Instructor’s Manual

12 American Voices

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Introduction

This manual contains suggestions on how to most effectively use the broadcasts and lessons in *Twelve American Voices*. We have taught these stories to many students and in a wide variety of classrooms. In each case there were differences large and small in how the lessons were taught depending on the goals and orientations of the course and—even more—on the interests and responses of the students. For that reason we would like to begin by emphasizing that our experience and advice are only that. You should accept only that which seems applicable to your own teaching situation.

We have organized this manual in the following way: Each chapter begins with a brief Introduction to the Broadcast. These notes include a synopsis of the story and comments on its content and major themes.

This is followed by Culture and Language Notes, which is intended to give background on some points, mostly vocabulary and idiomatic phrases, that might not be readily clear to teachers who have not lived extensively in the United States. This feature may also be helpful for those native-speaking instructors who find themselves teaching a lesson on a corner of American culture with which they are not familiar.

Once you have read these notes and decided to teach the story, we suggest that you listen to the broadcast before taking it into the classroom. A great
deal of the meaning of the broadcasts (as well as their charm and richness) can come only by actually hearing them. Also, noting your own reactions to a broadcast while listening on your own is the best preparation to lead the class through it.

The next section, Notes on the Exercises, consists of comments on each activity in the lesson. The notes for Chapter 1 are more extensive than are those for the other chapters, as this is an introduction to the book in a number of ways. In fact, we recommend reading through "Hunan Chef," both the chapter and the notes, no matter what chapter you plan to use first.

Using authentic materials such as these radio stories has a number of advantages for students and teachers alike. They are culturally as well as linguistically rich, and, because they were designed to appeal to native speakers, they are well crafted enough to bear up to repeated listening, which is important in a language classroom. However, working with authentic materials may require some adjustment. For that reason we would like to point out some of the ways that authentic materials can be different and explain a few of the principles that underlie the approach taken in this book.

The first difference is that the language in authentic materials is not as neatly controlled as in texts written for the classroom. The level of vocabulary and structures may range widely within a single broadcast. For this reason it is important to rethink what it means to "understand" a text. This book defines comprehension as the ability to appreciate and respond intelligently to the broadcast, but not necessarily to have mastery of every word it contains. After all, any two native speakers who hear a story such as these will likely have different memories and interpretations of it. The goal of *Twelve American Voices* is to put students in a position to construct their own meaning from the text, not to come to adopt wholeheartedly our, or your, interpretation of what it means.

We feel that this book can be used successfully with a wide range of classes, from lower intermediate to advanced. This reflects another principle of working with authentic materials: that it is far more important to grade the task—what is asked of the students, what support they are given, and how much time is allowed—than to grade the level of the text itself. Thus a lower-level class might need to do careful preparation in the Orientation and Vocabulary sections and perhaps repeat the Listening for Comprehension section (techniques for managing listening with lower levels are given below). A more advanced class might zip through these stages and be able to devote more of a given class period to Listening for Analysis and the After Listening activities. You, as the instructor, will act as a bridge between the broadcasts
and your students, using your judgment and their responses to determine how best to proceed.

Finally, we should note that these broadcasts are unedited from the form in which they appeared on National Public Radio, and some of the themes and language that they contain are of an adult nature. For example, “Airplane Ashes” discusses different means of observing death, and “Chained Girl” deals with drug addiction and the limits of parental discipline; the subject of “Cynical Santa” expresses his irascibility with such phrases as “Aw, to hell with it” and “I gotta go pee.” We consider all of the stories and the language used in them to be ultimately in good taste and to contribute to our students’ understanding of American culture. In fact, we consider these lessons to be something of an antidote to the watered-down language of so many ESL textbooks, which do not adequately respect students’ maturity and intelligence. We treat students as thinking adults capable of dealing with difficult issues or learning about impolite language. However, tastes and standards do vary. It is best to listen to the broadcasts yourself and then judge whether they are appropriate for your students.

With this book Twelve American Voices is leaving our hands and going out to a range of teachers, students, and classrooms. The meaning of these broadcasts and lessons will be different for each person who interacts with them. We hope that this manual serves you well as a starting point in looking for ideas and directions for your teaching of Twelve American Voices and that the lessons that you and your students derive from David Isay’s stories are rich and satisfying. Even more so, we hope that you find in these stories meanings and insights that we had not anticipated.

Structure of the Chapters

BEFORE LISTENING

Learners hear better when they have a context for the input they are receiving, so in this stage we introduce students to the world of the story. The two activities are intended to spur students’ curiosity and latent knowledge about the subject and to introduce vocabulary relevant to its themes and subject area. This helps to make the listening that follows more realistic and meaningful.

The emphasis here should be on raising issues in preparation for listening. (Themes raised in the Before Listening activities are generally revisited in the
After Listening activities, where they are dealt with in greater depth after students have worked with the broadcast.) The Before Listening activities should not take more than fifteen to twenty minutes.

In the Orientation students are asked to consider some of the themes of the story in a way related to their own experience (e.g., in “Hunan Chef” they are asked to describe a restaurant they themselves have gone to regularly).

The degree of teacher presentation needed at this point will depend on how familiar your class is with the procedures for working in groups. On your first occasion using this book with a given class, it may be worthwhile to establish protocols for working in groups. Additionally, consider modeling the type of response that is expected by giving your own response to the topic.

Once students are in working groups, it is advisable to limit their exchanges to about five minutes. You can let students know that they will have an opportunity to go more deeply into the subject later in the lesson. At this point, it is enough to simply raise the issues so that students are primed for listening to the broadcast.

Teachers should focus on what different individuals and groups have to say and avoid correcting the accuracy of language use unless there is a serious breakdown in communication.

The Vocabulary activity prepares students to listen by presenting words that may be unfamiliar and that are related to the themes and ideas in the story. Not all potentially difficult words are presented; rather, the focus is on vocabulary central to the ideas in the story. Later in each chapter, students are invited to ask about other words they are interested in learning in the Listening for Analysis activity.

In doing the vocabulary activities, students should be encouraged to pool their knowledge, to work together on each item rather than simply check their answers with each other afterward. In many cases, use of English-English dictionaries is encouraged. Two-language dictionaries, which pull the student away from English and which are often inaccurate, should be used only as a last resort.

**LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING**

This is the longest section of the lesson, and its goal is to lead students to a native-like understanding of the many meanings in the broadcast. The heart of this section consists of a three-part listening sequence leading to both comprehension of the broadcast and an appreciation of how it achieves its
effects. Opportunities are also given for focused work on points of language structure that come up in the story.

Each broadcast is preceded by a brief Introduction, which replaces the kind of introduction typically given by the radio host before David Isay's broadcast begins. You might read the introduction aloud (or ask a student to) or simply let students read it themselves before moving on. There are no activities associated with the introduction.

The First Listening: Predicting activity gives students a focus for their first hearing of the story by asking them to take a personal stake in the broadcast. Students might hesitate to make predictions out of a fear of being wrong or a sense that they don't have enough information to go on. Encourage them to base their predictions on the information in the introduction, on the opening page of the chapter (which contains the title, a photo, and a quote from the broadcast), and on their own sense of what might be the subject of a radio story. It can be helpful to ask, "When you're watching TV, how do you make a decision on what program to watch based on the small amount of information in the TV guide?" As they get used to working with this book, and get a sense of David Isay, their predictions will become more sophisticated.

You can let students keep track of their own predictions, have them share their predictions in groups, or gather the predictions on the board and then check which are most accurate, lending the activity the flavor of a competition. Some reasonable predictions will not be fulfilled, so not too much attention should be placed on whose predictions turn out to be right or wrong.

When you play the broadcast for the first time, encourage students to focus on listening for the answer to their predictions, but also urge them to relax and to listen for whatever else they can get out of the story. (One goal of this exercise is for students to realize how much they can understand of the text's global meaning by not worrying about details.) Students should check understanding with each other before getting feedback from the teacher.

The more intensive tasks in Listening for Comprehension ask students to demonstrate a fairly detailed literal understanding of the text. The questions are presented in the same order in which their answers appear in the text and include both short-answer and open-ended questions. Consider the difference between these types of questions when calling on students for answers: giving easier questions to students who are not as strong can help to build their confidence, and giving harder questions to more capable students can provide them with a challenge.

The methodology used in Listening for Comprehension is designed to gauge the level of support needed by the students. The first step after First
Listening: Predicting has been finished is to have the class read the questions to make sure that they understand them. If a student can answer a question from the first listening, he or she should do so in writing (though the class should not yet share this information). This process will prime students to listen for answers to the questions that they can not yet answer.

The broadcast then should be played through for a second time without stopping. After the broadcast ends, allow a minute or two of silence to let students process and reflect on the broadcast, and to work out answers they may know but not have had time to write. Students should check their work in groups before going over the answers as a class.

At this point students should have a solid grasp of the essential events and ideas of the broadcast. They should be able to explain where it takes place, who is involved, and what occurred. If the class seems to have generally good comprehension, simply move on to the next activity. If the class seems to need more work on comprehension, there are a number of options:

• play the broadcast again in its entirety;
• play the broadcast in sections, pausing and rewinding to give students as many chances as needed to hear a difficult passage;
• let students listen while following along with the transcript (a process usually saved for Listening for Analysis);
• in a small class it may even make sense to allow the students to control the tape player themselves.

In each case, ask the students how well they have understood the story and what would be the best way for them to improve their understanding, if necessary.

Two additional activities within the Listening and Understanding stage, Language Focus A and Language Focus B, give students a chance to look closely at a point of language structure or usage that comes up in the broadcast. Students often appreciate this kind of specific language study, as it gives them a sense of having learned something distinct and identifiable. It also represents a change of pace at this stage in the lesson, offering a break from the three listening activities.

Language Focus activities should not replace grammar study, but they do offer a different view of how grammar is used in real discourse. Therefore, these activities can be useful after students have studied a certain grammar point in a traditional textbook, or they can provide a starting point for a more thorough grammar lesson.
Language Focus A exercises examine a particular feature of language structure (e.g., phrasal verbs in Chapters 1 and 10; preposition combinations in Chapter 4 and time prepositions in Chapter 11) as it occurs in the text. Students are guided to understand the meaning and use of the particular feature and then given a chance to practice the point in a directed manner.

Language Focus B exercises cover broader issues of language, style, and culture than what is traditionally taught as “grammar.” Topics addressed include nonexist language (Chapter 2); the language of hype (Chapter 9); and polite and impolite language (Chapter 12). In each case, these exercises demonstrate how higher-level meanings are created through lower-level grammatical and stylistic features. Relative to Language Focus A, students are given more responsibility and freedom for analyzing the text and for working out its meanings themselves.

The rest of the chapter does not depend on the Language Focus activities, so you should feel free to change their order or even to omit them if time is short. Alternatively, Language Focus activities can be assigned as homework.

By the time students reach Listening for Analysis they have developed a solid general understanding of the events of the story. As they hear the broadcast a third time they are given access to the transcript and asked to use it in answering questions of a more interpretative nature. The goal here is that students will gain not only an understanding but a native-like appreciation of the broadcast. At this stage students often laugh at funny points or appreciate subtleties of the stories that until now have evaded them as they’ve focused on literal meaning.

There is a range of possible valid answers to any of the questions posed in Listening for Analysis. The focus should not be put on right and wrong answers, but on students’ ability to explain their interpretation and to back it up by reference to the transcript.

More advanced classes might choose to do Listening for Analysis without looking at the transcript, perhaps just taking notes as the broadcast plays. However, there are a number of advantages for having the transcript available. As students get used to using *Twelve American Voices*, the knowledge that the transcript is available helps them to relax during First Listening and Listening for Comprehension. Additionally, the transcript helps students to see the correlation between oral and written forms (students can see what a word or phrase they have heard actually looks like), gives them more mastery of the language in the broadcast, and gives them an opportunity to firm up their understanding and ask more questions. Finally, the transcript can be used for different purposes by students at different levels: weaker students can focus on
literal meaning while stronger ones go on to higher levels of meaning and interpretation.

