

4.1

International business

READING

- 1 Work in pairs. Write down ten classroom objects or things you have with you. Where was each thing made? How many were imported?
- 2 Write three things your country imports and three things it exports. Compare with another pair. Where do the imports come from?
- 3 Tick the words you know. Check the others in a dictionary.

producer wholesaler customer retailer warehouse
consumer competitor customs port clothing

Learning Tip

When you write vocabulary in your notebook, write an example sentence as well as the translation of the word.

- 4 Fill each gap in these sentences with a word from the box above. Then compare your sentences with a partner.
 - 1 Rotterdam is the biggest _____ in Europe.
 - 2 A _____ sells products direct to the public.
 - 3 Your business rival is your _____.
 - 4 A _____ is the 'end user' of goods.
 - 5 Japan is a major _____ of electrical goods such as audio products.
 - 6 A _____ is a place where things are kept before they are sold.
 - 7 There is no _____ control between EU countries.
 - 8 A _____ buys from manufacturers and supplies retailers.
- 5 Read the newspaper article about a new transport link between Europe and China and answer the questions.
 - 1 Which types of goods does the train transport?
 - 2 Which words from the box in exercise 3 are in the text?

World news

Opening the Silk Road once more



It's early morning at a train station in London as a new train arrives in the United Kingdom for the first time. It's a Chinese train which left the city of Yiwu in eastern China 18 days ago. With 34 containers, this train is full of products ready for London high street retailers. Once it's unloaded, UK producers will fill it up with British-made products and the train will return home.

The journey from Yiwu to London is around 12,000 kilometres and it follows a similar route to the famous Silk Road which once connected European and Chinese trade a thousand years ago. If this way of trading is successful again in the 21st century, the train will run once a week.

Larger corporations are unlikely to use this type of transport, but it's an attractive alternative for smaller traders and wholesalers who may not wish to use swift but expensive carrier services. Typically, the train pulls containers of clothing and smaller personal items such as wallets and bags. On its way back, it also stops in European cities where food and drink from warehouses in France, Germany, Italy and Spain are loaded on for Chinese consumers.



In terms of competition, the train company believes their transport is only half the cost of air transport and two weeks quicker than shipping, but not everyone is convinced. Some producers have criticised the costs of the train and prefer shipping because it's cheaper and more environmentally friendly. The journey can also be complicated because of customs regulations in different countries and because some countries have railway lines of different sizes.

Nevertheless, the Chinese train operator is optimistic and plans to add 20 more European routes in the future.

- 6** Decide whether the sentences are 'Right' or 'Wrong'. If there is not enough information to choose 'Right' or 'Wrong', choose 'Doesn't say'.
- The train transports products to and from China and Europe.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
 - This is not the first time in history that China and Europe have used this route.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
 - All types of businesses plan to use the train to transport products.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
 - The train doesn't stop between London and Yiwu.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
 - Transportation by train is faster and cheaper than by road.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
 - This owner of the train wants to offer more services into Europe.
A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say
- 7** Compare your answers with a partner. For the questions that you have answered 'Right' or 'Wrong', which words helped you to decide the answer? For the questions you answered 'Doesn't say', why did you give this answer?

LISTENING

Views on transportation

- 8**  **4.1** Listen to part of an internal meeting at a clothing firm, based in the UK. Which four types of transportation do they discuss?
- 9**  **4.1** Listen to the conversation again and correct the mistakes in these sentences.
- The retailer in China can start production as early as next week.
 - The clothing firm has confirmed the final price to the retailers.
 - Last time, three container loads were held up by customs for over a month.
 - In a worst-case scenario they'd use air transport but it reduces their costs.
 - The price of transporting a container by train is a lot more than shipping.
 - The distance from the manufacturer to Yiwu won't affect the costs.

SPEAKING

Imported goods

- 10** H&M buy 30 per cent of their clothing from China, and 70 per cent of shoes sold in the UK are imported. In pairs, discuss why a European company decides to import goods. Use these ideas. Can you add any of your own?

The quality of the goods is better.

It's difficult to find European manufacturers.

The price is lower.

