



ECOLOGICAL ISSUES

Listening and Speaking: English for Academic Purposes

1. **Introduction: Ecological issues**
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Introduction: Ecological Issues

Activity A. Listen to the anecdote about an ecological issue by clicking on the link below. After you listen, go to Activity B.

A Story about Ecology: [Ronan and The Water](#)

Activity B. Listen to the Storyboard Instructional Video: [Storyboard English Tutorial](#) After you listen, go to Activity C.

Activity C. Listen to the anecdote from **Activity A** again and complete the storyboard below.

[Ronan and The Water](#)



Language Tip: Sketching a picture can help you retell a story. As you create your storyboard, try to remember some important things that happened in the story. Also, try to remember a smaller detail that happened in the story.



Activity D. Use the storyboard that you created in Activity C to retell the story to a classmate or in small groups.

Activity E. Want to try some more? Click the link below and listen to one of the four extra anecdotes related to ecology and complete the story board. When you are finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

[The Little Ember](#)

[The River](#)

The image shows a storyboard template for a story. It consists of four empty, rounded rectangular boxes arranged in a 2x2 grid. Each box is intended for a student to write a part of a story or an anecdote.

Listening Skill: Notetaking



Why do we need to take notes?

Note taking is an extremely important part of going to school in Canada. You should be able to take notes in English when you go to school in Canada.

Activity A: Watch the Notetaking Tutorial Video [Note Taking Skills Tutorial Video](#). Then read through the information in the instruction box before completing the activities that follow.

Note Taking Skills

- When you listen to something, do you listen to every single word?
- When you are in school, do you listen to every single word the instructor says?
- When you are writing notes in your first language, do you write every single word the instructor says? When you are listening in English, is it important to understand every single word?

The answer to all of these is **no**. We do not listen to every single word in any language. We listen for the main ideas of what people say. When we are in class, we do not listen to everything or write everything the instructor says. We write the main ideas and we write the supporting points. When we are finished, we read our notes and try to understand them and add more details.