In Listening for Analysis, students are also encouraged to ask questions about points of interest in the broadcast that are not directly addressed by the apparatus. This gives an opportunity for more student-centered exploration of the language in the story and for students to define what they find to be interesting and important. This can also be a good time for teachers to give their own opinions of the broadcast, and to explain to students why they think that way.

AFTER LISTENING

In this section of the lesson students express their own opinions, feelings, and associations about the themes of the story they have been working with. This is done both by analyzing the broadcast on its own terms, and by bringing the themes and ideas it raises into students' own lives.

Discussion Activities provide an opportunity for students to explore how they and their classmates feel about the issues that have come up in the broadcast. There is often a chance to state an opinion about U.S. culture, and to compare it to the culture of their home country. In most chapters, one discussion topic is more personal, asking students to relate the themes of the broadcast to their own lives, and one asks students to discuss more general issues relating to the culture at large. Students should always be allowed to choose which topic to work on. This can be done by allowing choice within each group or by organizing the groups on the basis of which topic students wish to discuss.

The Discussion Activities are an important part of the process of integrated skills work, as they give students a chance to use all the linguistic and cultural input they have received in an open-ended way. If time runs short, discussion can be resumed in the next class. In fact, students might even have more to say about a broadcast after reflecting on it for a day or two.

Writing Activities are in many ways parallel to Discussion Activities, as they ask students to express their ideas on the themes of the story and to produce language based on the input they have received. A choice is generally given between different genres of writing and between more personal and less personal topics. While some of the writing assignments can be collaborative and are therefore likely to be done in class, most will be best assigned as homework. Also, writing assignments represent perhaps the best opportunity for assessment in the course of each chapter.
Each chapter ends with a Project Activity (debate, research activity, class survey, etc.) that offers an opportunity for students to explore the themes of the story beyond normal classroom activities. These activities include more extensive projects within the confines of the school (e.g., producing their own TV talk show in Chapter 9) and projects that take them out of the classroom to conduct research or to interact with the larger community (e.g., doing research on the Civil Rights Movement in Chapter 11).

A Project Activity can be rewarding if done thoroughly and enthusiastically but is not generally necessary. And, depending on how they are structured, these activities can easily take up as much time as the rest of the chapter put together. For these reasons it is not necessary to complete the Project Activity for each chapter. Rather, these activities are given primarily as ideas for expanding the themes of the broadcast into a larger, more student-centered lesson.
Notes on Chapters
Chapter 1  Hunan Chef

Introduction to the Broadcast

David Isay calls up his favorite Chinese restaurant for a delivery and is surprised to learn that it is going out of business that very night. David heads over to Hunan Chef to have a last dinner with David Ma, the owner, and to reminisce about a place that has been his hangout for nearly a decade. We learn something about David Isay’s personality and character—he’s both a very loyal friend and a very finicky eater—in this bittersweet story.

“Hunan Chef” serves as an introduction to *Twelve American Voices* in a number of ways. It introduces David Isay to the students by having a greater focus on David as a person that do most of the other chapters. The themes of “Hunan Chef” are also well suited to an introductory lesson. The subject of restaurants is covered to some extent, but the main theme of the story is having a “home away from home” and experiencing cross-cultural friendship.

Students may be interested to know that David Ma, after being forced out of Manhattan by high rents, has opened a new restaurant in New Jersey, also called Hunan Chef. David Isay is still in touch with him but of course doesn’t get out there to eat nearly as much as he did at the old Hunan Chef.
CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

PETER LORRE—Hungarian-born Hollywood character actor of the 1930s and 1940s. His best-known role was as the nervous smuggler Ugarte in the film Casablanca (1942).

FORTUNE COOKIE—A thin cookie folded around a slip of paper with a fortune or bit of advice printed on it. Usually served at the end of the meal at Chinese restaurants in the United States. The fortune cookie was introduced in San Francisco in the 1960s and is not at all well known in China.

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

Check that students are familiar with the sense of “regular” as used here to describe a restaurant visited on an ongoing basis. You may want to relate it to the term “home away from home,” which will be used in the Introduction. One way to communicate to students what is expected would be to offer a brief personal reminiscence of a place that once was your own home away from home.

Once students are in working groups, it is advisable to limit their exchanges to five to ten minutes, as the purpose of this activity is to raise the themes of the story rather than to exhaustively explore them. (Students will have a chance to return to these ideas in the discussion and writing activities.) For sharing, it probably is not practical to hear from all of the groups. Ask for volunteers (it is fine for students to elect not to speak in front of the class at this point) and have two or three people briefly summarize their stories.

VOCABULARY

This exercise introduces potentially new words from the story grouped around the theme of restaurants. Encourage students to pool their knowledge before turning to the dictionary.

Whenever teaching vocabulary, it is useful to give students your opinion about which words are more common and therefore useful (e.g., “sip,” “leftovers”) and which are less so (e.g., “fare,” “carafe”). Note that the distinction between “sliced” and “diced” plays a role in the broadcast.
The words “bill” and “check” are interchangeable here (both meaning the amount of money due for a meal), but they have distinct meanings in other areas (e.g., one might write a check to pay one’s credit card bill).

LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting

Note the use of modals and modal-like expressions (i.e., “must,” “might,” and “do you think . . . probably”). You may want to review for students the distinction between each. For example, it seems pretty clear from the name that Hunan Chef serves Chinese food, though it may or may not specialize in the cuisine of Hunan Province (in fact, it does not); whereas there are a wider range of possible answers to the other items.

The prediction questions here are fairly low level. In later chapters, as the students become more practiced at making predictions, more sophisticated, global questions will be asked at this stage, and in some cases students will be called on to generate their own predicting questions.

Each student should be encouraged to make an individual prediction. If students are hesitant to predict, explain the concept of making an educated guess. It is not important that they be right, but they should put down something to guide their first listening. You may want to gather a range of predictions and put them on the board so that you can check them after the first listening.

To ease anxiety, explain to students before the first listening that they will be given plenty of further opportunities to hear the broadcast, and that they will eventually have access to the transcript. When the tape finishes, allow students to consult with each other before checking with you on the accuracy of their predictions.

There are other possible answers besides those given. For example, it could be argued that “the owner is a poor businessman” is a valid prediction, as shown by the fact that David Ma did not seem to know about the rent hike in advance. In principle, any response is valid as long as the student can support it by referring to the broadcast.

Listening for Comprehension

Base the way you handle this activity on your students’ level and the amount of difficulty they had with the first listening. For intermediate students it can be useful to read through the comprehension questions, checking for understanding of what’s being asked and seeing which items need to be focused on.
(More advanced levels may be dropped into the listening after just taking a moment to skim the questions.)

After the second listening has been completed, go over the answers one by one. If the class is still having difficulty comprehending, a good technique is to replay the story, stopping after the point that answers each question, rewinding as many times as is necessary for students to hear how the answer is provided. (It may help for you to have the transcript open as you do this, though it is not suggested that students look at the transcript at this point.)

Most of the items in this exercise call for a fairly literal type of recall comprehension. Question 7, however, is a bit more complex, asking students to relate the mixup between diced and sliced chicken. It could be given to a relatively advanced student who is champing at the bit in the exercise.

An additional question to ask more advanced levels is, “How did David feel when he read his fortune cookie?” The answer is complex; he was in one sense disappointed, but he is also playing up his feelings of disappointment to make an ironic, humorous point.

**Language Focus A: Phrasal Verbs**

Phrasal verbs vary widely, particularly among different speech communities (e.g., between American English and British English). For this reason, asking students to learn a list of phrasal verbs and their definitions seems a misapplication of energy.

Exercise A points out some of the principles underlying phrasal verb creation and then exposes students to a few authentic uses. Though the language in this exercise is adapted, the phrasal verbs are in the same form as they appeared in the broadcast.

Exercise B gives students some experience in seeing how a single preposition can combine with different lexical verbs to create different idiomatic meanings. There is a twist to the answers: “up” is the answer to five of the items while each of the other five particles appears only once. This is intended to show how a single particle can have a range of other meanings (although “up” is perhaps the most flexible particle in creating phrasal verbs, each of the others given here—as well as many other prepositions—can be used with a range of meanings). Point this out to students and see whether they can infer what meaning “up” adds to the lexical verb in each of these sentences.

Another important concept in working with phrasal verbs is that some are separable (e.g., we can say either “call up Hunan Chef” or “call Hunan Chef up”) while others are nonseparable (e.g., we can say “head over to Hunan
Chef” but not “head to Hunan Chef over”). Some examples of each type are included, but this point isn’t directly presented.

A note on terminology: it would be more accurate to describe phrasal verbs as “multiword verbs” and to call the word that combines with the lexical verb a “particle” rather than a preposition. Our decision here has been to sacrifice technical accuracy for the sake of less-confusing terminology. You can tell students that the “preposition” in a phrasal verb is not acting in the way we expect a preposition to act (i.e., it is not joining with an object to form a prepositional phrase) but rather is functioning as a part of the verb phrase.

**Listening for Analysis**

The activity focuses on the emotional content of the relationship between David Isay, David Ma, and the restaurant.

Of course, there is a range of possible answers to each of these questions. Diverse answers should be encouraged as long as students can back up their response by reference to the transcript. If students are hesitant to offer a response, you might ask what a certain event shows (e.g., David eating at the same restaurant for nine years) and brainstorm vocabulary for possible responses on the blackboard (e.g., “loyal,” “conservative,” “boring,” etc.).

This activity also gives students an opportunity to pursue any language or vocabulary points of interest that have not been covered elsewhere in the lesson. It is our perspective, however, that understanding the story does not necessarily mean being able to gloss every single lexical item. For example, students might not get the reference to a busboy who looked something like a “Chinese Peter Lorre.” Though this certainly can be explained if a student asks about it, we consider it tangential to the story and not worth teaching explicitly.

You may want to ask students what they think of David Ma’s ability to speak English. Note that his language skills have many limitations (in terms of grammar, pronunciation, etc.), but he does speak well enough to run a business and, more important, to build a meaningful friendship.

**Language Focus B: Vocabulary in Context (i)**

This exercise focuses on a method for working to understand new vocabulary that is useful both inside and outside the classroom. It is placed in Chapter 1 in hopes that students will get into the habit of using this technique regularly. Students can use a dictionary if they get stuck but should be encouraged to use context clues and to make educated guesses.
AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activities
The saying in Activity A means that whenever someone offers something for free, they will expect something in return. In responding to this question, students may want to consider David Ma’s comment: “Money can buy some things, of course it can buy some things. Some things it cannot buy. Like a friend. We talk about it, you know what I’m saying. Keep the memories, buddy. Just a friend.”

One view is that this broadcast shows that there can, in fact, be such a thing as a free lunch. David Ma is picking up the tab for purely emotional reasons, not because he wants to get anything back.

Activity B, on cross-cultural friendships, is more specifically personal as it asks students to talk about their own lives and experiences. If students feel they have never had a relationship with a person from a significantly different background, they should be encouraged to do activity A.

Depending on class size and time available, you may want to ask one person from each group to summarize their group’s discussion.

Writing Activities
Activity A calls for a personal narrative. Students can be encouraged to pay particular attention to their use of past tense verbs, or to “showing” rather than “telling,” etc.

Activity B calls for familiarity with a fairly specific genre of writing, the review. To give more direction, introduce some other types of review (movies, books, theater, etc.) and present some of the functions of a review: identifying (providing the restaurant’s name and location); describing (talking about the food, atmosphere, prices, etc.); and evaluating (talking about whether the thing being reviewed is good, mediocre, or bad). Students can choose to write about the restaurant they described in the orientation, building on what they told their group.

