

ANSWER KEY

3B Develop your listening

Introduction


The goal of this lesson is for students to understand most of a TV/radio programme. To help them achieve this, they will focus on ignoring filler phrases.

Warm-up

Ask Ss what kind of street entertainers are common in their country (singers, musicians, living statues, acrobats, magicians, etc.). Ask Ss whether they enjoy street performances and why the performers do this.

1 Ask Ss to look at the photo and discuss the questions in pairs. After a few minutes, elicit answers.

2a Tell Ss they are going to hear an interview with a world champion living statue. Before they listen, they should predict his answers to the questions. Ask Ss to discuss in pairs, then ask for feedback, writing some predictions on the board.

b  **3.6** Play the recording and ask Ss to listen and check their predictions. They can discuss in pairs before you check answers as a class.

Answers:

- 1** 19 years
- 2** several hours
- 3** detail-oriented, competitive, determined, a bit tough, a bit stubborn
- 4** one hour
- 5** connection or interaction with your audience
- 6** never perform on an empty stomach, good stomach muscles,
- 7** because he's well-known, so he's invited to perform at company parties and conferences

c Ask Ss to work in pairs and discuss what they found surprising.

Audioscript 3.6

Evan: ... So, being a living statue is not actually something I planned to do, it was kind of just a fun job I took on while I was at university, you know, to earn a bit of extra money and when I did it actually, it turned out that I was quite good at it.

Interviewer: So, how long have you been doing it now?

Evan: About 19 years.

Interviewer: Wow! And what was your degree in?

Evan: Actually, it was in economics!

Interviewer: Oh, right, so your degree had absolutely nothing to do with performance or anything.

Evan: No, nothing at all!

Interviewer: But has it helped you in any way?

Evan: I would say no, it hasn't really helped me much. Studying economics and working as a living statue have nothing in common with each other. Plus I've pretty much forgotten almost everything I learnt at university.

Interviewer: And you're actually a world champion living statue, aren't you?

Evan: Yep, that's right. I, um, yeah, I actually won the World Living Statue Championships in the Netherlands a couple of years ago and that was, well, that was a great honour for me. It's like an invitation-only event and they're, well, you could say they're the Academy Awards of our profession so, yeah, yeah I was really pleased to win.

Interviewer: And what do you actually have to do as a living statue? I mean, the short answer I'm sure is nothing, you just keep very still for as long as possible, but there's more to it than that, isn't there?

Evan: Yes, absolutely. The first thing really is coming up with a kind of new and creative idea for a performance and then you have to, you know, you have to practise and find the right clothes and the props and stuff and do the full body make-up.

Interviewer: Full body make-up?

Evan: Yeah, for example, if I'm a gold statue then, you know, I'll, like, paint my whole body gold, or if I'm a marble statue obviously, I'll paint my whole body white, and then I'll paint in the faint blue lines, and that kind of thing, to make it look realistic, and that can take several hours.

Interviewer: What did you do for the World Championships?

Evan: Um, for the World Championships I was a stone statue and I painted in these tiny cracks so that I looked like a kind of old, almost falling apart statue, and I think the judges really appreciated that, so to speak, they liked the attention to detail and that's the difference between people like me who do it for a living and ... students who are just doing it for a bit of money over the summer, you know. We're much more experienced, much more convincing and really just a lot better at the job, you know, we have a lot more inner peace, so to speak.

Interviewer: So you need to be quite detail-oriented to be a living statue. What else?

Evan: Well, I think you need to be quite competitive and determined, you know, because you're like battling against yourself and your natural desire to move. So yeah, I would say you've got to be a bit tough and a bit stubborn to stand there for that amount of time.

Interviewer: What's the maximum amount of time you can stand still without moving?

Evan: Well, if I really have to, I can stand completely still for an hour, but a whole session might last six hours ...

Interviewer: Six hours?

Evan: Yes, but, you know, you need to take breaks in that time and change position and stuff like that. But, you know, standing still is not actually the point of being a living statue because otherwise, they might as well get a real statue if you see what I mean.

Interviewer: Yep, I get it. So, what is the point, I mean why do you do this job?

Evan: The point really is the connection you make with your audience and that connection comes from the small, surprising movements that you make when people are looking at you. Those tiny movements that are, how can I put it, part of the character.

Interviewer: So you mean the winks and the small smiles ...