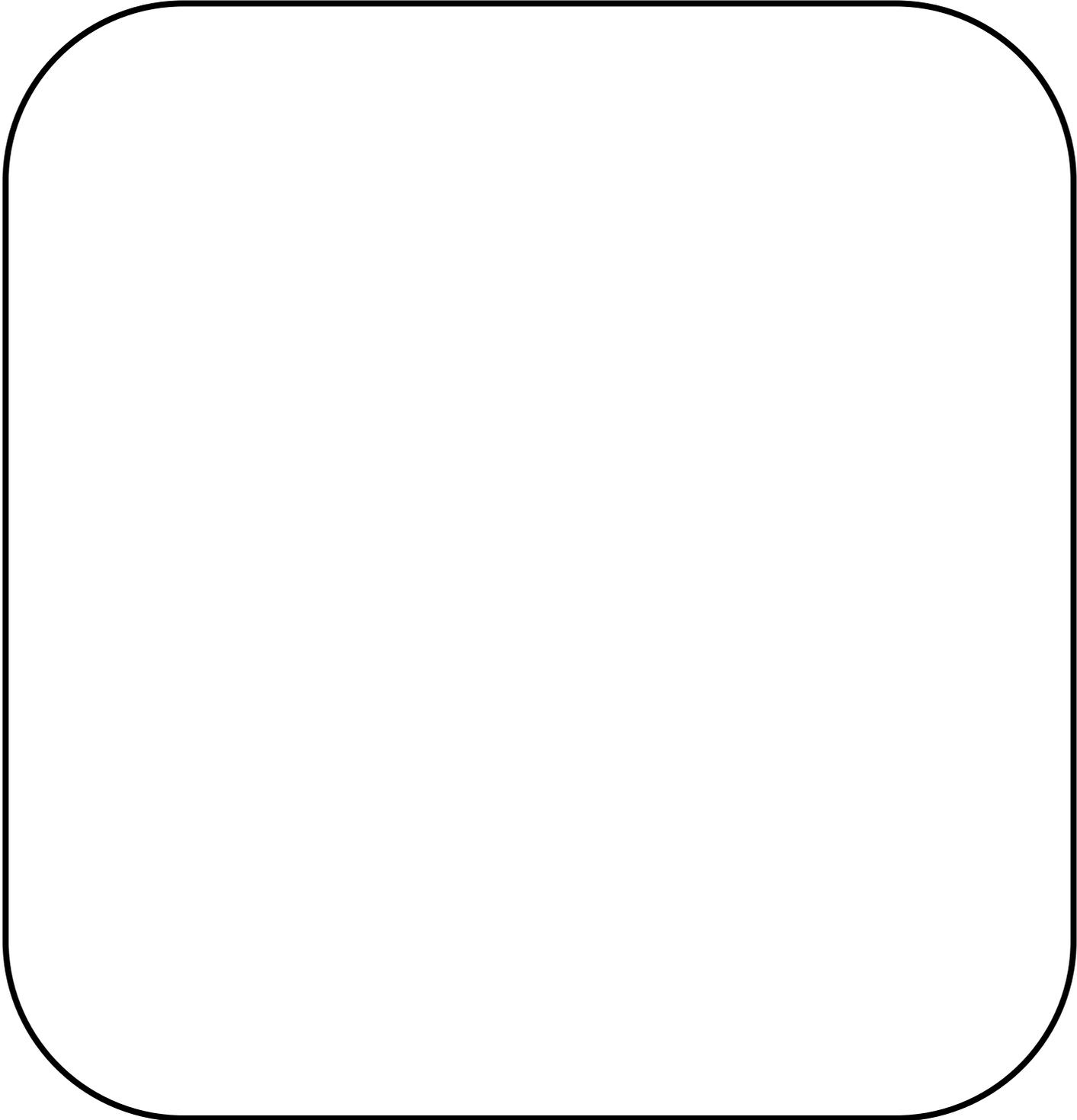
Writing notes can be a difficult skill. Here are some quick tips:

- Listen for the main idea.
- Do not write every sentence you hear, write the key words.
- After you finish, read your notes and add extra details.

Activity B. Listen to the short lecture on ecological issues in Canada: [Click here to listen to the Ecology Lecture](#) As you listen, complete the table below by taking notes. You may listen to the video more than once.

Activity C:

After you finish taking notes, check over your table for any missing information. Then share your notes orally with a classmate or in small groups.



Core Listening 1: Why Rivers and Lakes Should Have the Same Rights as Humans – Warm Up

In December 2019, Kelsey Leonard gave a Ted Talk called *Why Lakes and Rivers should have the same rights as Humans*. In this Ted Talk, Kelsey is advocating for giving rivers and lakes the same rights as humans.

Here's a question, what do you think the Whanganui River in New Zealand, the Ganges River in India, and the Klamath River in the USA all have in common?

They have all been granted **legal personhood** in the last decade.

In this Ted Talk, Kelsey Leonard presents a strong argument on why we should **grant legal personhood** to our natural resources, such as rivers and lakes.



Photo by Adam Vradenburg on Unsplash

Activity A. Read the questions and answer them in your own words. Then share your answers with a classmate or in a small group.

1. Can you think of any reasons a lake or river should be given the same rights as humans? What are those reasons?
2. Think of a lake or river in your home country that suffers from contamination or pollution. Tell us about that lake or river.
3. Do you think if this lake or river had the same rights as humans, they would be easier to keep clean? Why or why not?
4. If Kelsey Leonard is arguing that rivers and lakes should have the same rights as humans, what do you think she will say?

Core Listening 1: Key Words 1



Activity A. Before you watch the Ted Talk, review the Key Words.