Project Activity: Planning Your Own Restaurant
The directions given in the student book are deliberately open-ended. Depending on time and interest level, this can be a fairly short wrap-up discussion, or it could become an elaborate simulation activity. This activity can be expanded in any number of directions (e.g., copying each group’s menu and asking members to act as hosts in a roleplay of restaurant interaction). In either case, it’s important to give students clear guidelines on how
much time should be spent, what level of detail is required, and how the activity will end.

If group presentations are made, the other students—the audience—should be given a specific task to complete while listening (e.g., they can vote on which restaurant they would like to have dinner at, or they can act as investors choosing which they think is most likely to make money).
Chapter 2  The Nixie Clerk

Introduction to the Broadcast

David visits with Al Flynn, who works as a "nixie clerk," one of the postal workers responsible for dealing with envelopes bearing incomplete or hard-to-read addresses. Though it is a tedious and difficult job, Al's positive attitude and sense of challenge allow him to find a great deal of satisfaction in his work. Al even lets David take a shot at deciphering some of the hieroglyphic handwriting that goes into the mail.

The content area of this chapter is post offices, and exercises cover such activities as postal vocabulary, addressing an envelope, and writing a business letter. The main theme of the story is finding enjoyment in one's work.

Depending on the sophistication of the class, you may want to contrast Al's positive attitude toward his work with the way that of some bureaucratic employees who are not nearly as positive, or you may even mention the spate of violent incidents by post office employees in recent years as reflected in the idiom "to go postal," meaning to express violent anger.

Another theme that can be brought out of this story is that of increasing mechanization in the workplace. Al Flynn is an example of a human doing a job that cannot be done by machines. Of course, the post office is becoming more and more mechanized as fewer and fewer letters are addressed and sorted by hand.
CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

Students may understand from listening to Al Flynn that he is African-American. This is reflected in both his general speaking style (pronunciation, etc.) and in some ways in which his grammar is nonstandard (he says things such as “a address” and “what they was trying to say”). A workable way of addressing this complex issue is to note that there is a wide range of cultural differences between the experience of blacks and those of other Americans, and that this is quite naturally reflected in language use. African-American English and nonstandard speech are dealt with more thoroughly in Language Focus B of Chapter 11 (p. 00).

NIXIE CLERK—David defines NIXIE CLERK in the broadcast (“the term is old post office slang for employees who deal with difficult mail”). You could point out that this term is based on the somewhat archaic term NIX, meaning “no, nothing” or general refusal (e.g., to nix a proposal).

ABIGAIL VAN BUREN—David seems to mistakenly think that this refers to the wife of Martin van Buren (president of the United States from 1837–1841). It actually refers to the popular advice columnist whose column is “Dear Abby.” (President Van Buren was a widower while in office and did not have a “first lady,” which is a term used for the wife of the president.)

SIGMUND FREUD—Austrian physician (1856–1939) and the founder of psychoanalysis. He no longer receives mail.

A TOUGHIE—an informal word meaning a difficult problem (i.e., one that is tough to solve).

HIEROGLYPHIC handwriting—a term being used humorously to imply that the handwriting appears so different from English that it might as well be written in Egyptian hieroglyphs.

SCHLEP (also spelled SCHLEPP)—a word borrowed from Yiddish that means to carry something (or to move yourself) a long or laborious distance.

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

This exercise points up some differences between post offices in the United States and those in students’ home countries. A brief discussion will suffice to get students thinking about post offices and how they operate. Notes are
given on answers that are not entirely predictable or that may not be familiar to instructors from outside of the United States:

2. The word “utility” refers to such services as electricity, heating, trash collection, and phone service. In the United States, these bills are paid directly to the company that provides the service.

4. American post offices often have “wanted” posters with photos and descriptions of criminals who are being sought by the authorities.

6. On reaching the age of eighteen, all American males are required to register with the Selective Service in case of a military draft. This registration is conducted by the post office.

8. While post offices in many countries have booths where long-distance calls can be made, U.S. post offices do not offer phone service (though they do, of course, often have pay phones on the premises that could be used for a long-distance call).

VOCABULARY

This exercise may seem overly simple to teachers who are native to the United States, but there are some important differences between how envelopes are addressed in different countries. Depending on their country of origin, students may or may not need to have these pointed out.

1. A guiding principle in the United States (and in most Western nations) is to begin with the more specific information (the addressee’s name) and move to more general information on subsequent lines. (The placement of the zip code at the end is an exception to this principle.) This is the opposite of how addresses are organized in most Asian countries.

2. In the United States, return addresses typically appear on the front of an envelope, as opposed to most European countries, in which the return address is placed on the back.

Some further notes:

1. Most envelopes are now read by machines (rather than by humans operating machines, as in this story). Therefore, the post office prefers that there be no punctuation on envelopes.

2. There are standard two-letter abbreviations for all fifty states (e.g., CA for California; NY for New York).

3. The zip code, which appears on the same line as the state, is now being replaced by the “zip + four,” although most individuals do not yet use this system when addressing envelopes.
LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting
The key idea here is that problem envelopes are "rejected" from the mechanized sorting system and given to a nixie clerk. If the clerk is successful in reading them, they will be put back into the system. If not, they are sent to a dead letter office. A rough understanding of this process, and the nixie clerk's role in it, is sufficient at this point.

Listening for Comprehension
Understanding item 8, that AI takes a real satisfaction in his job, is important and will be built upon in Listening for Analysis.

Language Focus A: Nonsexist Language
You may want to preface this exercise by having a brief talk with students about the nature of sexism and why avoiding sexist language and sexual stereotyping is important. It can be pointed out that in addition to issues of social justice, sexist language also tends to sound archaic and to show an unfamiliarity with contemporary norms of language usage. Beyond the material presented in the book, feel free to give your own impressions of what is appropriate in these areas and to give your own explanations for what feels most natural to you.

There is not a truly satisfactory solution to all the items. Any such word ending in "-person" is a compromise at best. The point of this exercise is to introduce the concept of gender-neutral terminology to get students thinking about this and related issues.

In addition to the items presented in this exercise, some are uncomfortable with such terms as actor/actress and waiter/waitress, which are divided according to gender. There are two tactics for remedying this. Many female performers prefer to be called actors, while the terms waiter and waitress are often replaced with "server" or "wait person."

Though this language focus explores only a small corner of gender and language issues, it may provide an opportunity for you to open up this topic a bit more. Another valuable point (and one used in addressing envelopes and letters) is the contrast between Miss, Mrs., and Ms. Although Ms. has become more widely used in recent decades, there are still situations in which Miss or Mrs. are appropriate. U.S.-born teachers may want to reflect for a moment on how they use these terms in their own lives (think about who in your own family prefers each title) and then use those as examples for their class.
Listening for Analysis
In addition to the answers suggested in the student book, other passages—including ones arguing that AI does not have one or more of these qualities—are acceptable as long as students can explain their interpretation.

Note that many of the expressions AI uses are highly idiomatic, especially such interjections as “Bingo!” and “I love it like that!” The literal meaning of these expressions is generally less important than the enthusiasm they convey.

Language Focus B: Describing a Process with Vivid Simple Present Verbs
David’s use of the simple present is an illustration of how verb form usage is often a matter of choice rather than of what is right and wrong. (Though once a choice has been made, it’s important to use it consistently.) By choosing the simple present rather than a past tense, David makes the story more immediate. Note that we often do this when telling a joke or an anecdote (e.g., “Two guys go into a bar . . .”). And of course the vividness of the description is heightened by the specific vocabulary David chooses.

Part A of this exercise is quite simple, though more advanced students may be interested in the way David uses a string of clauses to create a fairly complex sentence. Essentially, though, Part A is a warm-up for the more substantial part of the exercise, which comes in Part B. Part B can be quite fun if emphasis is placed on making the students’ writing as vivid and descriptive as possible. If time is short, Part B could be set as homework or as an alternative to the writing assignments in After Listening.

AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activities
You may want to adjust your presentation of this exercise depending on whether most of your students have jobs or are full-time students. In either case, the emphasis should be put on thinking about the different principles that make a job rewarding. The concept of “telecommuting” in item 3 may be new to many students.

Writing Activity
Depending on class interest, you may want to present the differences between personal and business letters in some depth: block versus indented paragraphs; usually typewritten versus often handwritten; formal versus informal tone, etc.
Form is particularly important in business letters, so it may be worth spending some time on all the elements that may be unfamiliar to your students. In addressing a letter to an unknown recipient, it is usual to use “Dear Sir or Madam,” although this does sound a bit archaic; a substitution may be sought when possible, such as “Dear Admissions/Human Resources/Personnel Officer.”

Project Activity: Researching Your Ideal Job

This activity requires a bit of work on the part of the students—and using part of a future class meeting for reporting—but it can be rewarding. It is important to set guidelines for reporting: students should make their presentations brief (e.g., no more than five minutes), and those listening to the presentations should be encouraged to participate by asking questions.

This activity will have to be modified if your students have limited access to native speakers to serve as interview subjects. They can interview other teachers at your school, do an imaginary interview with a politician or celebrity (roleplaying the responses), or, if necessary, conduct the interview in the student’s first language, as long as the reporting is done in English.

Whenever asking students to interview members of the public, be careful to explain appropriate language and behavior for approaching a stranger (e.g., “Excuse me. I’m doing some research for my English class. May I ask you a few questions?”). Also, if students are going to interviewing people on the street, it is advisable to have them work in pairs or small groups.
Chapter 3  Airplane Ashes

Introduction to the Broadcast

Dick Falk is a somewhat eccentric man who operates a truly unusual funeral service. Falk will pack the cremated remains of your loved one into an oatmeal canister and take them up in a single-engine Cessna, reciting poetry as he scatters them over your choice of New York City–area landmark.

Although death is a serious topic, this broadcast is quite lighthearted, and most students find Dick Falk endearing, if something of an oddball. The broadcast also gives an interesting example of a nontraditional way of observing the end of a human life. This creates a good opportunity to discuss rituals, both those relating to death and those dealing with other aspects of life, as they are performed in the United States and in the students’ home countries.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

QUAKER OATS—a brand of oatmeal sold in a round canister that features a drawing of a man in the traditional dress of the Quakers, a religious group whose official name is the Society of Friends. The box is featured in the picture on the Chapter Opener page.
YELLOW PAGES—A telephone directory, usually printed on yellow paper, that lists businesses, services, or products alphabetically according to field.

CESSNA—the make of the small airplane that Dick Falk uses.

12-MILE LIMIT—The offshore boundary of a coastal state in the United States, extending 12 miles (19 km) into the ocean.

The broadcast contains a number of place names from the New York city area:

CONEY ISLAND—a beach area in Brooklyn, New York, famous for its boardwalk amusements.

THE CATSKILLS—a mountain range and resort area in southeastern New York state.

ASBURY PARK and ATLANTIC CITY—beach resort areas in New Jersey. Asbury Park is best known as the hometown of musician Bruce Springsteen; Atlantic City is famous for its casinos.

HUDSON RIVER—a major river flowing through New York state and along the west side of Manhattan.

42ND STREET—a street in New York City traditionally known for its (sometimes seedy) nightlife.

“HE DID TWENTY YEARS IN SING SING.”—Sing Sing is a prison in Ossining, New York; the verb “did” here means that he served twenty years in the prison.

“THE U.N. ON EAST RIVER”—The United Nations (U.N.) headquarters building is located on the east end of 42nd Street in Manhattan, alongside the East River.

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

Death is a sensitive topic that needs to be handled carefully, particularly in a cross-cultural context. If you present this orientation in a matter-of-fact way, however, students will usually follow your lead. NB: handling the orientation in too serious a manner will clash with the light tone of the story.