Evan: Yes, that's right. Some people really believe you are a statue and even if they don't, they're waiting for you to, you know, to do something, so when you do make a tiny movement, they tend to kind of explode with laughter, so to speak. And it's that interaction between the audience and the performer, that's really what it's all about.




- Interviewer:** What is the secret then of being a good living statue?
Evan: Well, yes, firstly never try and perform on an empty stomach. If you get hungry you can, like, start to feel light-headed or dizzy so you know, you always need to eat something first. And what else? Well, good stomach muscles are key. You need to have good stomach muscles to hold those positions.
- Interviewer:** And the million-dollar question – how much do you earn as a living statue?
Evan: Ah, well, that's a bit of a secret really but I earn more, now that I'm kind of, well-known, so to speak, because I get paid by companies to perform at their parties and conferences and things like that.
- Interviewer:** Oh, I see.
Evan: But if you're starting out, then you have to perform on the streets and the money you earn is what people throw into your hat, if you know what I mean, and that, that's not really enough to live on, particularly if it's winter and you're standing in the wrong place, if you see what I mean ...

3 Tell Ss they are going to listen again more carefully. Play the recording for them to complete the sentences, pausing as needed. Go through the answers. Ask Ss what the phrases have in common (they are fillers that don't add meaning).

Answers: 1 Actually 2 I would say 3 well 4 you know 5 and that kind of thing 6 kind of 7 so to speak 8 if you see what I mean 9 how can I put it 10 like

4 Read the Focus box as a class, with different individuals reading sections aloud. Then ask pairs to discuss the question, adding more fillers to the box.

Answers: Phrases 3, 5, 7, 8, 9

5  **3.7** Tell Ss they will hear six more extracts from the interview and they should write the answer, not including the fillers. Ask them to read through the questions first to prepare, then listen. Before feedback, put Ss in pairs to check their answers are grammatically correct, then go through the answers.

Suggested answers:

- 1 About ten euros each time I get dressed up.
- 2 No, because you need to be very patient and determined.
- 3 I set an alarm on my phone to vibrate after an hour, then I hide my phone in my costume.
- 4 You don't scratch it and eventually it goes away.
- 5 When people come really close and breathe all over you.
- 6 I don't have one. I do the job because I enjoy it.

Audioscript 3.7

1

- Interviewer:** How much do you spend on make-up?
Evan: Oh, um, good question. Well, let me think, I guess it, um ... it probably costs a bit less than, let's say, ten euros each time I get dressed up.

2

- Interviewer:** Can anyone learn to be a living statue?
Evan: Well, I would say not, because, you know, you need to be, like, very, very patient and determined.

3

- Interviewer:** If you're paid to perform for an hour, how do you know when your hour is finished?
Evan: Hah! That's a good one! Yes, well, it's like this you see, I set the alarm, you know, on my phone to, like, vibrate after an hour or so, and then I kind of hide the phone somewhere in my costume and, you see, when it vibrates I know it's, like, time to stop.

4

- Interviewer:** What do you do when you need to scratch an itch?
Evan: Um, that's kind of a simple one really, you kind of, just, don't do it and, like, eventually it just kind of goes away.

5

- Interviewer:** What do you hate about the work you do?
Evan: Well, I'm glad you asked that because it's kind of like this: what I really can't stand, and this is no offence to my audience, but I really can't stand it when people come really close and kind of breathe all over you. Yuk!

6

- Interviewer:** What is your goal now that you're a world champion living statue?
Evan: Actually, I would say that, you know, I don't really have a goal any more. I just do the job because, strangely, I really enjoy it.

Optional extra activity

If Ss have access to Audioscript 3.7, they can underline the filler phrases in it. Play the audio at the same time so that Ss can notice the way the fillers are spoken. Ask them to read the extracts with and without the fillers to see what is added. Point out that the fillers make speech sound more natural, even if they are not essential to meaning. They also allow the speaker to 'buy time' while they think about how they want to respond.

Teaching tip

Ss often enjoy listening again while reading the audioscript, as they can catch details that they may have missed. While it does not help with developing listening skills, it can be enjoyable when analysing a text for features or looking for specific language.

6 Ask Ss to discuss the questions in pairs, then discuss their answers as a class and see which type of street entertainer is the most popular and why. Elicit a list of problems faced by street performers (people being rude, the weather, needing the bathroom, not enough people passing by, etc.).

Homework ideas

Workbook: Ex 1–3, p26