You should read word 1 – 12

If you don't know any, watch the tutorial video by clicking the link

When you have finished, move on to Core Listening 1: Using the Key Words on the next page

Key Words for Listening 1 Playlist: [Playlist](#)

Watch six of the following videos:

1. Corporations [Click Here](#)
2. Ensure [Click Here](#)
3. Fundamental [Click Here](#)
4. Generation [Click Here](#)
5. Grant [Click Here](#)
6. Transform [Click Here](#)
7. Decade [Click Here](#)
8. Legal personhood [Click Here](#)
9. Contamination [Click Here](#)
10. Indigenous [Click Here](#)
11. Crisis [Click Here](#)
12. Climate [Click Here](#)

Core Listening 1: Using the Key Words – Activity B

Activity A. Watch the instructional video: [Using the Key Words Instructional Video](#)

Activity B. Watch and/or read at least three of the *What do you think – Statements* videos below. As you listen, start thinking of a response to the question. [Click here to listen to the statements](#)

1. The most effective way to **transform** people’s ideas about climate change is through advertisements on social media. What do you think?
2. The best way to **ensure** the reduction of **climate** change is to make solar panels mandatory for all new construction projects. What do you think?
3. It is our **fundamental** duty to protect the environment, for the sake of future **generations**, what do you think?
4. Big **corporations** should not be punished for the **contamination** of rivers and lakes, the government should pay to fix the problem. What do you think?
5. We need to **fundamentally** change the way we treat rivers and lakes. What do you think?
6. Some **Indigenous legal** systems have a foundational principle of treating our natural resources as human. This treatment has many benefits. What do you think?
7. The world is facing a global **climate crisis**, and there is nothing we can do about it. What do you think?
8. It is possible to reduce the damage of climate change in the next **decade** if we act now. What do you think?
9. Some rivers in New Zealand and some rivers in India were **granted legal personhood** in 2017. This legal status makes it easier to protect them. We should **grant legal personhood** to all rivers and lakes. What do you think?
10. We should **grant** more protections to our big **corporations**, they should be allowed to pollute rivers and lakes, it’s good for the economy. What do you think?

Activity C. You are going to have a short conversation with a classmate or in small groups. Ask your classmates three questions from activity B. Your classmate or small group members will then answer your question.

Don’t Forget:

Your response should be three or four sentences long, and it should end with “What do you think?” **Be sure to include the key words in your responses.**

Listening Tip:

Being an active listener is key to becoming a good communicator of English. Try using some of these phrases:

- That’s a great point, thanks for sharing.
- I didn’t think of that
- I like what you said there
- That’s a good example
- I hadn’t thought about that

Core Listening 1: Ted Talk and Note Taking

Listen to the Ted Talk on why rivers and lakes should have the same rights as humans. As you listen, complete the box below and take notes in the box. You may listen to the video more than once. After you finish taking notes, check over your table for any missing information. Then share your notes orally with a classmate or in small groups.

Link to Ted Talk: [Why Rivers and Lakes Should Have the Same Rights as Humans](#)

YouTube link: [Watch on YouTube](#) 7

Write your notes in the box below

Writing notes can be a difficult skill. Here are some quick tips:

- Listen for the main idea.
- Do not write every sentence you hear, write the key words.
- After you finish, read your notes and add extra details.

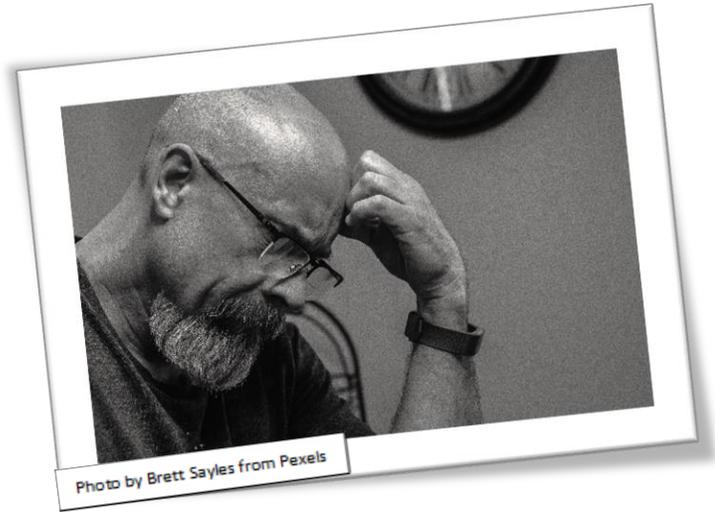
Activity C. Share your notes from the notetaking box on page 8 with a classmate or in a small group. Discuss whether you have changed your answers for questions 1–4 in Activity A on page 5?