Topic 1 is fairly objective (and can be quite interesting in a multicultural classroom), and Topic 2 is more personal. Encourage anyone who feels uncomfortable to choose Topic 1 rather than Topic 2. Alternatively, students can be given the option of listening only during this activity (though those
who wish to talk about a personal experience should be given sufficient time
to do so without feeling rushed.

**VOCABULARY**

Some of the words here may come up in the Orientation activity or in com-
paring different societies (e.g., Is cremation or burial more common in your
home country?).

“Urn” and “casket” are not high-frequency words. The inclusion of
“pilot” and “oatmeal box,” the answers to item 4, may seem a bit odd, but
the terms foreshadow the unusual service offered by Airplane Ashes.

If time allows, this chapter presents interesting opportunities to work on
word formation (e.g., “to cremate, cremated, cremation” or “to mourn,
mourning, mourners”).

**Listening and Understanding**

**FIRST LISTENING: PREDICTING**

The photo of Dick Falk can be particularly helpful here. Encourage students
to speculate about who the person in the photograph is and what kind of
person he might be. (You can give them the forms “He looks + adjective”
versus “He looks like + noun phrase.”) Responses can be compared to the
description of Dick Falk’s appearance, which is given early in the broadcast.
(Referring students to the photo is probably the best way to define such
phrases in the broadcast as “handlebar moustache” and “snow-white
goatee.”)

**Listening for Comprehension**

Students can expand on question 2 by discussing all the ways that Airplane
Ashes is, in fact, personalized (Falk gives individual attention, takes an interest
in the lives of the deceased, recites a poem, etc.).

Question 3 asks for students to tell a short narrative.

Students may be interested in the geography of New York City, which is
alluded to. You might sketch a map on the board to show where the places
mentioned are located.

**Language Focus A: Parts of the Body Used as Verbs**

Check that students have an understanding of the metaphorical sense of
each body part, some of which are straightforward (e.g., “hand” and “elbow”
as verbs) and some of which are less so (e.g., “to foot the bill,” “to nose around”). It can be helpful to demonstrate the imagery underlying, for example, “elbowing one’s way through a crowd.”

Note that in the exercise, students are called on to use the appropriate form of the verb, which is not always the simple form as given in the box.

**Listening for Analysis**
This exercise is intended to give students some sense of Dick Falk’s eccentricity and the enthusiastic, uninhibited way that he discusses death, a topic usually dealt with in a more somber manner. It is difficult to describe exactly what it is about Dick Falk’s way of speaking that expresses this, but it can be valuable for students to try to put his speaking style into words. The issue of whether it is appropriate to talk about death in such an informal way will be explored more fully in the After Listening activities.

**Language Focus B: Sequence Words**
All of these words could more technically be referred to as temporal discourse markers, but we refer to them as sequence words, a term that we hope will be more accessible to students.

You may want to point out to students that when sequence words start a sentence, they are generally set off by a comma.

NB: “Actually” is a false cognate of the French word *actuellement*. In English, it has no temporal meaning but rather expresses contrast with what would be expected in a given situation, similar in meaning to “really” (e.g., “Judging from how he dresses, you might think that he has no money, but he’s actually quite wealthy.”).

**AFTER LISTENING**

**Discussion Activities**
Topic A may be too personal for some students, but it has the potential to lead to some very revealing discussions. Topic B is less personal and therefore may be a good choice for those who find Topic 1 uncomfortable. If students seem slow to warm to this idea, try relating it to Airplane Ashes, which is very different from a traditional funeral, and list the things that are lost (e.g., no friends and family can participate in an Airplane Ashes funeral) and those that are gained (e.g., an Airplane Ashes funeral is cheaper and more environmentally sound than burial).
Writing Activities
Again Topic A is more personal and should be handled carefully. If students are comfortable taking a lighthearted approach, these essays can be quite fun to read aloud. Topic B gives students the latitude to interpret the idea of a ritual more broadly. In a multicultural classroom, students might be interested in hearing about rituals from a country they are not familiar with.

Project Activity: Researching an Unusual Business
This activity is probably most appropriate in the United States, where the yellow pages can be a rich source of cultural information for ESL students. As an alternative, students who have internet access could find and report on a web page run by an unusual business or institution.
Chapter 4  Chained Girl

Introduction to the Broadcast

When Eliezar and Linda Marrero found that they could no longer control their crack-addicted twelve-year-old daughter, they took a step that many would consider unthinkable: chaining her to a radiator in their apartment. As David Isay interviews the family and their neighbors, the conditions in their neighborhood and the lack of other alternatives makes their decision somewhat understandable if still upsetting.

The Marreros live in the South Bronx, long regarded as one of the least safe and most drug-ridden neighborhoods in the United States, though great improvements have been made in recent years.

Students will probably notice that the Marreros are Latino and do not appear to be native speakers of English. Although the broadcast does not directly approach this issue, students may want to know something about the high percentage of minorities living in such neighborhoods.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

CRACK—a cheap, potent, and highly addictive smokable form of cocaine that is often sold on the streets of urban areas.
CRACK HOUSE—a place where this drug is sold and used.
RIKERS ISLAND—a jail located on a small island in New York City.

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

In explaining this proverb, you may want to explain what “rod” and “spare” mean in isolation, though they are both low-frequency words. (Point out that proverbs often contain somewhat archaic language.) Students’ first languages will probably have some similar expression, or perhaps another proverb dealing with raising children, and students should be encouraged to compare.

Of course, physical punishment (and the line between punishment and child abuse) is a volatile topic. Let students know that it is all right not to contribute if they are uncomfortable doing so. Additionally, be cautious about rendering judgments if students’ values differ from your own.

Although students may want to debate this issue, discussion should be limited at this point. Once students have considered the ideas of when it is okay to physically discipline children and at what point, if any, the government should get involved, they are ready to move on to the broadcast. There will be opportunities for further discussion later in the chapter.

VOCABULARY

This activity presents words related to the themes of crime, punishment, and discipline. All words come from the broadcast. “Shackle” is a low-frequency word but one that is important in this broadcast. As used here, to shackle someone means essentially the same thing as to chain them up.

Listening and Understanding

FIRST LISTENING: PREDICTING

This activity is designed to create a real surprise for the students. Before hearing the broadcast, students usually see the parents as clearly abusive and can imagine no valid reason for chaining a child. (Though it is, of course, possible that some students might guess something close to the truth.) Therefore,
the fact that they appear to be concerned parents who acted out of genuinely
good motivations often causes students to change their positions dramatically.
After listening you may wish ask students how their attitude toward the par-
ents has changed since making their predictions; allow a couple of silent
moments for students to consider the question before comparing responses.

Listening for Comprehension
Question 3 is a bit difficult. It may help to explain the idea of “getting the
runaround” from a government agency. This expression means that the Mar-
reros were sent from office to office but not given any real help. This is what
David Isay means by “bounced back and forth in a bureaucratic nightmare.”

The sentence “Confidentiality prevents New York City’s human resource
administration from commenting on the case” explains why this broadcast
does not contain the city’s point of view. (This is a difficult sentence to under-
stand, so it may be worth pointing it out and explaining.)

For question 6, consider explaining the concept of an anonymous tip—that someone calls the police to report a situation but does not give a name
when doing so.

Language Focus A: Preposition Combinations
Prepositions are notoriously difficult to teach in any systematic way. Here the
approach taken is to look at prepositions in relation to the words they tend to
collate with. (More work on prepositions is given in Chapter 11 [p. 00].)

You may want to point out the relationship between these preposition
combinations and phrasal verbs (which often appear similar but in which the
“preposition” is no longer acting as a preposition and is therefore better
described as a “particle” in the verb phrase).

Listening for Analysis
Before this exercise, go over the meaning of words that describe such emo-
tions as sadness, anger, frustration, desperation, etc., and add any words that
you think are appropriate. Also note that a single person might be feeling
more than one emotion. For example, Elicezar and Maria Marrero might be
frustrated with their daughter, angry at the drug dealers, and bewildered by
their having been arrested.

It is acceptable for students to be somewhat speculative in making judg-
ments about what the people in the broadcast were feeling. Not all responses
need to be tied directly to what is said in the broadcast; students can feel free
to offer interpretations of how these four people probably feel.
Language Focus B: Features of Spoken Language
Students may be struck by the number of times that Roy Friberg uses such expressions as “you know what I mean,” “like,” and “blah, blah, blah.” While these, especially the first two, are often regarded as markers of noneloquence, they are a natural part of unrehearsed speech and everyone uses such expressions, or similar ones, to some extent.

AFTER LISTENING
Discussion Activity
In this chapter there is no choice of discussion topics. Instead, students are asked to work on a single activity that confronts some of the complex social issues raised by the broadcast.

This activity is essentially a values clarification exercise that seeks to uncover students’ values by having them evaluate the morality or responsibility of a number of people involved in a single conflict. If students don’t seem ready to rank all participants individually, they can simply be asked to pick the two or three who acted best and the two or three who acted worst.

This activity may produce some heated debate. Part of the teacher’s role will be to make sure that all discussions remain civil. (You might want to pre-teach some of the language of polite disagreement.)

Writing Activities
Topic A is more personal, asking students to relate personally to the theme of being in a desperate situation. Of course, students should not feel that they need to describe a situation as dramatic or as desperate as that facing the Marreros. In organizing their writing, students should be encouraged to describe the situation clearly and then explain how they attempted to solve it, whether they were successful or not.

Topic B calls for a less personal type of writing, the argumentative essay. Students may choose whether to use the Marrero family as one of their examples.

Project Activity: Debating How to Fight Illegal Drugs
This is an extensive activity that will typically take an entire class meeting to perform. Consider assigning the roles in this in advance of the class in which the debate will occur so that students have time to develop their arguments. Teams can be encouraged to meet and prepare for the debate outside of class time.
If there is not an equal number of students who want to be on opposite sides, explain that in a debate one is sometimes called on to argue against one’s actual beliefs.

If you would rather not choose a winner (and a tie is always an option), consider having a class vote or asking each student to compose a written evaluation (Did the best team win? Were the ideas presented fairly? etc.)
Introduction to the Broadcast

When Esther and Meyer Sherr could no longer find orchestras that played their kind of dance music, they didn’t just stay home and kvetch, they did something about it. They started a business called “Senior DJs”—a low-tech mobile entertainment team to bring the music of a previous era to senior and community centers. In this story David Isay looks at how the singles scene is different after seventy and what it takes to keep the floor full on the senior dance circuit.

Though essentially fun and lighthearted, this broadcast gives students an opportunity to consider the situation of the elderly and to consider how the lives and problems of senior citizens are different in the United States than in their home country.

Cultural and Language Notes

Students may notice that many of the characters depicted in the broadcast are Jewish and that some of their language (e.g., the way Rita introduces the Sherrrs) reflects a Jewish style of communication. Also, the phrase, “how this night is different from all other nights” is a reference to a ritual observed during the Jewish holiday of Passover.
MADONNA (b. 1958)—a popular singer and actress whose successful career is marked by her deliberately provocative behavior and often sexual image.

2 LIVE CREW—a rap group that gained a good deal of notoriety for its explicitly sexual lyrics, setting off a debate about placing controls on lyrics of popular music.

THE LAMBADA—a highly sensual South American dance that enjoyed a brief vogue in the United States around the time that this story was recorded. The lambada is said to be a very sexual dance, sometimes referred to as he “forbidden dance.”

LO AND BEHOLD—This highly idiomatic expression serves as an interjection indicating surprise.

KVETCHING—Borrowed into English from Yiddish, the verb “to kvetch” means to sit around and complain.

Notes on Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

Part A asks students to express their feelings about aging. This can be done with minimal preparation, and it is probably best not to model a response for students so that they are more likely to say what they truly feel.