Foreign designs appeal to Europeans.

The goods are made very quickly.

Other countries can supply in large quantities.

It doesn't take long to transport items from China.

Modal verbs: *can/could* and *should*

Modal verbs have the same form for all subjects. The negative form ends with *n't* and the modal verb goes before the subject (*I, he*, etc) in questions.

- We use *can* to talk about present ability and possibility.
I can speak English and Spanish. (ability)
He can't finish the work before he goes home. (possibility)
- We use *could* to talk about future possibility and past ability.
Our shops could be empty next week. (future)
I couldn't speak to him yesterday. (past)
- We also use *Can/Could I/we* when asking for permission and making offers.
We use *Can/Could you* in requests.
Can I leave early this evening? (permission)
How can I help you? (offer)
Could you sign this form for me? (request)
- We use *should* to make recommendations, and to ask for and give advice.
The European Union should protect European industry. (recommendation)
You shouldn't be rude to customers. (advice)

1 Look at the words in brackets in the table above. Write the correct word next to each sentence below.

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 0 Can we use our dictionaries during the exam? | <i>permission</i> |
| 1 Could you spell your surname, please? | _____ |
| 2 Students should attend all their classes. | _____ |
| 3 I can't do any of these questions. They're too hard. | _____ |
| 4 You shouldn't stay up late the night before the exam. | _____ |
| 5 She could be the best candidate for the job. | _____ |
| 6 I couldn't speak to Mr Jones because he was in a meeting. | _____ |
| 7 Can I show you what to do? | _____ |
| 8 How fast can you type? | _____ |

2 Complete the sentences with *can, can't, could* and *couldn't*.

- 1 You _____ smoke here. If you smoke, the alarm goes off.
- 2 I'm afraid Mrs Doriguez isn't available at the moment. _____ you come back later, please?
- 3 '_____ you read this dossier for tomorrow?' 'No, I'm sorry, I _____.'
- 4 Good morning, Johnson & Johnson. _____ I help you?
- 5 Mr Jensen is not in at the moment. _____ I take a message?
- 6 I _____ call you because my mobile phone battery was flat.

3 Work in pairs. Take turns as Student A and Student B in each of these situations.

Student A: Choose one of the problems below. Tell your partner about it.

Student B: Listen to your partner's problem and give him/her some advice.

- You have just sent an email full of spelling mistakes to an important client.
- Your colleague is often late for meetings with suppliers and it reflects badly on the company.
- Your boss can't keep his records organised and it gives you lots of extra work.
- You can't speak any other languages, but you want to be promoted.
- Your colleague is often away from his desk for long periods and you have to make excuses for him.
- You never remember clients' names and it is embarrassing.

- 4 Do you prefer to communicate face-to-face or on the phone? Why?
- 5 Read an article about teleconferencing. What are the advantages and disadvantages compared to face-to-face communication?

THE SKILL OF EFFECTIVE TELECONFERENCING

For anyone who does international business, face-to-face meetings can be very useful – especially at the beginning of a new business relationship. However, such meetings often take up a sizeable chunk of time and costs can run high as a result of the flights, hotels, and meals. The alternative is teleconferencing which is a great way to connect people cheaply and it's much quicker than face-to-face meetings overseas.

It's true that teleconference meetings can often go wrong. People are sometimes late because they are calling in from different international time zones or because they have technical problems. But with proper planning and preparation – as with any meeting – you can usually avoid any difficulties.

The first thing to do is arrange a date and time that suits everyone and make sure everyone understands the local time. If you are based

in London, don't plan the meeting at 9am with colleagues in South America because it's probably the middle of the night. Also, send out the agenda and any relevant information a few days in advance.

Teleconferencing can also get confusing if you have too many people attending, so limit it to about five people if possible. Like a normal meeting, you will need someone to lead the teleconference. This person needs to make sure everyone has a chance to speak and should also use other people's names a lot so everyone knows who's speaking. Afterwards, write the minutes – or summary – of the teleconference for everyone.



- 6 Read the text again and choose the correct ending (A, B or C) for each sentence (1–4).

