

Hear the Signal Not the Noise.



EAE Learning objectives for this lesson



Comprehension techniques and strategies. Learn and practice new idiomatic expressions. Practice and test your reading comprehension. Discussions.

Activity One: Discuss with your teacher.

1. Do you often have trouble understanding English?
2. In what situations and circumstances do you find it hard to understand?
3. What types of accent or person do you find it hard to understand?
4. Have you ever tried to adopt a strategy to improve your understanding of English?
5. What is the difference between the verbs 'hear' and 'listen'?



Activity Two: Read the article.



You can't understand Everything! Stop expecting to!!!

Spoken words, the organisation of the words, their intonation, loudness, and stress patterns, gestures, facial expression, proximity, and posture all contribute to meaning. Context factors need to be taken into consideration in interpreting what people mean to communicate, and it is easy to misinterpret another's communication, and it often requires effort!

People seem to accept this in their own language and forget this when trying to understand a foreign language, which is why we often hear them complain '*je n'ai rien compris!*'. It seems that the French education system has somehow made you expect to understand everything and so you have a sense of failure and frustration when you don't. You need to accept that you will only understand partially, and that you must use the context to piece the puzzle together!

So improving your listening comprehension is very much up to you. It's a question of mindset. We know that we don't have to understand every word, or every part of every word, in order to understand the meaning of what is being said. Being open and adopting a 'can do' attitude will help you to process every clue. This will make it easier to understand the main message. Clues can be parts of words, such as prefixes, suffixes or words which sound familiar. Clues can be context, visual cues, the words which you do understand. If you are open to all of this input and you trust yourself and listen to your intuition, you can understand a great deal more than if you focus only on what you don't understand.

Furthermore, the more exposure you get to the language, the more comprehensible input you are exposed to, in a positive environment, the more subconscious acquisition will take place. For example, by watching TV in English, watching things which you find interesting. Or, by reading simple articles in English about things you find interesting, you can greatly improve your comprehension and language acquisition in general. If you are interested in the subject or the storyline then you will be able to process the language in our brain and link certain words or expressions to their meaning.

Language acquisition is a subconscious process. Through comprehensible input, we process language, build a mental representation of it, and eventually we will be able to use that language spontaneously.





Let's break this down into some advice:

- Focus on what you do understand (hear the signal not the noise).
- Try to filter out the unimportant words (not emphasised, or compressed).
- Filter out distractions and background noise and words which are completely unfamiliar.
- Notice familiar words, maybe even jot them down.
- Trust your instinct, use the context.
- Write notes to keep track of the main ideas.(Bullet points).
- Listen out for anything familiar - syllables, morphemes, prefixes and suffixes which are familiar.
- Don't worry about words you didn't understand, don't get hung up on them and blocked.
- Watch TV and read in English as much as you can. Increase your exposure to interesting language, which you enjoy listening to. This will optimise your subconscious acquisition.
- Follow this advice and you will soon see an improvement in your oral comprehension. You will also find meetings and training sessions in English a lot easier!



○ **What do you think** of the above advice?



Activity Three: Questions about the article. Your opinion.

1. Talk about your personal experience and expectations.
2. Do you think that it would be a good idea to manage your expectations?
3. Do you try to expose yourself to English as much as possible?
4. What happens in meetings, lessons or important conversations in English?
5. How do you resolve to improve your listening comprehension?
6. Do you trust your instinct in general?

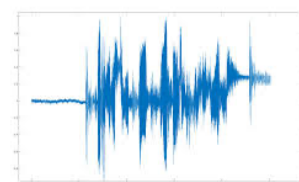
Activity Four: Listen to the recording.

Listening is about 60% of all communication and it is also one of the hardest things to learn when you are learning a foreign language. Listening is very important for you, in order to improve your English. So although it's difficult to teach you how to do it better, it's essential to approach this in our lessons. If you don't listen actively it's very hard to engage as a speaker.

Here's some advice to improve your listening skills.

LISTEN to the recording and then summarise what you heard.

https://soundcloud.com/easyaccessenglish/hear-the-signal-not-the-nois_



Activity Five: Hear the signal not the noise. Fact Checking, FAKE news, Conspiracies... what's it all about??? What does it really mean?

