

Using audioscripts in the classroom

Introduction

The Student Book audioscripts in *American English File third edition* are available on the **Teacher's Resource Center**. These provide a useful resource that can be exploited in the classroom in a variety of ways.

Listening tasks are often “unseen,” i.e., the students listen and complete tasks without seeing the audioscript. It is important that students become independent listeners and so, with tasks of this type, it is recommended that students do not read the audioscript before they listen. There are, however, a range of post-listening activities that can make use of the audioscripts.

Consolidation and support

Students often enjoy reading and listening to an audioscript after they have done the corresponding tasks. They can confirm their ideas about the speakers, context, or details of the script; they can pick up on aspects of the script not covered by the listening task(s), and they can highlight areas of misunderstanding when they first listened.

For shorter scripts, you can encourage students to listen and read aloud with the speaker(s). This highlights pronunciation and will help reinforce the structures, vocabulary, or lexical items being focused on. Less experienced learners often find this technique especially helpful.

Language work

The scripts can be exploited for extra language activities.

- **Find and underline:** Students look for specific examples of recently presented language, whether structures or vocabulary. Students should be encouraged to transfer any useful items to their notebooks.
- **Re-order the lines/sections:** Students put lines of conversation or sections of longer scripts into the correct order. These techniques are useful as review or consolidation, and so are best done a reasonable time after students first listened to the script. Before class you will need to copy enough pages for your students to work in pairs and also cut up the relevant script.
- **Fill in the gaps:** Students complete a gapped version of the script. Again, this can be a conversation or narrative style script and can be used to recycle or consolidate both target structures and vocabulary. Care should be taken in the selection of the words so that students are not expected to focus on low-frequency or incidental items. Typical items to gap in a script include: key items of vocabulary that form a lexical set; key structural items, e.g., auxiliary verbs, past tenses and past participles, adjectives and adverbs, prepositions, etc. You can also gap answers or questions in conversations to consolidate question formation/ comprehension. Mixed ability classes can be catered for using this technique by gapping fewer or easier items for the weaker learners in the class. Before the class, you will need to produce a gapped version of the text and copy enough pages for your students to work individually.

Pronunciation and fluency work

Extra work on pronunciation can also be provided by working on the audioscripts.

- **Listen and analyze:** Students focus on a particular section/ line of the script and listen out for features such as: stress, voice range and intonation, pronunciation of key sounds, different sounds (minimal pairs), linking features (elision, assimilation, weak forms), etc. These work best with texts of spoken English or conversations. It is best to keep the sections of script short for this type of analysis and to encourage students to mark their analysis in a graphic way, e.g., arrows for voice range and intonation, two or three of the phonetic symbols for sounds that students often confuse or linking symbols, e.g., I'm Italian.
- **Listen and practice:** Students listen and repeat short sections of the text after the recording. This works well with conversations, as students can go on to practice with a partner, and it can help to build confidence and develop overall fluency.
- **Role-play:** Students work on a whole conversation in pairs/ groups. They can follow the scripted version and then work without scripts and improvise the situation, changing the language to suit their own needs.

Self-study

There is opportunity for self-study by getting students to make use of the audioscripts in the following ways:

- highlight useful language and record it.
- focus on areas they got wrong and analyze why.
- take the part of the second speaker in conversations, working from the script at first, and then spontaneously giving their own answers.
- read aloud with the script to develop confidence and oral fluency.