Part B asks students to discuss in less personal terms the role of older people in their home country. If students seem resistant to the kind of personal expression called for in Part A, it can be omitted and Part B used as the entire orientation.

VOCABULARY

While these terms may seem quite basic, there are some interesting subtleties of meaning. Be sure that students are not under the impression that the age terms are exclusive (i.e., emphasize that they do overlap quite a bit).

Additionally, this exercise can raise some questions about what it means to be an adult in the United States. Why is it, for example, that one can drive a car at sixteen and serve in the military at eighteen but cannot legally drink beer or other alcoholic beverages until twenty-one? Some would argue that adolescence in the United States is lasting longer and longer, and that now
twenty-two, the age people typically finish college, might be a more appropriate upper limit than nineteen.

Note the difference between "child" as an age word (and some might argue that childhood ends when adolescence begins) and the use of "child" as a relationship word, in that a sixty-five-year-old parent might have a forty-year-old child.

Listening and Understanding

FIRST LISTENING: PREDICTING

Students are asked to generate their own prediction questions. Note that some quite reasonable prediction questions might not be answered. If an answer to a question is not answered, ask whether the students can infer the answer from what they do hear.

Listening for Comprehension

Item 5 is relatively difficult, as students must infer the answer from what Meyer says not to do. Item 8 is something of a lead-in to the Listening for Analysis exercise, which looks at how DJ-ing helps keep the Shurrs young despite problems associated with aging.

Language Focus A: Using Descriptive Adverbs

Exercise A is based directly on the broadcast and shows how adverbs can be used to give color and precision to a description. Exercise B gives students some exposure to the difference between adverbs and adjectives, with particular attention to common troublespot of "well" and "good."

Listening for Analysis

Students may well have a range of different answers to this exercise. All answers are acceptable as long as they can be explained by referring to the broadcast. Sample responses are given in the Answer Key at the back of the Student Book.

Language Focus B: Using "Will" and "Going To"

This is a subtle grammar point, and one that most students at this level could use some work on. You can point out that English, unlike many languages, does not have a future tense. That is, the verbs do not inflect to express the future; rather, the modal auxiliary "will" and the modal-like expression "going to" are used.
Note in the examples that the first two are noncontracted forms and that the second two use contracted forms (as they are taken from spontaneous oral speech).

**AFTER LISTENING**

**Discussion Activities**
Remind students that in a ranking activity of this type, their answers themselves (i.e., what they put as 1, 2, 3, and 4) are much less important than are their reasons for those decisions. Students can also be encouraged to suggest other options for organizing one’s retirement, or to make interpretations of what kind of people are likely to choose each of these lifestyles, and what each option reveals about the lives of older people in the United States.

**Writing Activities**
Topic A calls for a personal, descriptive essay, and Topic B calls for an argumentative essay.

The instructions for Topic A have intentionally been left quite open so that students might approach the topic in any way they feel comfortable. If you would like to give a more directed assignment, consider the following version of the same topic:

A. Write an essay describing an elderly person you admire. Begin by clearly stating why you admire this person. For example, identify two or three of this person’s admirable characteristics. Then give an example or relate an incident that illustrates each of the characteristics you have mentioned. End the essay by saying how this person has influenced your life and in what way you would like to be like him or her.

**Project Activity: Planning for an Aging Population**
This activity is similar to the planning a restaurant activity at the end of Chapter 1, and most of the advice given there applies here. For the sake of a lively class, encourage students to come up with something creative and original in the spirit of Senior DJs.
Chapter 6  Advance Obituaries

Introduction to the Broadcast

David Isay offers a behind-the-scenes look at how the New York Times always manages to have a thoughtful, comprehensive last word ready to go when any well-known person passes away. Peter Flint and Marilyn Burger disclose their methods of ensuring that such important figures as Henry Fonda get the farewell they deserve in America’s paper of record.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

JOAN CRAWFORD (1904–1977)—An actress and Hollywood star for more than fifty years, she won an Academy Award for her role in Mildred Pierce (1945).

HITCHCOCK—British-born Alfred Hitchcock (1899–1980) was the director of such classic Hollywood suspense films as Rear Window (1954) and Psycho (1960).

GHOUL POOL—This humorous phrase means that the reporters were betting on which of the advance obituary “clients” would die next. “Ghoul” means an evil demon or ghost (or a person who enjoys revolting things) while “pool” refers to a type of betting arrangement in which many people contribute money and one person wins the resulting pot.
PAPER OF RECORD—This phrase, applied to the New York Times, means that the Times fulfills a semi-official function in the United States as the paper that serves as the “first draft of history.” It is relied on as an authority in many matters.

HENRY FONDA (1905–1982)—A star of American films and theater, whose great movie roles included dramas, such as The Grapes of Wrath (1940), comedies such as The Lady Eve (1941), and Westerns such as My Darling Clementine (1946). For more information, see Peter Flint’s obituary, as reproduced in the transcript of the broadcast.

A PRAIRIE GALAHAD—In the legend of King Arthur and the Round Table, Galahad was the noblest and purest knight. This phrase means that Fonda filled much the same role as Galahad, but on the prairies of the American West.

IN LIEU OF FLOWERS—This request means that instead of sending flowers in memory of Fonda, well-wishers are asked to contribute the money they would have spent to a certain charity (“in lieu of” means in place of or instead of).

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

This exercise is intended to get students to talk about their own experiences with newspapers and to activate the world of newspaper journalism in preparation for their listening. You may need to explain the different features found in a newspaper.

VOCABULARY

Not all of these words appear in the broadcast, but they are central to the content area of newspapers and journalism and will be of use to students in discussing the broadcast.

First Listening: Predicting

The questions that students ask in item 2 will depend largely on how accurate they were in answering item 1 (i.e., if they realize that the obituaries are
being written about still-living people, they might include “interviewing the subject” as a response to item 2. Still, it is better not to give away the answer to item 1 and to ask students to listen for it in the broadcast.

**Listening for Comprehension**

Item 7 calls for a degree of interpretation.

Item 8 can be answered very simply (e.g., “he was an actor”) or in a great deal of detail. Encourage students to pick up from Peter Flint’s obituary a bit more about what kinds of characters Fonda played, what he was like as a person, etc.

**Listening for Analysis**

Students may well disagree about Peter Flint’s speaking style. He speaks slowly and haltingly and seems to be choosing his words very carefully, to a point where some might find him frustrating to listen to. His writing is much smoother and even eloquent.

Question 3 asks students to make judgments about the quality of his writing style. Some may feel they lack the authority to do this, but encourage them to express an opinion or at least to give their reaction.

**Language Focus A: Past Tense Verbs in Context**

This exercise is intended to illustrate how the simple past often serves as a baseline frame of reference in narrative. When telling a narrative in the past, a basic time idea is established, and the same tense should be used throughout except when there is a reason to use a different verb form.

In addition to the simple present verbs at the end of the passage in Part A, you may want to point out the different idea expressed by the phrase “had long been” between items 4 and 5.

This exercise assumes a familiarity with how to form the simple past tense, including irregular forms and passive forms. If students are weak on the simple past, introduce the forms before going on.

In Part B, some students may be uncomfortable with writing about a time after their death, but we hope most will get into the spirit of the broadcast. Also encourage them, if they wish, to use quotes from their subject in their advance obituary (and remind them to observe the appropriate verb forms for direct and indirect quotation). They can be encouraged to begin with the same kind of first sentence as used by the real advance obituary writers, leaving blanks for date of death and age.
Language Focus B: Using the Passive Voice
The exercise focuses on the use of passive voice as a choice and directs students to think about such questions as why the passive is used in some situations and not others, when it is particularly effective, etc. In explaining the use of any given passive form, it can be relevant to talk about the focus of a larger stretch of discourse (e.g., for the first two sample answers given to Exercise A, note that the larger focus is on explaining Peter Finch’s job, so the focus is on him).

The exercise assumes a basic familiarity with the forms of the passive. If needed, the forms of the passive (including modals and progressives) could be presented on the board in advance.

AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activity
This is a values-clarification ranking activity similar to that in Chapter 5, but in the world of journalism. It is meant to raise questions about who “should” be considered more important as opposed to who “is” considered more important. Questions to consider include: Should the newspaper try to shape public taste or merely reflect it? Should it highlight the lives of people of substance (2 and 3) or emphasize the sensational lives of people who will presumably sell more newspapers (1 and 4).

If students choose to, they can overthrow the choices offered—an editorial board can, of course, choose to use whatever kinds of stories it prefers—and all or none of the stories can be on the front page. As always in such an activity, the decisions that students make are less important than their explanations for these choices.

Writing Activities
Topic A is personal. Although related to the broadcast, it does not directly deal with obituaries and may be preferred by some students for this reason.

Topic B can be based either on personal knowledge or on research. If students wish, they can expand the paragraph written for Part B of Language Focus A into an essay.

Project Activity: Presenting a Newspaper Article
This exercise calls on students to find their own piece of authentic language-learning material. Most students are fascinated with having a chance to work with U.S. newspapers; they may be particularly interested in finding how news of their home countries is reported in them. In classrooms outside of
the United States, the *International Herald Tribune* is a good resource for this activity, as are the large number of newspapers that make articles available free of charge over the Internet. Of course, students could also choose articles from a non-U.S. English-language newspaper.

The presentation of the articles offers a good opportunity to work on oral presentation skills. (For example, students should be encouraged to look at the audience when speaking, use the blackboard to present new vocabulary, and not to simply read from the chosen article.) If students choose articles that are too long, you can edit them to an appropriate length.

In a more advanced class, extend this exercise by asking of each article presented the question, “Could an article on this subject appear in your home country? If not, why not? If so, how would it be different?”
Chapter 7  Diaryman

Introduction to the Broadcast

Robert Shields is a retired minister in the Pacific Northwest who has become obsessed with documenting his life almost to the exclusion of living it. He records literally all the events of his life, making entries for each five-minute period, in a diary that has grown to more than 25 million words.

This broadcast is both funny and somewhat disconcerting, raising questions about the purpose of journal writing and about the decisions most of us make concerning what is and isn’t worth remembering. It is one of the best known of David Isay’s stories, having been rebroadcast on National Public Radio many times.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

IBM WHEELWRITER—a brand name of electric typewriter (see photo).
ALASKA RED SALMON by BUMBLEBEE—a brand name of canned fish.
THE TRI-CITY HERALD—Shields’ local newspaper.
THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS—a short and very famous speech made by President Abraham Lincoln while dedicating a Civil War cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in 1863.

ARCHWAY SUGAR COOKIES—a brand name of cookies.

MCQUARRY—Shields’ local supermarket.

WALLA WALLA—the largest city nearby Shields’ home in the town of Dayton, Washington.

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

This activity prepares students for the story by asking them to do some journal writing and to reflect on it briefly. Give only minimal direction on how to write or what to discuss; later parts of the chapter (including Writing Activity A) will call on students to think more about their writing process.

A note on “sharing” writing: students can elect to read their work aloud or simply to tell the other students what they wrote about. In either case, the student who is sharing should feel free to exclude any parts that he or she would rather keep private. Exchanging papers to read is an option with small groups (e.g., maximum three students).

VOCABULARY

Not all of the items presented here occur in the broadcast, but they are central to the general theme of writing. Some of the items (e.g., “journal” and “diary”) overlap quite a bit, and some may be used differently in American and British English (e.g., “schedule” in the U.S. versus “agenda” in the U.K.). In addition to the definitions given, consider explaining how you think of and use each of these words.

Listening and Understanding

FIRST LISTENING: PREDICTING

It is important to emphasize that Shields’s diary will be “complete” in a way that students might not anticipate. Encourage students to make predictions
that are as specific as possible. (e.g., ask, “What kinds of things do you think would normally not be put in a diary?” and see if he includes those.)