Hearing the signal - it means hearing what things mean. This could be about listening for meaning when you are communicating in a foreign language. It could also be about thinking about things from a certain distance, with perspective, critically. Today in main stream media we are told a lot about fake news, we are warned not to believe everything which is shared on the internet. We are learning not to trust everything we read and to consider the source. Now that everyone is starting to understand this we are better able to protect ourselves from spreading false or fake news or information. However, the manipulation doesn't end here. Fact checkers, fact checking sections of publications, fact checking TV or radio broadcasts, are springing up all over the place. It's now more and more clear that the fact checkers themselves all have an angle! So, who do you listen to? How can you actually get to the truth? What's the signal and what's the noise? With your teacher or a partner, **discuss this issue.**

Activity Six -The Corbett Report - Comprehension activity to prepare at home. Watch the video. It's quite confusing because the presenter uses a lot of sarcasm and shows extracts from other media. Watch, and answer the questions below.

**Episode 381 First 16 minutes. (Please prepare at home).
Who will fact check the fact checkers.**

<https://www.corbettreport.com/who-will-fact-check-the-fact-checkers/>



1. What keeps happening at the start of the video?
2. What point is being made?
3. What does Obama say?
4. What's the difference between fake and real news according to the video?
5. How does misinformation go viral according to the BBC?
6. What do you think 'ham fisted' means?
7. Which term is vastly overused according to Corbett?
8. What does the word 'debunking' mean?
9. What has the Corbett Report been categorised as?
10. Who is he referring to as 'sheeple'?
11. What is his tone?
12. Why do you think that Corbett 'cringes', what does he say is nonsense about the journalist speaking from her kitchen?
13. After nine and a half minutes there are examples given. Corbett is pointing out that people don't look very far to see if fact checking is true. He wants people to be skeptical and think for themselves.
14. The first example he gives is about 'EVENT 201' an emergency preparedness exercise. He points out that it is strange that a pandemic exercise was carried out before COVID. He then shows the fact check about that. New Coronavirus wasn't predicted in simulation. He says that most people don't read the full article. He says that the fact check takes irrelevant arguments to avoid actually checking the facts. What main point is Corbett making? What does he say that they have completely deflected?
15. Did you know about the simulation exercise event? Does it make you a little suspicious?
16. What gifts were given at that event?



Activity Seven: Idiomatic expressions.

Hear the signal not the noise is a metaphor. It's also an idiomatic expression. What do you think it means?

It's really useful and interesting to get to know expressions in a foreign language which you are learning. It also helps you to improve your listening and reading comprehension. Even if you don't use the expressions yourself, it's good to know what common expressions mean because sometimes they don't translate into anything similar in French. Idiomatic expressions may not seem to make any sense at all. When learning French for example, we have trouble understanding things like 'occupe toi de tes onions', I mean we many not have any onions to look after. It makes no sense! In English we say, 'Mind your own business'. Here are some other idiomatic expressions. Can you use them in a sentence?

know something like the back of your hand

- If you *know something like the back of your hand*, you are very familiar with it or know it in detail.
*"Of course I won't get lost. I **know London like the back of my hand!**"*

at cross purposes

- If two people are *at cross purposes*, there is a misunderstanding as to what each one is talking about.
*"Look, we seem to be **at cross purposes**. You're talking about 'sailing' boats, but I'm talking about 'selling' boats."*

crystal clear

- A statement or expression that is easy to understand or has an obvious meaning is *crystal clear*
*"There's no need to repeat the instructions. They were **crystal clear**."*

put on your thinking cap

- If you tell someone to *put their thinking cap on*, you ask them to find an idea or solve a problem by thinking about it.
*"Now here's this week's quiz; it's time to **put your thinking caps on!**"*

