5. *better than anybody else*
6. *it depends*
7. *How about your note-taking? Which do you think it is?*
8. *not as good as most people’s*
9. *about average for the class*
10. *better than most*
11. *best in the class*

*3. How much do you think you need to understand, in order to be able to take effective*

*notes?*

1. *less than 25%*
2. *25-50%*
3. *50-75%*
4. *more than 75%*

**Combining the Skills**

**1. Note-taking techniques**

**A. Using Telegraphic Language**

a) Using symbols

b) Using abbreviations

**B. Organising Input**

a) T-formation

b) shopping list

c) word map

*Read the following text and see what symbols and abbreviations could be used. Then organize the information using one of the formats.*

**Biomass**

Biomass can be defined as fuel that is developed from organic materials. Furthermore, it is a renewable and sustainable source of energy used to create electricity or other forms of power.

We have used biomass energy, or "bioenergy" since people began burning wood to cook food and keep warm. Wood is still the largest biomass energy resource today, but other sources of biomass can also be used. Some examples of materials that make up biomass fuels are: scrap lumber, certain crops, manure, residues from agriculture or forestry, oil-rich algae, and the organic component of municipal and industrial wastes.

Biomass can be used for fuels, power production, and products that would otherwise be made from fossil fuels. It is not only renewable due to the energy in it which comes from the sun, but also because biomass can re-grow over a relatively short period of time compared with the hundreds of millions of years that it took for fossil fuels to form.

**2. Lecture internal structure**

**A. Discourse markers**

*Underline the discourse markers in the text above.*

**3. Building Background knowledge**

*Complete the chart into word groups with the information from the text about biomass.*

**Biomass**

**Energy form**

**Renewable**

**Organic material**

**4. Predicting**

*From the text above, what do you think the video will be about?*

*Write a topic sentence.*

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**5. Responding and clarifying**

1. *Think critically about the following question. Then share your opinion providing supporting arguments.*

* **Can biomass provide a standard of living for everyone on the planet in an environmentally sustainable way?**

1. *Write notes about your classmate’s opinion and make comments.*

**6. Inferencing**

A. Guessing intelligently

B. Using clues

**Step 1**

*The following sentences are from the video you will watch. Work with a partner. Using the context and your knowledge of related words, try to guess the meaning of the words in bold.*

1. Biomass is a **carbon neutral fuel**.
2. Biomass is a **biological material**.
3. Biomass is **replenished** with new growth as it is harvested.
4. Biomass could provide an ongoing contribution to climate change **mitigation**.
5. Biomass can satisfy heating and water needs for both domestic and commercial **properties**.
6. Biomass could be used in a district heating **scheme**.
7. Three main types of biomass fuel are used: wood **logs, pellets and chips**
8. Logs are easily **available**.
9. Wood pellets are **byproducts** and need less storage.
10. Wood chip is timber that has been **shredded**.

**Step 2**

*Now, match the vocabulary terms with their definitions.*

1. Matter composed of organic compounds
2. To  be cut or torn into small pieces
3. Forms that wood can take
4. A piece of real estate
5. Lessening the force or intensity of something unpleasant
6. To make full or complete again
7. A system that follows a program of action
8. Fuel with no net greenhouse gas emission or carbon footprint
9. A secondary or incidental product, as in a process of manufacture
10. Suitable or ready for use

**First listening**

# Watch the video “What is biomass”. As you listen, take notes. Use telegraphic language, conventional symbols and abbreviations and complete the ideas below. Then, write down your notes in one of the formats you already know.

**Second Listening**

The teacher will now play the video a second time. Look at your notes and listen carefully for points where, during the first listening:

* You didn’t catch what the speaker said.
* You didn’t have time to note all the details.
* You misunderstood what was said.

**After listening**

After watching the video, compare the content of your notes with those of another student. Ask yourselves the following:

* Have you included the same information?
* If you missed any points, has your partner made notes on them?
* If there were points (words or sections) that neither of you could understand, can others in the class help?

Now compare the form of your notes. For this you will need to put them side-by-side. Look for differences between the ways in which you have used:

* + abbreviations
  + symbols
  + telegraphic language
  + spatial layout
  + emphasis

**Follow-up**

Exchange your notes with another partner. Use this checklist below to evaluate your partner’s notes. Check (√) the skills your partner used.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Note-taking skills** | |
|  | Identifying main ideas and supporting details |
|  | Using symbols and abbreviations |
|  | Using telegraphic language |
|  | Organising notes in a clear format |
|  | Identifying anything that was not clear |
|  | Writing questions and comments |