Critical Thinking: Identifying Facts and Opinions

Activity A. Discuss these two questions with a classmate or in small groups and give examples.

1. What is a fact?
2. What is an opinion?

Activity B. Listen to the Ecology Lecture from page 4: [Click Here for the Listening](#). When you are listening, identify some facts and opinions from the listening and write them in the table below. You can also look at your notes from page 4 to identify the facts and opinions.



Facts	Opinions

Activity C. Ecological issues are everywhere. They are in our towns and cities, our rivers and lakes, and our forests and mountains. Can you think of different ecological issues that happen locally, nationally, and globally? Brainstorm a list of issues in the table below. *You can click here to download the editable document.*

Local Ecological Issues	National Ecological Issues	Global Ecological Issues

Activity D. Choose *one* issue from your brainstorming task in Activity C and provide some solutions in the table below.

Problem	Possible Solution

Activity E. What are some facts you know about the ecological issue from the table in Activity D? What are some opinions you have about this issue? Complete the facts and opinions table with your ideas.

Facts about this ecological issue	Opinions about this ecological issue

Activity F. Share your answers from Activity E with a classmate or in small groups. Did anyone else think about a similar ecological issue and possible solution? Be prepared to share your ideas with the class.



Core Listening 2: Why Wildfires Have Gotten Worse – and What We Can Do About It

In May 2017, Paul Hessburg gave a Ted Talk called *Why Wildfires Have Gotten Worse and What We Can Do About It*. In this Ted Talk, Paul explains how this ecological issue emerged and gives advice on what we can do about this issue.

Activity A. Look at the pictures and answer the questions below. Share your answers with a classmate or in small groups



A wildfire | Noun
A wildfire is an unplanned, unwanted, uncontrolled fire in an area.



1. What do you see in the picture?
2. How do you think the wildfire started?
3. What damage can a wildfire cause?
4. Do you think there any advantages to wildfires?
5. How can we stop wildfires from spreading and getting bigger?
6. How can we ensure wildfires do not happen in the future?

Don't Forget:

- Try to give more than a one sentence answer
- Your response should be three or four sentences long
- Try to use a key word or two from this unit
- Use some parallel structure
- Use effective word stress and pausing
- Try to use facts and opinions

Core Listening 2: Key Words

Core Listening 2: Key Words 2

In the last Ted Talk, Kelsey Leonard spoke about the ecological issue of water contamination. In this Ted Talk, Paul Hessburg explains why wildfires have gotten worse and what we can do about it. Before you watch the Ted Talk, review the Key Words by watching six of the Key Words 2 videos. You can find the videos at the links below:



Watch six of the following videos:

1. Megafires [Click Here](#)
2. Prescribed Burns [Click Here](#)
3. Wildfires [Click Here](#)
4. Landscape [Click Here](#)
5. Avoid [Click Here](#)
6. Severe [Click Here](#)
7. Manage [Click Here](#)
8. Fuels [Click Here](#)
9. Acre [Click Here](#)
10. Occur [Click Here](#)
11. Area [Click Here](#)
12. Logging [Click Here](#)

Core Listening 2: Using the Key Words

In this activity you will practice Key Words in the Ted Talk by Paul Hessburg called *Why Wildfires Have Gotten Worse and What We Can Do About It* by following these directions:

