

ŽUPANIJSKO NATJECANJE IZ ENGLESKOGA JEZIKA
za 4. razred srednjih škola

SLUŠANJE S RAZUMIJEVANJEM

Good morning. May I have your attention, please? The listening part of the test will start now.

[Note for the teacher: DO NOT stop or pause the recording until you hear the sentence: *This is the end of the listening task. You may now go on to do the other parts of the test.*]

Open your tests to page 2. As you can see, the listening task and questions are on this page.

You will hear a news report on Timbuktu, a city in Africa.

You will hear the report twice, and there will be a short pause between the two readings.

You can write your answers during both the first and second readings.

For questions 1-10, complete the sentences using no more than one word or a number for each gap. You will hear the exact words that you need to use. You do not need to change them. The answers will occur in the same order as the questions.

While you are listening, write your answers on the task itself. You may cross out your answers, change them, make notes or underline words if you wish.

After the second reading, you will have 1 minute to check your answers and transfer your final answers to the separate Answer Sheet.

Now, let's begin. You have 30 seconds to read through the questions.

[A pause of 30 seconds]

Now you will hear the report.

[Read the report at natural speed]

Timbuktu

In the English language, the name Timbuktu conjures up images of somewhere exotic and distant that is hard to get to. As a result, many people are under the impression that it is a mythical place without any foundation in reality. It will therefore come as something of a shock to such people that Timbuktu is a real place, albeit a distant one that is hard to get to, with a rich history.

The town is situated in the modern-day African state of Mali, not far from the River Niger. Although it has diminished in importance since its peak in the Middle Ages, the last census revealed that its population numbers fifty thousand, some twenty thousand up on the figure of thirty thousand people in the previous census.

The town rose to prominence in the medieval era as a centre for trading in precious metals, ivory and salt. Its position also meant that it played a key role in the African slave trade. This period saw it become an important centre of Islamic scholarship. In fact, it is credited with playing an important role in the Islamicisation of large parts of Africa. It had its own university and libraries filled with books and manuscripts. Several hundred thousand of these latter have survived up to the present day. It also had numerous mosques, which were built of mud and which can still be seen, as they have been well preserved by the dry atmosphere. Although today Timbuktu subsists on rice, old accounts that reached the west mentioned that the city was rich in agricultural produce such as corn, meat and dairy products.

During the Middle Ages, the city's existence was a mere rumour in Europe. Legends grew up based on its alleged fantastic wealth. These stories mainly came from traders from Arab lands. A particularly famous account was that of Leo Africanus, which was published in Italian. Such tales naturally attracted the attention of the European powers who were keen to claim its riches for themselves. However, despite being close to a mighty river, the city's inaccessibility due to the presence of the desert to the north kept it hidden from the West.

The stories of those who had been there continued to fuel European interest in the legendary city. As a result, the African Association was formed in Britain in the eighteenth century with the express purpose of finding Timbuktu and its wealth. Similarly, a French society put up a reward to anyone who could discover it.

The African Association funded Mungo Park, a Scottish explorer, in his attempt to reach the city. Park travelled by canoe and is widely credited as the first European to set eyes on the fabled city. Unfortunately, he drowned before he was able to submit his report. Twenty years later, another Scot, Gordon Laing, reached the city but was killed as an infidel by the local population. The first European to visit the city and live to tell the tale was a French explorer who, learning the lesson of the unfortunate Liang, entered the city in disguise as a Muslim traveller. He also claimed the ten thousand franc prize. This was in 1828. Sixty-five years later, the city had been annexed by the French.

The city has declined since its heyday and Timbuktu is now faced with serious problems, most of which stem from climate change. For instance, it is often confronted with drought, which has major consequences for crops.

In 2012, civil war broke out in Mali and Timbuktu was seized from the government by rebels who started to destroy parts of this World Heritage site, such as its shrines to Muslim saints. For this reason, Timbuktu has been placed on UNESCO's list of World Heritage in Danger.

[A pause of 10 seconds between the two recordings/readings]

Now you will hear the report for the second time.

[Read the report at natural speed]

[After the second reading, say the following]:

You now have 1 minute to check your answers and copy them onto the Answer Sheet.

[Count silently to 60 –and then say the following:]

This is the end of the listening task. You may now go on to do the other parts of the test.

[You may now stop the CD.]