Groups may come up with questions that are not answered in the text. If such questions are put forward, don’t veto them. Students can speculate at the end what the answers would be. Do tell the students, though, that not all the questions will be answered.

There are three “voices” in this story; David’s, Shields’s, and Shields reading from his diary (marked by italics in the transcript). Point out to students that when Shields reads out days and times he is reading his diary entries verbatim.

**Listening for Comprehension**

This story has an unusual format—there’s little narrative to be told, and it’s almost more an interview with the diary than with Shields himself. Therefore, the note-taking part of this exercise ensures that students understand the content of the diary, and the three other questions check the relationship between the diary and the man.

**Language Focus A: Units of Measure**

This exercise focuses on units of measure (e.g., ounces, degrees, etc.), their abbreviations, and some of the symbols that replace them. These abbreviations often do not seem directly connected to the word they stand for, and, additionally they are sometimes pronounced in unpredictable ways (e.g., lbs. pronounced as “pounds”).

**Listening for Analysis**

Items 1 and 2 are fairly straightforward, while item 3 asks students to make what could be a more difficult value judgment. In explaining the difference between “eccentric” and “crazy,” point out that these words are not being used as technical psychological terms. Rather, a crazy person can be seen as one whose behavior is extreme and unacceptable in a way that an eccentric person’s is not.

**Language Focus B: Vocabulary in Context (2)**

Most of the lexical items focused on here are fairly high level (i.e., typical of what’s thought of as an educated vocabulary). Context may not be sufficient for students to understand all of them, but they should use context clues as much as possible, along with a process of elimination, before resorting to dictionaries.
AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activities
Topic A, in which students are asked to make a judgment about their personal response to Shields, is fairly well structured. Topic B, in which students are asked to reflect on the role of writing in their life and its importance, is wider in scope and open to a broader range of discussion. Topic B tends to be more appropriate for groups that are self-motivated and inquisitive.

Writing Activities
Topic A is an exercise in a type of process writing: constructing a longer essay from a “kernel” sentence. The idea is that if students pick a narrow enough topic—a single event from their day, rather than the whole day—and a topic that is intriguing to them, they are likely to be able to cover their topic more completely and to produce some valuable writing.

Topic B could be used as an alternative project activity, in that it asks students to continue their work outside of the classroom and then report back in a future class. The students’ actual writing is unlikely to be as interesting or valuable as the observations they make about how it felt to do that kind of recordkeeping. In reporting, students should of course be allowed to leave out any personal details that they don’t want to share.

Project Activity: Survey on Writing
The class survey is a lively activity that can produce interesting comments from students. Make sure that all of the students understand the questions before you assign one question to each student. The questions are of varying difficulty and depth, so care should be taken when assigning questions. Feel free to make up your own questions, preferably related to the theme of writing.

This activity takes roughly an hour of class time. This can be shortened by reducing the number of people each student is expected to interview (e.g., if they are asked to talk only to five people, they could probably do that in fifteen minutes—though it still takes time for students to report).

Encourage short, snappy reports; a two- or three-minute time limit might be appropriate. This teaches students the important presentation skill of being concise and also helps the class to move along. With higher level classes you can talk about how to present the results of a survey (e.g., give the raw numbers, an observation of trends, some interpretation, etc.)

A similar activity would require students to ask eight to ten people outside the school for their responses; they would report in a future class session.
Whenever asking students to interview members of the public, be sure to explain appropriate language and behavior for approaching a stranger (e.g., "Excuse me. I'm doing some research for my English class. May I ask you a few questions?"). Also, if students are going to interviewing people on the street, it is advisable to have them work in pairs or small groups.
Chapter 8 Passover Wine

Introduction to the Broadcast

For more than one hundred years Schapiro's Wine Shop has been selling the thick syrupy Kosher wine that is central to Jewish religious holidays. A visit just before Passover introduces us to this mom-and-pop establishment and to the colorful characters who consider it part of their holiday traditions. The visit also prompts David to remember his own first experiences with Passover wine and provides an opportunity for students to discuss their own holiday traditions.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

HOI POLLOI—the common people, as opposed to the upper classes.

PROHIBITION—the period from 1920 to 1933, when alcoholic drinks were illegal in the United States.

In addition to PASSOVER and SEDER, which are defined in the Orientation exercise, the following words related to Jewish culture appear in the text:

EXODUS—the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, under the leadership of Moses as recounted in the second book of the Bible. (This word appears in the Orientation exercise.)
KOSHER—(of food) suitable to be eaten or drunk in accordance with the traditional dietary laws of Judaism.

KIDDUSH—a blessing said over a cup of wine or a piece of bread.

L'CHAIM—a common Jewish toast or saying; it translates as “to life.”

Note: a good deal of the language in this broadcast is contained within what could broadly be considered a Jewish style of communication. In addition to the specific religious vocabulary noted above and in the chapter, this includes the imperfect grammar of those customers who appear to be Eastern European émigrés (e.g., “since I remember”) to the way that Linda Schapiro “discreetly nudges” David Isay to sample some wine and asks if he is married. An opportunity to discuss this style in the context of cross-cultural communication is raised by the Listening for Analysis exercise.

Notes on Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

In addition to “Passover” and “Seder,” you should be prepared to define the words “exodus” and “kosher,” both of which are relevant to Jewish traditions—a major theme of this story. Also, “commemorate” may be a new lexical item; it is a fairly low-frequency word, but it is important to the theme of this chapter.

The way that this exercise is handled will depend on students’ familiarity with Jewish traditions. A multilingual class from different cultures may need a basic introduction to the holiday. A monolingual class of students from the same culture can first look at differences in how each group member defined the holiday, and then talk about the specifics of how their family celebrates a holiday all are familiar with. American teachers can provide a model by telling about how his or her own family celebrates Thanksgiving—a classic American holiday that many ESOL students do not know well—or another holiday.

VOCABULARY

This activity introduces the lexical field of wine and winemaking, which is key understanding Schapiro’s business and some of the processes described in the broadcast.

Other words with the root vinum include “winery” and “vintage.”
LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting
This is the first story since Chapter 1 in which David Isay is an active participant. Encourage students to use their knowledge of David Isay as a person to make their predictions.

Listening for Comprehension
Items 4 and 5 presage the Listening for Analysis activity. At this stage, students should stick to literal answers, saving opinion and details for the later activity.

Item 7 offers a chance to retell a story; it could be given to a relatively advanced student.

Language Focus A: Using “Would” and “Used To”
This is a fairly subtle point, but it relates to errors often made in narrative writing about the past. You may want to remind students of the difference between the forms “used to” and “to be/get used to,” meaning to become accustomed to.

In Exercise A, note the three verbs that can be used, in this sense, only with “used to”: “be,” “live,” and “speak” (in the sense of having the ability to speak a language). Point out to students that each of these refers to an ongoing situation rather than a discrete event.

Exercise B should be kept brief, but remind students to focus on habitual actions and to use the forms presented. Give students perhaps fifteen minutes to write, and then have them exchange papers (with a partner or a small group) and proofread each other’s work for accurate use of verb forms.

Note that Exercise B is similar to Writing Activity A/B. You might want to conflate the two (or simply remind students to keep the ideas from this Language Focus in mind when they do the writing activity).

Listening for Analysis
Be prepared for a wide range of responses, particularly to Linda Schapiro’s personality. Some people like the highly personalized style; others will find her somewhat pushy and overbearing. This can be an opportunity to talk about different styles of interaction in different cultures, and the possible conflicts and misunderstandings that happen in cross-cultural situations.

Language Focus B: Using the Passive Voice to Describe a Process
This is a relatively slight Language Focus. It can be done quickly, and it complements Language Focus B in Chapter 6. See notes there on having students write “grammar paragraphs.”
AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activities
The skill being worked on here is storytelling. Taking notes in advance gives students a chance to tell a more organized yet still spontaneous story. Consider modeling by telling students a story from your own family.

This activity can be done in small groups or as a whole class activity. The latter will take longer but can be a good opportunity to build a sense of community among the class members as they get to know something quite personal about each other.

No choice of activities is offered, though students do have some control in terms of how intimate a family story they choose to tell. And if a student has a good story to tell, the rule about it relating to something that happened during a family gathering can be relaxed—any family story can be told.

Writing Activities
Topic A is quite personal and can be meaningful for those students who choose it. Topic B calls for an argumentative essay. Students may need to have the concept on which the question is based explained to them a bit more. You could talk about chain stores that exist in areas where you class is located—Wal-Mart, Barnes & Noble, etc.—and talk about how these stores change the experience of shopping and the atmosphere of neighborhoods into which they move.

Project Activity: Researching an Ethnic Holiday
Encourage students to go into as much detail as possible, finding out specifics about food, ceremonies, etc. Classes being held outside of the United States might want to look for information about how one of the home culture’s holidays is (or is not) celebrated in the United States (The Internet can be a good source of information for this.)

If research seems too daunting, in a multicultural class in the U.S. students can instead be asked to present a holiday from their own country. In such presentations, students should be encouraged to bring in photos, costumes, or other visual aids, or music or even food associated with the holiday. In presenting, they should explain both how the holiday is celebrated and what it means to them personally.
Chapter 9  The Joe Franklin Show

Introduction to the Broadcast

Joe Franklin is the effusive host of the longest-running, though not the most-watched, talk show on television. His program is a standard of late-night cable TV and features guests who could hardly be considered genuine celebrities. David Isay visits with Joe both in his cluttered office and on the set, where Joe has interviewed, among others, dancing dentists, singing lawyers, and people who play the piano while standing on their head. Throughout, we are treated to the hyperbolic introductions and loquaciousness that are at the heart of the Joe Franklin style.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

LYSOL—a cleaning product with an antiseptic smell.
MULTIPLEX SEX EMPORIUM—Joe’s office is apparently located over a club that features nude dancers.
VAUDEVILLE—an old-fashioned form of variety entertainment show, presented in a theater; it was most popular before the advent of radio and TV.
Seltzer Bottles, Pratfalls—features of vaudeville entertainment (a seltzer bottle contains carbonated water, which one comedian would spray at another; a pratfall is an intentional fall done on stage).
Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

This discussion often builds quite a head of steam. Try to keep each student's explanation to one or two minutes. Students may talk either about an English-language program or about one produced in their first language.

The words from the vocabulary exercise may be useful in doing this orientation, so consider reversing the order of the two exercises or referring students to both of them at the same time.

VOCABULARY

Responses will vary depending on the students' degree of familiarity with U.S. culture. You can aid students by describing a given show according to the directions given in the Orientation and asking them to guess the category it belongs in. For this chapter it is crucial that students understand the concept of a talk show. Students may also be interested in hearing about such "junk TV" shows as "Ricki Lake" and "The Jerry Springer Show." "Sitcom" is a portmanteau word blending the words "situation" and "comedy."

LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting

The main impression given by Joe's office is one of a very disorderly person and perhaps also someone of great activity and energy. After hearing the broadcast, students can compare the photo to the colorful description of Joe's office given in the first paragraph of the broadcast (reprinted below). It might help to replay, or read aloud, just this paragraph.

On the sixth floor of an old Times Square building, Joe Franklin's cramped office looks tornado-stricken. It's permeated with the musty, Lysol-tinged smells rising from the multiplex sex emporium that occupies the floors below. There are stacks of old coffee cups, molcy half-eaten bagels, and shopping bags full of yellow newspaper clippings everywhere.
Listening for Comprehension
Item 2 is a bit difficult and may require careful explanation, or a replaying of that section of the tape.

Item 6 might require that you explain the concept of promoting a product (and how pervasive this practice is in U.S. media).

Language Focus A: Groups of Synonyms
This is a fun exercise that helps students get a handle on Joe's distinctive speaking style.

