

## Book Review: *Top-Up Listening 3*

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### *Top-Up Listening 3* についての書評

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Alastair Graham-Marr, Bill Holden, Chris Cleary, and Terry Cooney (2015). *Top-Up Listening 3* (Second Edition), ABAX ELT Publishing, Tokyo-San Francisco. ISBN978-1-896942-7-7-3  
¥2300

*Top-Up Listening 3* is one of the listening textbooks in the Top-Up series published by ABAX publishing company. It was written by four authors: Alastair Graham-Marr, Bill Holden, Chris Cleary, and Terry Cooney, respectively. As the title suggests, the book is designed to support learners of listening in English. The targeted learners are elementary to low-intermediate students or adults who want to enhance their listening skills.

The book has been divided into 14 units with different topics and themes. Each unit begins with a ‘Let’s Start’ section, where it introduces new vocabulary necessary for the unit. Then the following sections ‘Conversation Flow’ and ‘Words & Expressions’ provide learners more opportunities to exercise vocabulary and language use. The main listening part is in the ‘Let’s Listen’ section, where students can practice their listening skills through listening tasks such as, predicting, listening for overall understanding, listening for gist, and listening for specific information. Due to its use of English that is actually used in a realistic setting, learners can feel that they are in a real-world situation to improve their listening skills.

Another important feature of this book is the ‘Listening Clinic’ section. This part introduces the characteristics of spoken English. For example, in spoken English, we say ‘tur-noff’ instead of ‘turn off’; or instead of ‘Good to see you’, we say ‘Good t[o] see y[ou]’. Phonological features

like these are listening barriers to most L2 learners of English. The ‘Listening Clinic’ part deals with such listening barriers with the focus on listening tasks. It covers the following categories: dropped sounds, linking sounds, weak vowels (weak forms), shared sounds, helping sounds, intonation, and sentence stress. These features should definitely help learners to improve their listening skills.

The next sections following the ‘Listening Clinic’ are: ‘Practice’ and ‘Focus on Patterns’, in which the focus is to provide more practice of listening through pair activities. It includes dictation, taking notes, and paraphrasing. The last section in each unit has a ‘Try It Out!’ section, where learners do role plays with both speaking and listening activities. This section actually gives learners an opportunity to practice on what they have learnt so far. It also allows learners to engage in language learning activities in an active way.

*Top-up Listening 3* also has all the scripts of the listening sections at the back of the book. Following the scripts section, there is a ‘Vocabulary Note’ section where students can write down new words from each unit. It can also be used as a review section, where learners can work on their new vocabulary.

In sum, due to its distinct features, *Top-up Listening 3* is not only a textbook for improving listening skills but also a well-designed language learning book through which one can develop listening as well as speaking and vocabulary skills. By using the book, one can learn how to predict, listen for gist, listen for general understanding and listen for specific understanding. It also helps learners to understand how sounds change, how they are dropped and how they are weakened in natural speech.