Activity A. Watch the instruction video: [Statement Evaluation Instructional Video](#)

Activity B. Listen and/or read to four of the statements below. Then listen to two more statements, A and B. Which statement, between A and B is most similar to the original statement? Put an **X** in the box you think is most similar, the first one is done for you. When you are finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

[Statement Evaluation Introduction](#)

Statements		A	B
1	If we act now, we can avoid the main problems of climate change. Click Here	X	
2	We can manage our wildfires better, we can prevent the wildfires from getting out of control and causing destruction. Click Here		
3	We need to stop building houses in areas where wildfires are known to happen. Click Here		
4	Wildfires occur naturally and unnaturally. Some wildfires occur after a lightning strike, and some wildfires occur when a person throws a cigarette from their car and it lands on the side of the road. We can prevent the unnatural wildfires from occurring . Click Here		
5	In the last five years, we have seen a rise in severe wildfires. In the past, wildfires were not as severe because the forests were not as dense or thick. Click Here		
6	In the early 1900s the landscape looked very different to today. That is because we have stopped wildfires from burning. Now, the landscape has more trees than it should. Click Here		
7	Indigenous nations of North America had their own prescribed burns , people believe we should go back to the indigenous ways of managing wildfires. Prescribed burns are very successful. Click Here		
8	Wildfires are bad, but megafires are much worse. In 2019 California was hit a giant megafire . Megafires are bigger than regular wildfires, more dangerous than regular wildfires, and are harder to manage than regular wildfires. Click Here		
9	One of the main reasons why wildfires are getting worse today is because of the number of dead trees in the forests. Dead trees, branches, and sticks are all examples of fuels . When a wildfire starts, it has an endless amount of fuel to burn. Click Here		

Activity C. Read three of the statements from Activity B to a classmate or in small groups. When you finish reading the statement, say “What do you think?” Your classmate should respond.

Don't Forget:

Your response should be three or four sentences long, and it should end with “What do you think?” **Be sure to include the key words in your responses.**



Core Listening 2: Why Wildfires Have Gotten Worse – and What We Can Do About It

Activity B. [Core Listening 2: Introduction Video](#)

Watch the Ted Talk on wildfires. As you listen, take notes in the table below. You may listen to the video more than once. Then share your notes orally with a classmate or in small groups.

Ted Talk: [Why Wildfires Have Gotten Worse - and What We Can Do About It](#)

YouTube link: [Watch on YouTube](#)

Writing notes can be a difficult skill. Here are some quick tips:

- Listen for the main idea.
- Do not write every sentence you hear, write the key words.
- After you finish, read your notes and add extra details.

Activity C. Look at the questions in Activity A, have your answers changed? Discuss whether you have changed your answers for questions 1-6 in Activity A with a classmate or in small groups.

Activity D. Complete the following to **reflect** on your learning.

Reflection Worksheet	
Name of the Ted Talk	
Speakers Name	
What was the topic of the Ted Talk?	
Was the Ted Talk interesting?	
Why?	
What was the main idea of the Ted Talk?	
What were some supporting points or examples?	
Overall, what was a key message from the Ted Talk?	
Did I learn any new words from this Ted Talk?	
1	
2	
3	
4	
Write some example sentences using the new words	
1	
2	
3	
4	
Questions I have after watching the Ted Talk	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	



Photo by cottonbro from Pexels

Grammar Skill: Using Parallel Structure (Word Type and Word Repetition)

Activity A. Consider the following questions and discuss them with a classmate or in small groups

Have you ever given a presentation or a speech? If so, when and what was the topic?

1. **What advice do you have for someone who is giving a presentation or a speech?**
2. **How can you keep people more interested in a presentation or speech?**



Photo by mentatdqt from Pexels

Introduction to Parallel Structure

Watch the video on Parallel Structure and Word Type

Parallel Structure and Word Type Instructional Video: [Parallel Structure and Word Type](#)

Activity B.