- 1 Teleconferencing is ideal if
 - A you want to work with people in other countries.
 - B you don't want to bear the costs of face-to-face meetings.
 - C you want meetings to be more effective.
- 2 Sometimes teleconferences go wrong because
 - A people don't remember to telephone at the correct time.
 - B a lot of employees prefer face-to-face communication.
 - C people prepare and plan it like a normal meeting.
- 3 When arranging a date and time for the meeting,
 - A think about where everyone is based.
 - B only invite people in nearby countries.
 - C remember that mornings are usually the best time.
- 4 When you lead a teleconference, it's a good idea to...
 - A speak more than other people to avoid confusion.
 - B invite lots of people so everyone knows what's happening.
 - C say people's names when you want them to speak.

- 7 Match words from A and B to make collocations from the article.

A	B
1 go	people
2 connect	a date
3 arrange	any difficulties
4 plan	wrong
5 send out	a meeting
6 have	the minutes
7 avoid	the agenda
8 write	technical problems

- 8 Write questions with collocations. Then ask your partner the questions.

How often do you have face-to-face meetings at work?

4.2

Business communications

SPEAKING



On the phone

1 Work in pairs. Read each phrase and decide who could say it – the person who makes the call (C) or the person who receives the call (R)?

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Can I help you? | 8 I'll give it to you. |
| 2 Can I leave him a message? | 9 I'll pass your message on to |
| 3 Can I say that back to you? | 10 I'm sorry, the line is busy. |
| 4 Does she have your number? | 11 This is ... , of |
| 5 I'd like to speak to ... , please. | 12 Who's calling, please? |
| 6 I'll call back later. | 13 Would you like to leave a message? |
| 7 I'll ask ... to call you when she gets back. | 14 I'm afraid ... is not in her office at the moment. |

2 Match what the receptionist says (1–6) with the caller's responses (A–F). Then practise saying the short exchanges with your partner.

Receptionist

- 1 Smith & Sons. Can I help you?
- 2 Who's calling, please?
- 3 Can I take a message?
- 4 Does he have your number?
- 5 I'm sorry. The line is busy.
- 6 I'll ask him to call you when he gets back.

Caller

- A No thanks. I'll call back later.
- B Thank you very much. Goodbye.
- C Hello. I'd like to speak to Albie Smith, please.
- D Can I leave him a message?
- E It's Jane Bowman of Bowman's Builders.
- F I'll give it to you now.

3 4.2 Listen to the telephone conversation between Jane Barrett of Bryant & Sons and the receptionist at Wates' Office Supplies. Underline the objects that Jane mentions.



printer cartridges



pencils



pens



envelopes



paper



diaries

4 4.2 Listen to the conversation again. Complete the order form with the correct letters and numbers.



Order Form		
Quantity	Description	Model
3	(a) boxes of _____ paper	
(b) _____	printer cartridges	(e) _____
(c) _____	boxes of pencils	
(d) _____	boxes of pens	

Tel: 0573 – (f) _____

5 Work in pairs. Practise the telephone conversation, following the prompts.

Receptionist	Caller
You work for Thorpe Office Supplies Ltd. Answer the call.	
	Ask to speak to Raj Kahn.
Say that Mr Kahn is in a meeting. Offer to take a message.	
	Explain that your order has arrived and it is wrong. You ordered: four diaries, three packets of envelopes, and two printer cartridges. You received: one diary, six packets of envelopes, and one printer cartridge. The printer cartridge was the wrong one.
Ask which printer cartridge the customer ordered.	
	Code: HL630
Ask which printer cartridge the customer received.	
	Code: HPC 3903 A
Say that you will ask Mr Kahn to call when his meeting finishes. Ask if he has the customer's telephone number.	
	Give your number.
Say the number again to check it.	
	If the number is correct, say so.
Say that you will pass the message on.	
	Thank the receptionist. Say goodbye.

WRITING

Exam Success

This is similar to the task in Part Two of the Writing Test. You have to write a response to a short communication. Don't copy from this text: practise ways of writing the information in your own words.

Dealing with complaints

6 Read this section of a letter from a customer to Mr Raj Kahn. What is the main purpose of the letter? Choose from the following.

