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Qualifications
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**ESOL
Listening transcript**

THURSDAY, 29 MAY

1:30 PM – 2:15 PM (approx)

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Instructions to reader(s):

Recording 1

The conversation below should be read clearly and naturally. After reading the introduction you should pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to read the questions. On completion of the first reading pause for 10 seconds, then read the conversation a second time. On completion of the second reading pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to write their answers.

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(t) Recording 1

Listen to the recording and attempt the questions which follow. You will hear the recording twice. You now have one minute to read the questions in Recording 1 before the recording begins.

(1 minute pause)

TONE

- Kevin** Hello listeners. I'm Kevin Turner and this is the latest episode of Conservation First — a podcast about protecting the planet. Today, we are joined by Audrey Smith, a marine conservation campaigner, who is here to discuss ocean noise pollution. Good afternoon, Audrey.
- Audrey** Hi Kevin. Thanks for having me.
- Kevin** So Audrey, can you explain to our listeners where ocean noise comes from and why it's such a serious threat to marine animals?
- Audrey** Sure. Although there are a handful of natural contributors, such as wind or earthquakes, the overwhelming majority of ocean noise pollution is human generated — think commercial shipping, construction, oil exploration, and naval exercises. This noise pollution negatively impacts on a wide range of marine species driving them out of their natural habitats. And we're not just talking about whales and dolphins, it's quite literally every marine creature. Ocean noise causes stress and can dramatically change an animal's behaviour reducing their ability to communicate, navigate, locate prey, avoid predators, and find mates.
- Kevin** And what is currently being done to minimise ocean noise pollution?
- Audrey** Well, unfortunately, there is no international regulation on ocean noise, so we are working to change this. We are also recommending that governments start offering a reduction in port fees for ships that are complying with requests to lower their noise pollution levels. Incentives motivate people to make positive change. We also have to consider the ships themselves. Newer models tend to have noise reduction technology built in as standard, but there are already several excellent systems on the market that can be fitted to older vessels. The reason they're not more popular is that they are still quite costly, so we are calling for governments to lower or subsidise the cost. Of course, we can't get rid of marine travel completely, but the most effective solution that we advocate is to implement speed restrictions for ships. This not only reduces ocean noise, but also minimises the risk of collision between a vessel and marine life which can cost

the animal dearly.

Kevin So, if an individual wants to take some positive action, what would you recommend?

Audrey We advise people to become responsible consumers. Think about where your purchases come from and try to buy locally. Buy fresh food, such as fruits or vegetables, from your own country — that way you know they weren't shipped from the other side of the world producing ocean noise pollution as they go. Of course, this may require a few adjustments to your dietary regime, but that minor inconvenience will be worth it because you'll be making a collective difference.

Kevin That's a really great point about fresh produce — particularly fruit and veg. I mean I feel like I've noticed a trend where we've fallen into a bad habit of valuing convenience over conscientious behaviour. If I'm perfectly honest I'm probably guilty of this myself. As a society we're so accustomed to being able to buy whatever we want whenever we want, even when that particular product is not in season where we live, without really considering the consequences.

Audrey I think you're spot on. And I can't stress enough how truly tragic it will be if the ocean ecosystem continues to collapse. Disturbingly, we have a whole multitude of threats going on right now that are leading to the emptying of the ocean. Yes, ocean noise is a major player but rising temperatures are also of huge concern, not to mention the devastating effects that overfishing is causing. I've heard people refer to the ocean as the world's life source because it regulates carbon dioxide, produces two thirds of our oxygen, and is rich with biodiversity. If the ocean were to die, there would be disastrous consequences. It's imperative that we protect underwater species and preserve the ocean to maintain life.

Kevin Well thanks Audrey, you've given our listeners — and me — lots to think about today. Join us again next time for . . . *(fade)*

(10 second pause after first reading)

TONE

(1 minute pause after second reading)

TONE

[Turn over

Instructions to reader(s):

Recording 2

The conversation below should be read clearly and naturally. After reading the introduction you should pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to read the questions. On completion of the first reading pause for 10 seconds, then read the conversation a second time. On completion of the second reading pause for 1 minute to allow candidates to write their answers.

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(t) Recording 2

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(1 minute pause)

TONE

Mehmet Hey . . . Tara, isn't it? Didn't expect to see you here! You weren't a great fan of school, were you?

Tara Mehmet? Hi. Yeah, I didn't think I'd come to this reunion, but, I dunno, here I am.

Mehmet You went off to Dundee to do Art, didn't you? So, I'm guessing you haven't found a job yet. And you've got no money. And you're . . . doing a Master's Degree while you're considering the next step.

Tara Actually, I've got three jobs.

Mehmet Three? So you'll be working evenings and weekends and everything? Tara, there is more to life than work, you know.

Tara Ah, it's not three full-time jobs fortunately. So, if you think I'm working 12-hour shifts or something, you're way off, I never do more than 8 hours a day. I've got a portfolio career.

Mehmet Yeah, I've heard about portfolio careers — interesting phrase, isn't it? For some it can mean a linked set of professional roles where you can really impress people and progress, but for others it's a bunch of random stuff — a bit of work in a fast-food joint on a Monday, stacking shelves on a Tuesday and then cleaning offices on Wednesdays . . .

Tara Well, you may find it hard to believe, but mine's basically the first kind. The roles are linked and I am moving forward. But perhaps you're not really interested . . .

Mehmet No, I think I am, try me.