Read and listen to the two following listening and decide which one has more effective use of parallel structure, A or B. Write the letter in the box below. When you have finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

Listening 1: [Parallel Structure and Word Type Activity](#)

A. The wildfire caused destruction, death, and lots of people were sad

B. The wildfire caused destruction, death, and sadness.

Answer:

Listening 2: [Parallel Structure and Word Type Activity 2](#)

A. If we grant legal personhood to our rivers and lakes, we can keep them clean, fresh, and offer more protections

B. If we grant legal personhood to our rivers and lakes, we can keep them clean, fresh, and protected.

Answer:

Watch the video on Parallel Structure and Word Repetition

Parallel Structure and Word Repetition Instructional Video: [Parallel Structure and Word Repetition](#)

Activity C. Complete the activity below by watching the videos and writing your answers in the spaces provided. As you watch the video identify how many times the speakers repeat certain words. When you have finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

Listening 1: [Parallel Structure and Word Repetition 1](#)

How many times does the speaker say the words “*will be able*”?

Answer: __

Listening 2: [Parallel Structure and Word Repetition 2](#)

How many times does the speaker say the word “*power*”?

Answer: __

Activity D. Respond to the following questions using parallel structure. Share your answer with a classmate or in small groups.

1. The best way to transform people’s ideas about climate change is through education. What do you think?
2. Big corporations should not be punished for the contamination of rivers and lakes, the government should pay to fix the problem. What do you think?
3. We need to fundamentally change the way we treat rivers and lakes. What do you think?
4. The world is facing a global climate crisis, and there is nothing we can do about it. What do you think?

Pronunciation Skill: Effective Parallel Structure

Pronunciation Introduction Video

When giving a presentation and using parallel structure, it is important to focus on stress and pauses. First, watch the introduction video to Effective Pronunciation with Parallel Structure, when you have finished the video, move onto Activity A and B.



Activity A. Watch the tutorial video on Parallel Structure and Effective Word Stress. When you have finished, complete the table in Activity A.

Effective Word Stress: Parallel Structure and Word Stress Tutorial

Listen to the examples of parallel structure in the video link below. As you listen, **underline** the stressed words. Then, identify which examples, A or B, have more effective pronunciation with parallel structure. When you are finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

Activity A: Effective Word Stress

Underline the stressed words	
A	The power is in our hands, the power to make change, the power to make a difference, the power to really help our natural resources.
B	The power is in our hands, the power to make change, the power to make a difference, the power to really help our natural resources.
Which sentence had more effective parallel structure, A or B?	

Activity B. Watch the tutorial video on Parallel Structure and Effective Pausing. When you have finished, complete the table in Activity B.

Effective Pausing: [Parallel Structure and Effective Pausing Tutorial](#)

Listen to the examples of parallel structure in the video link below. As you listen, insert “commas” when you hear a pause. Then, identify which examples, A or B, have more effective pronunciation with parallel structure. When you are finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

Activity B: [Parallel Structure and Effective Pausing](#)

Insert the commas	
A	If we grant legal personhood to our rivers and lakes we can keep them clean fresh and protected.
B	If we grant legal personhood to our rivers and lakes we can keep them clean fresh and protected.
Which sentence had more effective parallel structure, A or B?	

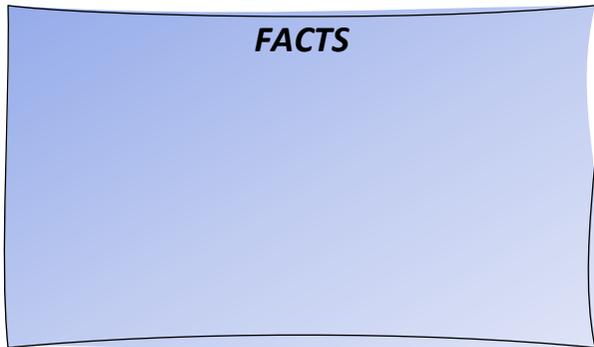
Activity C – Read the following sentences and use effective stress and pauses, there may be more than one effective way. Share your answers with a classmate or in small groups