- A to return an order
- B to complain about the non-arrival of an order
- C to cancel an order

Dear Mr Kahn

I am writing to complain about our stationery order of 12th March. Following my telephone conversation to your office on 21st March, I expected to receive the correct goods. However, that was a week ago and we are still waiting for delivery.

Could you please assure me that the order will be sent correctly and as soon as possible? If not, we will be forced to look for another supplier in the future.

Yours sincerely
Peter Paxman

7 Reply to the customer, apologising for the problems and giving an explanation. Offer the customer a discount of five per cent on the order. Write 60–80 words.

Useful language

I apologise for ...	We had a problem with ...
Please accept my apologies for ...	I would like to offer ...
I would like to apologise for ...	I can offer ...
Unfortunately, ...	Please accept ...
The problem was due to ...	

will for offers and promises

We often use *will* when we decide to do something – for example, in offers and promises.

I'll ask him to call you. (offer)

I'll do it later. (promise)

1 Complete the sentences with *I'll* and a suitable verb.

- Mr Grey isn't in his office. _____ him you rang.
- I know Carrie's extension number. _____ her for you.
- _____ at these accounts today, I promise.
- Those files look heavy. _____ them for you.
- I pass the post office on my way home. _____ those letters for you.
- I'm not usually late. _____ at work on time tomorrow!

2 Complete the conversation below with the sentences in the box.

I'll write the report tomorrow morning. I'd like to check them again.
 I'd like to speak to Natalia Marin, please. I'll see you tomorrow.
 I'll send them to you this afternoon. Would you like to come?

Natalia Westlaine Pharmaceuticals.

Sven Hello. (1) _____

Natalia Speaking.

Sven Hi, Natalia. It's Sven. I need your budget figures for the report. Can you email them to me?

Natalia They're not ready yet, I'm afraid. (2) _____
 Some of the figures aren't quite right.

Sven When do you think they'll be ready?

Natalia I'm working on them now. (3) _____
 Is 4 o'clock all right?

Sven Yes, that's fine. (4) _____

Natalia Oh, by the way, Margareta is leaving next week. We're having a little party tomorrow afternoon. (5) _____

Sven Yes, I'd love to. What time?

Natalia Half past three.

Sven Great. (6) _____ Bye.

3 4.3 Listen to the conversation and check your answers.

4 Practise the conversation with a partner.

5 Work in pairs. Use the prompts below to practise conversations with your partner. Each exchange will involve making an offer, a promise or a request.

1 **Retailer:** The delivery of new LED TVs is late. Your special promotion starts tomorrow.

Wholesaler: Promise to find out why there is a problem.

2 **Exporter:** You need prices and schedules for a shipment of electrical equipment to Mexico.

Freight forwarder: Ask if the exporter wants the information by email or return call.

3 **Distributor:** You want to know when the merchandising products will be available.
Manufacturer: Offer to find out and return the call.

4 **Wholesaler:** You want to know if your containers have arrived.


Importer: Ask if the wholesaler wants to speak to the warehouse.

Telephone messages

6  **4.4 Listen to extracts from four telephone conversations and tick the expressions you hear.**

- How do you spell that?
- Could you spell your name, please?
- M for Madrid.
- Did you say the 21st?
- Let me just check that.
- Could you repeat that, please?

7  **4.5 Listen to four telephone calls and correct two mistakes in each message.**

1  Telephone Message


Message for: Ms Chandra

From : Joe Panetta

Caller's company: AC Associates

Tel./Email: 0632 157431

Message: Would you like to wait for the new brochure which is coming out in two weeks' time?

2  Telephone Message


Message for: Mrs Horbaczewski

From : Bob Davis

Caller's company: _____

Tel./Email: bd.davis@gmail.com

Message: Could you post Mr Davis a copy of his tax form for last year?

3  Telephone Message

Message for: Mrs Peters

From : Sigrid Junge

Caller's company: Hoffmann gmbh

Tel./Email: _____

Message: Can you see Ms Junge on the 16th? She can't fly to London on the 17th.