(the) brains behind something

- Someone who is *the brains behind* a project or action is the person thought to have planned and organised everything.
*"The police have arrested a man believed to be **the brains behind** the bank robbery."*

all ears

- To say that you are *all ears* means that you are listening very attentively.
*"Of course I want to know - I'm **all ears!**"*

fall on deaf ears

- If something such as a suggestion or a request *falls on deaf ears*, it is ignored.
*"I told Mark not to take any risks, but my advice **fell on deaf ears**."*



- **keep your ear to the ground**
 - If you *keep your ear to the ground*, you make sure that you are aware of all that is happening and being said.
*"We don't know what has been decided, but Jack is **keeping his ear to the ground!**"*
- **lend an ear**
 - If you *lend an ear* to someone, you listen carefully and sympathetically.
*"The best person to talk to is Jenny. She's always ready to **lend an ear.**"*
- **make one's ears burn**
 - If something *makes your ears burn*, you are embarrassed by what you hear, especially if the conversation is about you.
*"The comments I overheard **made my ears burn.**"*
- **music to your ears**
 - If something is *music to your ears*, the information that you receive makes you feel very happy.
*"His compliments were **music to my ear.**"*
- **prick up your ears**
 - If you *prick up your ears*, you suddenly pay attention to what is being said.
*"The children **pricked up their ears** when they heard the word 'ice-cream'."*
- **turn a deaf ear**
 - If you *turn a deaf ear* to something, you refuse to listen.
*"Sam **turned a deaf ear** to his wife's advice and went off in the rain without an umbrella."*
- **bear in mind**
 - If a person asks you to *bear something in mind*, they are asking you to remember it because it is important.
*"You must **bear in mind** that the cost of living is higher in New York."*
- **(have a) brain/memory like a sieve**
 - Someone who has a *brain like a sieve* has a very bad memory and forgets things easily.
*"Oh, I forgot to buy the bread - I've got a **brain like a sieve** these days!"*
- **jog someone's memory**
 - When you help someone to remember something they have forgotten, you *jog their memory*.
*"You don't remember who was with us that day? Here's a photograph to **jog your memory.**"*
- **lose your train of thought**
 - If you forget what you were saying, for example after a disturbance or interruption, you *lose your train of thought*.
*"Now where was I? I'm afraid I've **lost my train of thought.**"*



• **if my memory serves me well**

- If your *memory serves you well*, you remember correctly or you have not forgotten any details.
"You're Stella's daughter, **if my memory serves me well.**"

it slipped my mind

- If something has *slipped your mind*, you have forgotten about it.
"Oh dear! **It slipped my mind** that the shops were closed today!"

hammer something home

- If you *hammer home* a point or an argument, you repeat it often to make sure that it is fully understood.
"The police **hammered home** the dangers of drinking and driving."

Activity Eight: BEYONCÉ! -<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RmGe-LY5HQs>. Beyoncé - Listen [Official First Video]

Listen to the song here in my _____
A _____ I start, but can't complete
_____ to the sound from deep within
It's only beginning to find release

Oh the time has come for my _____ to be heard
They will not be pushed aside and turned
Into your own, all 'cause you won't _____

[Chorus]
Listen, I am alone at _____

I'm not at home in my own home
And I've tried and tried
To say what's on my _____
You should have _____, oh
Now I'm done _____' you
You don't know what I'm _____
I'm more than what
You've _____ of me
I found the _____ you think you gave to me
But now I've gotta find my own
You should have _____

There was _____ here inside
Someone I thought had died
So long ago

Oh, I'm screamin' out
And my _____ will be heard
They will not be pushed aside or turned

Into your own
All 'cause you won't _____

Listen. I am alone at a _____

I'm not at home in my own home
And I've tried and tried
To say what's on my mind
You _____ have known, oh
Now I'm done believin' you
You don't know what I'm feelin'
I'm more than what
You've made of me
I followed the _____ you gave to me
But now I've gotta find my own

I don't know where I _____
But I'll be _____ on
If you don't, if you won't

_____ to the song here in my heart
A melody I start, but I will complete
Now I'm done believin' you
You don't know what I'm feelin'
I'm more than what you made of me

I followed the voice you think you gave me

But now I've gotta find my own, my own

learning objectives

How far have you got?



easy access english

Fill in the bars to show your progress