Activity C	
1	It has been proven that if we reduce the amount garbage we create, reduce the amount of food waste we generate, and reduce the amount of meat we consume, we can save our planet.
2	We must clean our rivers, clean our lakes, and clean our oceans.
3	Whilst it is known we can not fully prevent wildfires, we can manage wildfires, we can live with wildfires, we can learn to have better wildfire management.
4	The power is in our hands, the power to make change, the power to make a difference, the power to really help our natural resources.
5	YOUR EXAMPLE

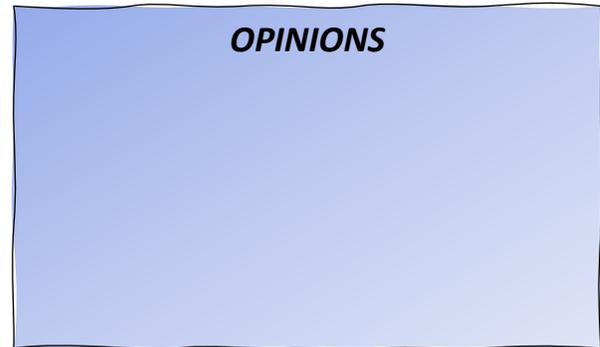
Speaking Skill: Using Facts and Opinions With Parallel Structure

Activity A. Earlier in the unit we looked at facts and opinions. Can you remember any of the phrases we use for giving facts or opinions? Write some of the phrases in the box below and share your answer with a classmate or in small groups.

FACTS



OPINIONS

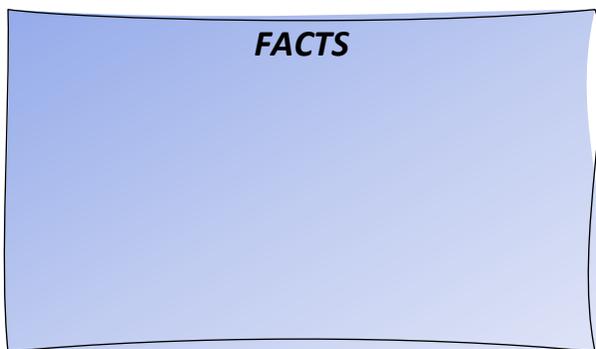


Activity B. Watch the video tutorial about giving facts and opinions.

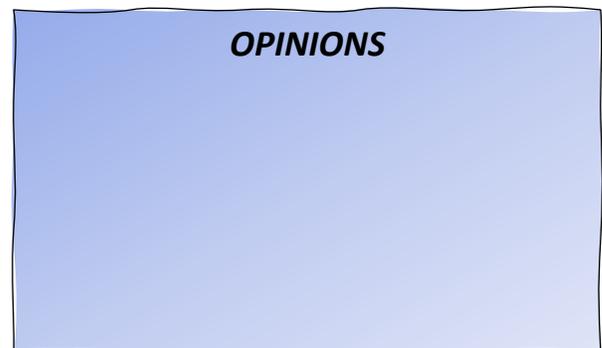
[Facts and Opinions - Tutorial](#)

Activity C. Listen to a short snippet from the Ecology Lecture used earlier in this unit. [Lecture Snippet](#). As you listen, write down some of the **phrases** used for giving facts and opinions in the table below. When you are finished, share your answers with a classmate or in small groups.

FACTS



OPINIONS



Activity D. Respond to the following questions using some of the phrases above. Share your answer with a classmate or in small groups.

1. The best way to transform people's ideas about climate change is through education. What do you think?
- 2.. Big corporations should not be punished for the contamination of rivers and lakes, the government should pay to fix the problem. What do you think?
3. The world is facing a global climate crisis, and there is nothing we can do about it. What do you think?