4  Telephone Message


Message for: Mr Dando

From : Martin Kramer

Caller's company: _____

Tel./Email: _____

Message: He hasn't accepted the first offer.

8  **4.6 Listen to three short recordings. Choose the best answer (A, B or C) for each question.**

- 1 When will the goods arrive?
 - A on 3 February
 - B on 16 February
 - C on 19 February
- 2 Who does the caller want to speak to?
 - A the personnel manager
 - B the production manager
 - C the managing director
- 3 What new time does the caller suggest for the meeting?
 - A 1.00pm
 - B 2.30pm
 - C 4.30pm

4.3

Speaking Test: Introduction and Part One

EXAM FORMAT

The Speaking Test lasts 12 minutes in total. It has three parts and you can get 30 marks. You do the Speaking Test with a partner.

Part One is an interview. This is a conversation between an examiner and each candidate. It lasts about two minutes in total. The topics for conversation could be: giving personal details, talking about your work or studies, describing your home, speaking about your hobbies, etc. You also have to give your personal opinions.

Part Two is a mini-presentation. Each candidate chooses one topic. You have one minute to organise your thoughts and one minute to present your ideas. At the end, the other candidate has to express his/her opinion of your ideas and you have to do the same. The topics for your presentation could be: choosing a course, booking a flight, selling a new product, etc. In total, this part lasts five minutes.

Part Three is a discussion. In this part of the test, the examiner presents a situation using pictures or a text. You then have a conversation with the other candidate, discussing ideas and making choices. The examiner asks you to explain your choices. The topics for discussion here could be: training, health and safety, business services, management skills, etc. The third part lasts five minutes in total.

1 Read about the Speaking Test above and decide if candidates do the following in Part One, Part Two or Part Three. Tick ✓ as appropriate. Some of the features are connected with more than one part of the test.

	One	Two	Three
1 You might look at pictures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 You have time to prepare what to say.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 You talk about yourself.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 You choose what to talk about.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 You answer the examiner's questions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 You discuss a situation with your partner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 You talk for a minute about a subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 You comment on what your partner has said.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2  **4.7** Listen to a recording of two candidates who are doing Part One of the Speaking Test. Write down the information about each candidate in this table.

Name	Christine (1) _____	João Cordeiro
City/ Country	Brittany in (2) _____	(3) _____
Work and studies	Works for a multinational company in Paris. Finished school last year.	Works for an (4) _____ company. Attends an evening class in (5) _____
Reasons for liking job	Likes speaking English with colleagues and (6) _____	Likes working with (7) _____ people

EXAM PRACTICE

Exam Success

Before the exam: practise speaking in small groups.
During the exam: if you don't understand a question, ask the examiner to repeat it.

Spare time	Reading, listening to music, swimming and (8) _____	Taking photos, going to the cinema and visiting (9) _____
Opinions on towns and cities	Prefers (10) _____	Prefers big cities because it's exciting and there's a lot to do.

EXAM SKILL

3 Complete the examiner's questions from Part One of the Speaking Test in full.

- 1 What / name? *What's your name?*
- 2 How / spell / surname? _____
- 3 Where / from? _____
- 4 Do / work / study? _____
- 5 Do / like / job? _____
- 6 What / you / in / spare time? _____
- 7 Do / have / hobbies? _____
- 8 Do / think it's better / live in a small town / a big city?

4 4.7 Listen to the recording again. Check your answers in exercise 3.

5 Work in groups of three. Turn to the transcript of the recording on page 153 and read the conversation aloud.

EXAM PRACTICE

6 Prepare for Part One of the Speaking Test. Complete the first column of the table with your personal information. Then add an additional comment for each field, as in the examples.

	personal information	additional comment
your name	<i>Phyllis Smith</i>	<i>It's difficult to spell.</i>
your city and country	<i>Rotterdam</i>	<i>It's a nice place to live.</i>
your name		
your city and country		
your home		
your job		
your studies		
your hobbies		

7 Work in groups of three and practise similar conversations for Part One of the Speaking exam. Take turns to be the examiner and candidates. Use the questions in exercise 3 and include the information in exercise 6.