Tara Well, I paint pictures from time to time and some of them sell at the Sunday market, but no, not enough to make a living from. So one day a week I lecture in Fine Art at the university, but there's no sign of an extension of the hours I have right now, so two days a week I work as the administrator in the same uni department that I teach at.

Mehmet That sounds interesting, but not very secure. How do you feel about that?

Tara So here I am, 23 years old, and I'd say it's okay for now, but obviously I'd like to consolidate a bit more lecturing and get permanised for that and then drop the admin bit, then I'd have two jobs, one of them solid and secure, and the other one a bit of painting, or even some arts and crafts as well, and that'd be okay.

Mehmet And how about day to day — I mean I get that you don't rush off from one job to another the same day, but even so, isn't it still confusing and exhausting sometimes?

Tara Yeah, but isn't most modern work like that? For me it's about getting a real buzz out of meeting a variety of people and out of finding myself successful at switching roles — it's a bit like, you know, being an actor. But obviously without being a superstar with my name in lights. Anyway, how about you end this interrogation for a bit and instead tell me if you're having a brilliant time on the back of your Business degree.

Mehmet Well-remembered. Yes, I started doing that but then I switched to an IT degree. I just found myself to be good at it. And then I thought I'd be a software developer, but a job happened to come up in IT support and I went for it and got it.

Tara So you're the guy who goes round from department to department telling them, 'Computer says no', or getting them to switch something off and then switch it on again, and you're the least popular guy in the office?

Mehmet Actually, what you're describing is the situation of, er, some of the other guys. I'm the guy who's in demand, because I get to know people and have a laugh with them and then I usually fix their problem, and everyone goes home satisfied. Well, mostly. And one day, I might get a permanent contract.

Tara We're the same age — so is that you in the same boring job for the next 40 years then?

Mehmet Maybe. Who knows? Anyway, I'm going to get myself another drink . . . *(fade)*

(10 second pause after first reading)

TONE

(1 minute pause after second reading)

TONE

[Turn over

Instructions to reader(s):

Recording 3

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(t) Recording 3

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(1 minute pause)

TONE

Kathy And now, ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour of introducing to you our keynote speaker, Michael Morpurgo with his talk 'Why teaching kids to love writing is more important than grammar'. Michael, over to you . . .

Michael Thank you, Kathy. And thanks for inviting me to speak today. I should start by saying that some years ago, I was made to do an English test designed for 10-year-olds. I don't even want to tell you how I did, but it wasn't good. I deem grammar expressions such as 'fronted adverbials' and 'subordinate conjunctions' to be unnecessarily abstract and I'm often left puzzled by what on earth it all means. You would think that the education system would have moved on with the times, but we're stuck in an era in which school children are trained in analysing language in a way that seems to inhibit, rather than to encourage creativity.

When I was a primary school teacher in the 1970s, we were free of such burdens. During writing lessons, I would concentrate on encouraging children to find their own voices rather than teaching them how to jump through assessment hoops. We would go for long walks up to the nature reserve, look at herons standing in the reeds, and we would be quiet. Then we would go back and I'd prompt them to reflect on their observations. Some children would be descriptive; most were very thoughtful. They weren't restricted by anything I was trying to teach them. This is the opposite of how I was taught, which was very punishment-driven. There was a fear in the classroom, and grammar and punctuation were part of that. I wasn't a naughty child, and I didn't ever want to go into detention, but I did find myself there an awful lot of times. The more red marks I got on my writing, the more resentful I became, and the less I was able to control my behaviour.

I come from quite a bookish family. I was read to every night by my mum, who considered herself to be quite the actress, helping the characters jump off the page. She didn't have the patience to put pen to paper herself, but her eyes shone when she shared her love for a great story or poem she'd uncovered. She'd also turn a blind eye when she caught me hiding under the duvet with a torch so I could pore over the books again. But when I went off to primary school, I learned that words were not for storytelling, or music or fun. They were about spelling and punctuation, and if you got things wrong, you were in trouble.

For a great number of years, I innocently accepted that I must achieve the near unachievable task of retaining and sticking to countless language rules while writing. For example, and I'm sure you'll have heard this one, never ever start any sentence with 'and'. But now, I start huge numbers of sentences with 'and'. While it'd be foolish to suppose we can throw the whole lot out of the window and just do our own thing, it's really a matter of judgment, and not just rules. Grammar, punctuation and spelling are guidelines for how we frame our language, and are fundamental in terms of communication, for accurately reflecting what it is we wish to say and how to be understood. But they're not supposed to tie us up in knots.

My final thoughts for today are about how our current school curriculum approaches language. What we should be focusing on is every child becoming a reader and discovering their favourite authors — not forcing students to read something they have no interest in because they're going to be rigorously tested on it. If you do that, what will happen is that those who are built for testing will flourish and go on their way towards university. And those who aren't begin to feel that they're failures and that language and books aren't for them, because they're not enjoyable, because they keep getting bad marks in tests. More and more, it's space for language creativity that is lacking in our education systems — a place to dream and invent and play. The grammar is supposed to be what serves that. It's not what you start out with in the first place.

(10 second pause after first reading)

TONE

(1 minute pause after second reading)

- (t) You now have one minute to check your answers.

(1 minute pause)

- (t) This is the end of the listening test.

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]

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Recording 3 – Recording is adapted from www.theguardian.com/books/2022/may/18/my-spelling-isnt-that-great-michael-morpurgo-on-why-teaching-kids-to-love-writing-is-more-important-than-grammar.
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