You may want to talk about potential differences in meaning among some of the words in the synonym groups and about the physical images underlying such expressions as "mushrooming and skyrocketing and snowballing and escalating."

Part B asks students to assess the impact of this aspect of Joe's style on the listener. A range of opinions is, of course, possible. One typical interpretation is that this is part of Joe's over-the-top personality; it draws the viewer's attention but also makes us discount a bit whatever Joe says. We realize that he is probably exaggerating. This discussion will help lay the groundwork for Language Focus B.

Listening for Analysis
With a more sophisticated class, you may want to discuss the distinct possibility that Joe's entire performance is tongue in cheek and that he does not mean for the listener to take his words literally.

Language Focus B: The Language of Hype
You may want to introduce the word "hyperbole" and talk about its relationship to hype. Parts A and B work together with the Listening for Analysis exercise and can be combined into a general discussion of Joe's style and its effect on the audience.

Part C can be extensive and may be used in place of the Discussion Activity. The work that students produce in this exercise can be built on in the roleplay activity.

AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activities
Activity A is personal, asking students to reflect on the impact of TV their own lives.

Activity B calls on students to make broad cultural generalizations. In a multicultural class, each student can be the expert on their home country.
Students from the same home country may well give different answers. Such disagreement, if expressed appropriately, can be quite productive.

**Writing Activities**
Topic A asks students to speculate broadly. You may want to focus on their use of modal verbs and conditional forms. Topic B is broader and calls for an argumentative essay.

**Project Activity: Producing a TV Talk Show**
If students are enthusiastic, this exercise can be fun and productive. It can be expanded in scope depending on the time and resources available. Groups should have three to five people: host, sidekick (optional), and two to three guests. Basic props required are a desk and a chair for the host and chairs for the guests.

Encourage students playing guests to develop a clear sense of the character they are portraying (what the personality is like, what they are coming on the show to promote, whether they like the host, etc.) and then allow them to improvise freely. The characters they play can be based on their own interests or be completely imagined.

Videotaping can add to students' enjoyment, and this also gives an additional opportunity for feedback and correction.
Chapter 10  Kipperman's Pawnshop and Wedding Chapel

Introduction to the Broadcast

Ted Kipperman is the colorful and outspoken owner of a pawnshop in Houston, Texas. When a surplus of wedding bands built up in his pawnshop, Kipperman decided to expand his business to include a wedding chapel. Everything about Kipperman and his business is in poor taste, from his sales pitch to the artificial flowers and plastic wedding cake that he uses in his bargain wedding ceremonies.

This story is one of the more challenging in the book in terms of length and language content. Additionally, Ted Kipperman himself is a relatively unsympathetic character. This chapter can be fun and valuable, however, for a class that understands the idea of kitschiness and is open to making a fairly sophisticated critique of the crassness of some aspects of U.S. culture.

CULTURE AND LANGUAGE NOTES

PAWNSHOP—A business where people can bring valuable items and leave them in exchange for short-term loans of money. If they can repay the loan in time, their item is returned to them; if not, the shop keeps it and sells it. Pawnshops are usually located in low-income neighborhoods.
TO HOCK—a slang term meaning to pawn something.
.25 OR .38 CALIBER PISTOL—two sizes of gun (as measured by the inside diameter of the gun’s barrel in millimeters).

BARGAIN BASEMENT—the most inexpensive (comes from the practice of department stores keeping sale items on the basement floor).

TIE THE KNOT—a slang expression meaning to get married.

THERE’S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SKIN A CAT—this idiom means that the same thing can be done in different ways. (Ted Kipperman uses it to comment on the unusual circumstances of Rose Martinez’s wedding.)

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

This activity ensures that students have a basic understanding of how weddings are typically conducted in the United States before listening to the broadcast. This is important because the weddings depicted in the broadcast are quite atypical but are based on the standard formula.

Students often have a lot to say about weddings. For reasons of time management, you might want to limit each pair or group to four entries in each category, and then collect them on the board to note differences.

If students don’t know a given word, encourage them to use the form, “the person who . . . [performs the ceremony], [gives the ring to the groom], etc.”

Elements of a traditional wedding include the proposal; the engagement party; a wedding shower (for the bride); a bachelor party (for the bridegroom); the rehearsal dinner; the marriage ceremony itself. The elements of the ceremony are as follows: the groom enters; the bride enters with her father; the officiant performs the ceremony; the rings are exchanged; the first kiss; the couple exit (rice is thrown).

There are many variations on this, of course. Particularly, as this formula has fixed, traditional gender roles (e.g., the difference in nature between the wedding shower and the bachelor party), many younger couples seek to change the formula to make it better reflect their own values. An opportunity to discuss weddings and their variations in more depth will be given in the After Listening activities.
VOCABULARY

It is important that students understand the concept of a pawnshop and how it works before listening for the first time. Part B introduces a major theme of the broadcast: the way that Kipperman’s Pawnshop mixes elements of the “sacred” and the “profane.”

LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting

Again, students must understand the concepts of a pawnshop and a wedding chapel independently so that they have a basis on which to predict and so that they will understand the mixing of the two businesses when listening to the broadcast.

Encourage students to look at the photo of Ted Kipperman in front of his business to get a feel for what a wedding at his chapel might be like.

Listening for Comprehension

Item 5 is something of a trick question—it asks which options the couple gets, but they actually turn them all down.

Item 6 can be hard to answer because Ted Kipperman’s speech is somewhat unclear at this point. You may want to replay this part of the tape as many times as needed for students to understand what he says.

Item 8: Students may initially have difficulty with the phrase “wedding by proxy,” but the next part of the broadcast shows what is meant by this phrase. This is a good opportunity to point out the importance of using context clues.

Language Focus A: Multi-Word Verbs (2)

This exercise is built on some of the ideas introduced in Chapter 1. It could be argued that not all of the words taught in this exercise are, strictly speaking, phrasal verbs (e.g., the more literal uses of “come out,” “come in,” and “pick up”), but these have been included under the idea that students should be exposed to the range of types of meanings, from the more literal to the less literal, that phrasal verbs (or multi-word verbs, or verb-plus-particle combinations) can have. Similarly, noun forms are used in a couple of cases where they seem more natural than the verb itself (e.g., “standout”).

Note the difference in stress for “pass on” when in means to give to a future generation (primary stress on the word “on”) and when it means “decline to buy” (primary stress on “pass”).

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Listening for Analysis
Not only is there no arguing about taste, but it may well be impossible to explain as well. In most cases, your students will either get the sense in which Kipperman's Pawnshop is in very poor taste without your explaining it, or they will not get it at all. If not, concentrate more on the responses to items 2 and 3 and work with whatever the students have to say.

Language Focus B: Formulaic Language
Part A focuses on a type of language that students often find most difficult to understand, the kind of fixed formulas that occur in traditional ceremonies. Alerting students to the ways that this language can differ from everyday usage is an important first step.

Part B looks at one of the most pervasive contemporary uses of formulaic language: sales pitches. Point out that David Isay is being ironic (and perhaps mocking Ted Kipperman), while Ted Kipperman is committing a more straightforward breach of good taste by trying to sell things throughout the wedding ceremony.

AFTER LISTENING
Discussion Activities
Here students can have a chance to return to the topic raised in the Orientation.

In responding to Topic A, encourage students to be creative and even fanciful; their responses do not have to be realistic.

Topic B works best in a class where there is a good mix of first languages and first cultures. If you have groups of students from different places, encourage them to work together to explain their own cultural traditions relating to weddings.

Writing Activities
Topic A is fairly accessible and straightforward. If many different countries or backgrounds are represented in your class, it may be interesting to read some of the essays aloud. (Also, this activity can be adapted as an alternative discussion assignment.) If you have groups of students from a single country, they can work together to complete this assignment, either in spoken or written form.

Topic B is quite challenging. As the proverb implies, discussing taste and identifying what is good or bad taste is a difficult task. Still, this could be a good topic for ambitious students.
Project Activity: Planning a "Combination Business"

This is another topic that works best with a lively, imaginative group that can take the ball and run with it. Some groups may want to try to do something that is in taste as poor as Kipperman's. Others may want to do something more literal, something that sounds like it would actually be a good idea for a business. Don't try to force the "bad taste" idea on students who don't seem to respond to it.

Also, see the directions and comments for the Project Activities in Chapters 1 and 5, which are similar.
Chapter 11  Woolworth’s Lunch Counter

Introduction to the Broadcast

This luncheonette, located in a Woolworth’s store in Greensboro, North Carolina, became famous in 1960 when it was the site of a sit-in to protest segregation, an event that helped to spark the Civil Rights Movement. David interviews Geneva Tisdale, a black woman who has worked at the store for forty-two years and who was among the first African-Americans to eat at the lunch counter. In talking to her he finds out how some things have not improved for Geneva in her decades of work at the store.

This story raises some difficult and important questions about the role of race in American society, the legacy of segregation, and the effects of the Civil Rights Movement. Students are often eager to talk about racial issues but feel that they do not have the background or vocabulary to do so. It may help to point out that native speakers on all sides of the color line have strong feelings about this issue and that we tend to have difficulty talking about it too.

Some teachers might feel that such controversial—and potentially explosive—topics are not appropriate for the ESOL classroom. We disagree. It is our experience that students are often eager to learn about and discuss the African-American experience and racial issues in general. The ESOL classroom can be an ideal place to help them gain some experience discussing
controversial issues in a safe, supportive environment. And if your students learn to discuss race productively, there are few issues in American society that they won't be able to handle.

This broadcast gives students a chance to understand one person's experience with both segregation and the Civil Rights Movement. One way of looking at the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement is that the United States has been fairly successful in giving political rights to blacks but that economic and social equality have not progressed nearly as far.

Students may be interested to hear that the chairs that the four initial demonstrators occupied are now on display in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C.

**CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE NOTES**

**WOOLWORTH'S**—a chain of "five and dime" discount stores found across the United States for most of the twentieth century. Most Woolworth's stores featured a lunch counter serving inexpensive meals.

**LUNCHEONETTE**—a synonym for lunch counter; a small restaurant serving inexpensive meals.

**Notes on the Exercises**

**BEFORE LISTENING**

**ORIENTATION**

Students will likely have a wide range of levels of awareness of this piece of U.S. history. The purpose of this exercise is to find out what they know and to get them to ask some relevant questions. While you may want to provide some basic background on the Civil Rights Movement, avoid overloading the students with information. The Research Activity at the end of the chapter provides an opportunity to explore this period in much greater depth.

Students may not feel that they have any basis for responding to item 2. Encourage them to make a guess. (Alternatively, you can ask them to write a question or two about what they would like to learn.)

**VOCABULARY**

This exercise gives a basic introduction to the Civil Rights Movement as it introduces some of the vocabulary necessary to understanding the broadcast.
It is important that students understand the concept of racial segregation, and some of the basic principles and techniques of nonviolent social protest.

Item G, the lexical item “African-American,” raises the issue of group terminology for Americans of African descent. One way to handle this is to introduce the terms “colored,” “Negro,” “black,” and “African-American” and to explain that the first two terms were generally considered polite before the Civil Rights Movement but now are somewhat archaic. (They are not, however, inherently offensive. These terms are used throughout the speeches and writing of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Thurgood Marshall.) The terms “black” and “African-American” are generally the most commonly used and widely accepted in the United States today, with the former being used in less formal and the latter in more formal situations.

This exercise raises the question of whether the word “nigger,” almost unanimously considered the most violent and offensive word in the English language, should also be presented. One way to present it is to note that it is very different in meaning, if similar in sound, from Negro; to compare it to racist epithets for other groups; and to strongly emphasize that it should be in students’ receptive but not productive vocabulary. In classes where there is a comfortable bond between students and teacher, students may be interested in hearing about other racial epithets, including those directed at their own ethnic group.

LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting

As always when students write their own predicting questions, it is possible that some reasonable questions will not be answered by the broadcast. After listening, see which ones were and were not. If a question was not answered, perhaps you or the students can infer a likely answer.

This activity can lead to some general discussion on what the social and political situation was in the American South during this period.

Listening for Comprehension

Even after understanding the literal events, students might be confused about why the manager asked Geneva and her co-workers to be the first ones to eat at the lunch counter. It appears that once the decision to desegregate had been made, the manager decided to have Woolworths’ own employees break the ban because they could be counted on to eat quickly and attract minimal publicity.
Item 7: $5.50 per hour is a very low wage, close to the minimum wage mandated by the U.S. government. A question not answered by this broadcast is whether Geneva was able to supplement her income with tips, as a restaurant waiter would be able to. The broadcast implies that $5.50 per hour is essentially all the money she earns.

**Language Focus A: Time Prepositions**

This activity complements the Language Focus A in Chapter 4.

Each sentence is adapted only slightly from the broadcast. One advantage of this is that it gives students a slightly more complex view of what a "time idea" is. For example, the kind of "point in the past" that calls for "since" isn't always something as discrete and clear as "11:00 a.m." or "Tuesday"; it can be something like, "the days when African-Americans were not allowed to serve food." (In the broadcast, this phrase is actually more complex.)

It is useful to consider what kind of physical image is the primary meaning of each preposition, and how that image is built on to express this time idea. For example, "at" often refers to a specific physical point, or to a similarly specific temporal point; "in" expresses the idea of location within some two- or three-dimensional shape, and a longer time period like a week or a month can be compared to such a shape. The use of "on" to refer to a day is somewhat different but can be compared to placing something "on" the square designating a day on a calendar.

Based on these spatial and temporal uses, more figurative and abstract meanings of prepositions are built. The connection may not always be perfectly clear, but an understanding of basic physical and temporal ideas can be of great help to students in learning these more abstract uses.

**Listening for Analysis**

Answers to item 2 can be particularly sensitive. Students may have a range of responses, including some that appear quite insensitive to Geneva and her plight. Avoid contradicting any responses made by students—they certainly have a right to their opinion—but to try to make clear, as much as possible, the severe limitations on the opportunities available to blacks in that time and place. (For example, when Geneva was young, no one in her family was allowed to vote, schools were segregated, and she probably had limited access to the type of education that would have prepared her for a higher-paying job.)

This activity is focused on Geneva Tisdale but it can lead directly into a more general discussion of the status of blacks and other racial minorities in the United States as laid out in the Discussion Activity.
Language Focus B: Nonstandard Language

The question of exactly what Black English (or Ebonics) is and who speaks it is controversial in the United States today. One way to approach it is to point out that, largely because of segregation, the experiences of African-Americans in the United States have been different from the experiences of other groups, and this has inevitably led to language differences. That said, it is important to make clear that Black English is not a genetic phenomenon but a social one; it is generally spoken by those who live in predominately black neighborhoods.

This exercise attempts to illustrate that Black English differs from standard English but is no less logical or rule governed. In linguistic terms it is the equal of Standard English, though the same thing is not true in sociological terms (e.g., speaking only Black English greatly reduces one’s employment opportunities).

The goal of this exercise is to give students some understanding and appreciation of Black English. Certainly, it is not expected that they will produce any of these forms in their own language use. Depending on the interests of the class, Part B can lead to thought-provoking discussions about the relationship between segregation, other forms of racism, and language use.

AFTER LISTENING

Discussion Activity

No choice of activities is offered here because we consider it important for all students to have a chance to discuss the serious and complex social issues relating to race and inequality that come up in this chapter.

Having said that, it is not necessary to answer each of the questions given. Rather, you should guide the discussion in whatever direction you feel is most appropriate for the class, moving from an analysis of Geneva Tisdale’s individual experience to broader questions of race and discrimination in the United States (or perhaps in the students’ home countries).

Writing Activities

Topic A is something like a “free writing” topic. A number of potentially volatile ideas have come up in the chapter, and this activity is intended to give students the opportunity to express whatever feelings they have. In this kind of activity the form is much less important than the content. It’s important to give students the freedom to write in any direction that they want, thus the choice of the word “associations” in the directions.
Topic B is less personal and somewhat more directed, but it remains potentially emotional. Students could be reminded of the form of a business letter (mentioned in Chapter 2), but in this exercise the content is, of course, more important. If students would benefit from more direction, suggest that they organize the letter the following way (with each of the points below constituting roughly a paragraph):

- Introduce yourself.
- Present the length of your work experience at Woolworth’s.
- Describe what you have seen during that time.
- Describe how your job has changed over the years (or not).
- Ask for some form of compensation or another job.
- Politely close the letter.

**Project Activity: Researching the Civil Rights Movement**

Consider putting students into teams to two to four and asking each to research a specific topic (e.g., the Montgomery bus boycott, the March on Washington, Dr. King’s assassination, Rosa Parks, Malcolm X, etc.). Have each team prepare a five- to ten-minute presentation to be made in a future class session. As these are presented to the class, the students themselves will generate a good overview of the Civil Rights Movement and answer any questions that came up in the Orientation activity.

Another way to pursue the themes of this broadcast would be to do a lesson on the Civil Rights Movement—e.g., by watching a section of the documentary “Eyes on the Prize” on video or by reading (or listening to) some of the essays or speeches of Dr. King. (Among his best-known and most accessible works are the essays “Three Ways of Responding to Racism” and “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” and the famous “I Have a Dream” speech.)
Introduction to the Broadcast

Eddie Sirwinski is an itinerant welder and recovering alcoholic who works for a charity during the Christmas season. He dresses up as Santa Claus and rings a bell on the sidewalk to encourage passersby to donate money. Although Santa Sirwinski has a very non-jolly approach to his work (his nickname is Cynical Santa, and he says such things such as, "Aw, to hell with the ho, ho, hos") he receives more donations than any other charity Santa in his area. The Cynical Santa lets David Isay follow him around for a day's work in front of Rockefeller Center as his cynical humor and irreverent attitude toward the holidays strike a chord with New Yorkers.

Despite his nickname, there is a warm and sincere spirit under Eddie Sirwinski's gruff exterior that leads most students to find him somewhat sympathetic, as well as very, very funny. In addition to giving an unusual take on the Christmas holidays, this broadcast also raises some interesting points about the norms of behavior and polite and impolite language.

CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE NOTES

TO BE DOWN ON ONE’S LUCK—to be going through a difficult period in one’s life.
HARD KNOCKS—difficult life experiences (often used in the phrase, “the school of hard knocks”).

BLOOMINGDALE’S—a large department store in New York City.

THE BOWERY—a street famous for its cheap “flophouse” hotels where many unemployed men live.

Notes on the Exercises

BEFORE LISTENING

ORIENTATION

This activity is intended to make certain that students understand the two kinds of Santa Claus: the legendary figure (i.e., the “real” Santa) and the kind who stand on a street corner soliciting donations for charity. The key to making this distinction is revealed in the last line of the directions. The true sentences—1, 3, 6, 7, and 9—provide a basic summary of what the legendary Santa Claus is known for. The remaining (even-numbered) sentences provide a basic introduction to the work of a charity Santa, the world in which this broadcast takes place.

VOCABULARY

Students might need help with items 2 and 7, which are idiomatic expressions. Item 8, “serenade,” often has a romantic connotation, but in this broadcast it is used simply to mean “sing for others.”

LISTENING AND UNDERSTANDING

First Listening: Predicting

Encourage students to use all the information at their disposal, particularly the line of dialogue at the beginning of the chapter.

Listening for Comprehension

All items here are fairly straightforward. Check that students understand the concept of a charity Santa and that they understand the financial basis of Sirwinski’s job (i.e., he is paid a flat fee of $35 per day but receives a commission of 15 percent on all donations above $100 each day). Sirwinski’s interactions with others will be looked at more carefully in Listening for Analysis.
Language Focus A: Negative Expressions
This phenomenon is also found in common idioms, as when we say that someone “is no spring chicken” (i.e., is relatively old) or “wouldn’t hurt a fly” (i.e., is harmless).

You may also want to discuss the effect of saying something indirectly; in most cases, this technique gives some kind of ironic distance and/or humorous effect. Dave Isay often uses negative expressions to create a kind of droll understatement (e.g., “Not your typical Kris Kringle . . .” and “It’s not hard to pick out Cynical Santa from all of the others”), while Eddie Sirwinski’s use of negative expressions seems to be part of his gruff personality (e.g., “I’m not here to entertain people”).

Listening for Analysis
This exercise addresses Cynical Santa’s speaking style, which is what makes him so entertaining and successful at his job. The question remains as to how literally Eddie Sirwinski’s cynicism should be taken, and to what extent might it be a show that is put on for the benefit of his “audience.” As always, students are entitled to any opinion they prefer, and their ability to explain their opinion and relate it to the text is more important than the position that they take.

Be certain that students can understand the interchanges between Sirwinski and the people on the street. You may want to replay a few of these interactions to help students with these very informal and authentic exchanges, which can be more difficult to understand than the rest of the broadcast.

Language Focus B: Polite and Impolite Language
The point of this activity is not, of course, to encourage students to use “bad” language but to point out some of the differences between polite and impolite language—certainly an important thing for students to be able to recognize. The activity focuses on understanding impolite language and looking for polite ways to express the same sentiment.

This exercise can lead into a broader discussion of the idea of euphemism and the myriad ways we have for referring to things that we are uncomfortable discussing (e.g., sex, death, using the bathroom). The questions in Exercise B can also be used as a starting point for Discussion Activity B.

AFTER LISTENING
Discussion Activities
Topic A asks students to speculate about Cynical Santa’s life and the possible reasons for his brusque personality. There’s not a great deal of information to
go on in the text, but this might open up a more general discussion of the 
problems of homelessness (and its relationship to alcoholism) and so forth.
Topic B asks students to make a generalization about norms of cultural 
behavior. The underlying idea is that different cultures have different norms 
for what is considered polite, and that misunderstanding of these norms can 
often lead to conflict. For example, in relation to American norms, standards 
in Asian cultures often seem unduly indirect while standards in some Euro-
pean cultures can seem too direct.

This topic needs to be handled with care to avoid stereotyping, but we feel 
that it is one worth discussing. If you would prefer to present this topic in a 
way that is less likely to lead students to make generalizations, you may 
replace the topic provided in the student book with the following topic: What 
are the relative values of being polite and being rude? Is it ever possible to be 
too polite? Tell a story from your own experience about a time when either 
you or a person you know was either too polite or too direct, or even rude.

**Writing Activities**

Topic A is personal, asking students to reflect on their feelings about holidays 
and how they are observed.

Topic B is more philosophical and calls for students to evaluate the level of 
cynicism in Eddie Sirwinski. They might want to use their response to Listen-
ing for Analysis as a starting place for doing so.

**Project Activity: Making Your Own Documentary**

This activity serves more as a culmination to the book than to this chapter 
alone. It is quite large in scope and could require much time and many 
resources, but it can be very rewarding. How it is put into action—i.e., whether 
students use video, audiotape, or just notes—will depend of course on the 
resources available and the amount of class time committed to the project.

Even if you do not wish to put this activity into practice, students might 
 enjoy looking at the guidelines for making a radio documentary, which give a 
behind-the-scenes look into David Isay’s work. For more info on this—or any 
other aspects of David’s work—visit the website of Sound Portraits Produc-
tions, David’s production company, at www.soundportraits.org.

Another possible project would be to ask the students write an evaluation 
of the documentaries in this book—what did they like and dislike about 
them, etc. Students can write their opinions in the form of a letter to David 
Isay giving feedback on his documentaries. These letters could be e-mailed to 
David via the Sound Portraits website or sent through the regular mail to the 
address given on the website.