
What Should I Listen for with Picture Questions?

Problem: When candidates see questions as pictures and not words, they often 'go blank' and don't think logically about what they can see in the pictures.

This is simply because they are not expecting this kind of question and it is very easy to overcome.

Picture questions are often in section 1 of the listening test in the form of multiple-choice questions. Normally, you will see four pictures that have something in common and there will be a written question above the pictures. You have to listen to a conversation between (usually) two people and decide which picture answers to written question.

Look at the example below: **Which car has John just sold?**

A



B



C



D



What you need to do is to 'translate' the pictures into words. In the test, you will have to do this in your head, but here you can write the words down. Remember – In the test the pictures will be in black and white!

Look carefully at the pictures and write down exactly what you see – the question above has been done as an example:

Picture A

- Sports car
- 4 doors
- No roof
- Small boot

Picture B

- Sports / city car
- 2 doors
- Roof
- Small boot

Picture C

- Family car / saloon
- 4 doors
- Roof
- Large boot

Picture D

- Small family car / city car / hatchback
- 2 doors
- Small boot

You should notice that some of the pictures share the same things. For example Pictures A & C both have 4 doors and Pictures B & D have 2 doors. In this way you can put the pictures into ‘groups’ and this will help you when listening because if you hear that the person has sold a 4-door car then you can forget about pictures B & D and just concentrate on A & C. This will cut down the amount you have to listen for.

Tip: Don’t answer the question too quickly because you will often hear one or more incorrect answers before you hear the correct one.

Read the written question carefully so that you know exactly what you’re asked to do. In the above example it is which car John has “sold”, not “bought”?

Practice One

Which telephone does Susan want to buy?

A



B



C



D



IELTS Picture Questions

(See below)



Write notes:

Telephone 1

Telephone 2

Telephone 3

Telephone 4

Which Bicycle does Peter Want to Sell?

A



B



C



D



Write notes:

Bicycle 1

Bicycle 2

Bicycle 3

Bicycle 4

There is no Answer Key for this worksheet

For more IELTS strategies visit:

Listening : http://www.ieltstips.com/ielts_test_strategies/listening_test_strategies/listening_test_strategies.html

Reading : http://www.ieltstips.com/ielts_test_strategies/reading_test_strategies/reading_test_strategies.html

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