Final Assignment

Use what you have learned in this unit to complete one of the following final assignments. Click on the links provided for more information about the final assignments.

Option A: The Magic Podcast

You have 10 minutes to persuade people to act on a global ecological issue

1. Choose a global ecological issue from the critical thinking skill section of this unit.
2. Record a 10-minute podcast about the global ecological issue explaining the issue and providing ways people can do something about the issue



Option B: The Water is Human



The water has ten minutes to talk to the government and explain ***why*** it should be protected. The water also needs to explain ***how*** it can be protected.

1. Write and record a short speech the water could give to persuade the government to give it the same rights as humans
2. Provide examples of how it can be protected if it had legal personhood

Option C: Informative Poster Presentation

Choose a local or national ecological issue from the critical thinking skill section of this unit.

1. Create a poster presentation with facts on the ecological issue.
2. Develop an informative or educational presentation explaining the local or national ecological problem using the poster and provide a solution.
3. Record a presentation people can listen to ***as*** they look at your poster.



Rubric

For the final assignment, select one of the options from page 22.

You should include:

- Key words from this unit
- Facts and opinions
- Parallel structure
- Facts and/or opinions

You should also have effective pronunciation, intonation, and pauses when speaking.

The following rubric will be used to evaluate the unit assignment:

E = Emerging: frequent difficulty using unit skills; needs a lot more work

D = Developing: some difficulty using unit skills; some improvement still required

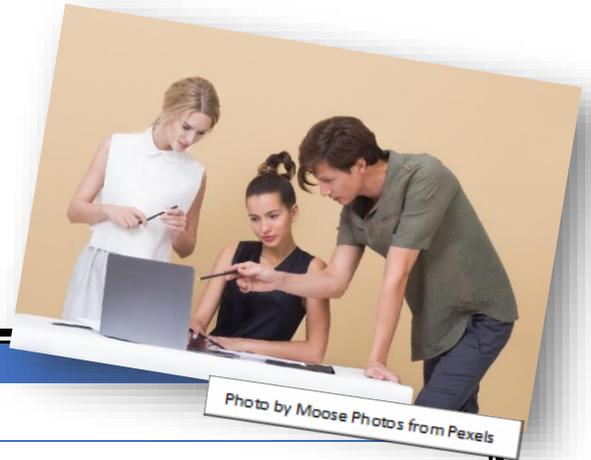
S = Satisfactory: able to use unit skills most of the time; meets average expectations for this level

O = Outstanding: exceptional use of unit skills; exceeds expectations for this level

Skill		E	D	S	O
Key words	Key words from the unit were used in the final assignment				
	Effective use of the key words				
Content	The final assignment has been revised, edited, and proofread so that it is polished and largely error-free.				
	The content was delivered in an engaging manner				
	Presentation coherence is created by effective transitions between stages of assignment, including logical order, connectors, and key ideas.				
	The overall objective of the task was completed				
	When applicable, effective use of facts and/or opinions				
Grammar	Use of parallel structure				
	Effective use of word type with parallel structure				
	Effective use of word repetition with parallel structure				
Pronunciation	Effective pronunciation of key words from the unit				
	Effective use of word stress with parallel structure				
	Effective use of pauses with parallel structure				

Peer Assessments

When you are finished your assignment, watch or listen to an assignment completed by someone else in your class. As you watch or listen, complete the feedback worksheet below to provide constructive feedback on the assignment you are reviewing.



Reflection Worksheet			
Which option did they choose?			
Speakers Name(s)			
What was the ecological issue?			
Did they use key words from the unit?		YES	NO
Did they use parallel structure?		YES	NO
Did they use facts?		YES	NO
Did they use opinions?		YES	NO
Did they provide everything they needed to? Example: (Identify a problem, give a solution, persuasion)		YES	NO
Questions I have after watching/listening to the final assignment			
1			
2			
3			
Do you have any thoughts or comments?			
Do you have any advice for your peers?			