

IELTS Listening Lesson 23

Setting:

Two university students are sitting in the campus café, discussing their approaches to studying for final exams. They compare how they take notes, manage their review schedules, and prepare for different types of exams.

Questions 1–6

Complete the sentences below.

Write NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS for each answer.

1. The Cornell method uses a page format with _____, main notes,

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4. The second student uses _____ apps for spaced repetition practice.

5. For multiple-choice exams, doing _____ is considered helpful.

6. Reviewing mistakes helps the student to identify their _____.

Questions 7–10

Choose the correct letter, A, B, or C.

7. What type of exam does the first student find handwritten summaries most useful for?
 - A. Multiple-choice exams

- B. Essay-based exams
- C. Oral presentations

8. What issue do both students have with group study sessions?

- A. They are too short.
- B. They are poorly scheduled.
- C. They often lose focus.

9. What technique does one student use to check their understanding of concepts?

- A. Reading summaries
- B. Teaching a friend
- C. Memorizing definitions

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Script

Student 1:

Hey, how's your study prep going for finals?

Student 2:

Not bad, actually. I've been trying out a new method this semester—Cornell notes. Have you heard of it?

Student 1:

Yeah, I have. That's the one where you divide the page into sections, right?

Student 2:

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Sounds organized. I still stick to the old linear method, just writing everything down during lectures. But sometimes, when I look back, it's all a bit jumbled.

Student 2:

That's how I used to feel. The Cornell system forces me to be more selective with what I write, and that makes it easier to absorb later. What about reviewing—do you follow a set schedule?

Student 1:

Kind of. I cram a bit more than I should. I keep telling myself to start early, but then I procrastinate. This week I'm trying to go over one subject per day.

Student 2:

That's better than nothing. I follow spaced repetition. After a lecture, I review the notes the next day, then again after a few days, and again a week later. It's supposed to help with long-term memory.

Student 1:

I've read about that. Doesn't it take a lot of discipline?

Student 2:

It does, at first. But I've set reminders on my calendar, and it becomes routine. Also, using flashcards—especially digital ones—helps a lot with spaced repetition.

Student 1:

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Student 1:

I've never tried those. I usually make handwritten summaries and read them over a few times. It works okay for essay-based exams but not so much for multiple-choice ones.

Student 2:

Yeah, different strategies work for different types of exams. For multiple-choice, practice questions are essential. They help me spot patterns in how questions are framed.

Student 1:

That's a good point. I did a few practice quizzes for psychology and noticed they often ask for exceptions to a rule.

Student 2:

Exactly! You also get familiar with distractors—the options that seem right but aren't.

Student 1:

I should spend more time analyzing my wrong answers. I usually just move on and hope it won't come up again.

Student 2:

But reviewing your mistakes is key. That's how you spot your weak areas. I keep a log of questions I got wrong and go back to them weekly.

Student 1:

That sounds useful. What about group study? Do you do that much?

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Yeah, I know what you mean. I prefer studying alone, especially closer to the exam date.

Student 2:

Me too. Though I sometimes teach a concept to a friend—if I can explain it clearly, I know I understand it.

Student 1:

That's smart. I've heard of the Feynman technique—it's based on that same idea, right?

Student 2:

Yep. You write out a concept as if teaching it to someone with no background knowledge. If there are gaps, you go back and study more.

Student 1:

I like that. I might try it for economics. Some of those models are tough to explain unless you really get them.

Student 2:

Totally. Also, don't forget to take breaks. Pomodoro technique is my go-to for study sessions—25 minutes on, 5 minutes off.

Student 1:

I've used that, but sometimes I skip the breaks when I'm in the zone.

Student 2:

It's tempting, but the breaks help prevent burnout. Especially if you're doing long sessions.

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Exactly. Better to study smarter, not longer.

Student 1:

Agreed. I think I'll start experimenting with some of your strategies—especially spaced repetition and reviewing mistakes. Thanks for the tips!

Student 2:

No problem. Let me know how it goes. Good luck with your revision!

Student 1:

You too. Let's survive finals!

Answer Key

- 1 cues or questions
- 2 a bit jumbled
- 3 long-term memory
- 4 flashcard
- 5 practice questions
- 6 weak areas
- 7 B. Essay-based exams
- 8 C. They often lose focus
- 9 B. Teaching a friend
- 10 C. It leads to mental fatigue

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