

Tesco pilots in-store flexible office space (3:34 mins)

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Listening comprehension with pre-listening and post-listening exercises

This worksheet and the original report are in British English.

Topics: working world • hybrid work models • post-Covid life and work

Skills: teamwork • listening comprehension • group discussion and decision-making • vocabulary • presentation • project work • writing

Pre-listening

1. Talk to your pre-pandemic self! (warm-up and teamwork)

Task: How has your world changed since the pandemic?
Explain your life today to your 2019 self.



| Images: Getty Images

Directions

- Take notes about what has happened and how your life has changed. Look at the questions below for help to tell your old self what you enjoy and what you're missing out on.
- Find a partner. When you talk about your life today, your partner will play your 2019 self. Of course, your 2019 self has no clue what has been happening.
- Take turns acting out the conversation. Your former self can react, comment, and ask questions.

Questions

- What does your school life look like?
- What does your social life look like?
- What aren't you able to do today? What do you do for fun instead?
- What are you missing? What do you appreciate having?
- What has been the biggest impact on your life?
- What have you learned? What have you unlearned?



Tip for teachers! This exercise can be used for further writing and speaking tasks: diary entry, role-play taking on different roles (teacher, nurse, family member, neighbour), dialogue written in pairs and acted out in front of the class.

2. Covid “working world” (vocabulary practice)

Find the odd word! Get to know the Covid “working world” by completing the exercise on the next page. Underline the word that does not belong in the group. Add a short explanation.



Diese Aufgabe bieten wir Ihnen auch als Online-Übung an. Sie finden sie als H5P-Übung in Ihren Downloadprodukten und können sie dann auf Ihrer Lernplattform einbinden – oder Sie nutzen die Übung direkt auf unserer [Webseite](#).
Passwort: spz2022

Odd one out

- | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| a) | waving | elbow bump | handshake | bumping feet |
| b) | working from home | video conference | hybrid meetings | commuting |
| c) | masks | contact tracing | ventilation | hand sanitizer |
| d) | furlough | lay-off | short time | staff shortage |
| e) | zoom fatigue | social distancing | overtime | burnout |
| f) | essential | overworked | redundant | overwhelmed |
| g) | bonus pay | relief package | emergency pay | financial aid |

Explanations

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____
- d) _____
- e) _____
- f) _____
- g) _____

3. Synonyms and antonyms (vocabulary preparation)

These words are taken from the recording. Find a synonym and an antonym for each of them.

| Word from recording | Synonym | Antonym |
|---------------------|---------|---------|
| pleased | | |
| to transform | | |
| to trial | | |
| redundant | | |
| tie-up | | |
| rival | | |
| to emerge | | |
| venture | | _____ |
| to spur on | | |
| vibrant | | |

Listening comprehension

Before you listen to the recording, read through the questions and tasks below. You will then hear the recording and answer the questions.

Mark (✓) the correct box. There is only one correct answer to each question. You will have time to listen to the recording again and check your answers.

1. Supermarket space is turned into flexible office space ...

- ☐ to bring back customers to the stores.
- ☐ to adapt to pandemic restrictions.
- ☐ to make use of empty space.
- ☐ to retain employees.

2. The office space project at Tesco supermarkets ...

- ☐ offers several different work options.
- ☐ partners with different branches.
- ☐ is a temporary solution.
- ☐ is here to stay.

3. Louise Goodland is _____ about the project.

- ☐ motivated
- ☐ confident
- ☐ thrilled
- ☐ happy

4. Tesco's project Spaces ...

- ☐ is looking for more partners to fill space.
- ☐ is one of many partnerships of the retailer.
- ☐ offers babysitting options for customers' pets.
- ☐ partners with companies to offer canteen food.

5. The need for flexible working space ...

- ☐ creates problems for businesses.
- ☐ will cool down again.
- ☐ is likely to remain.
- ☐ will increase further.

6. The amount of 30% relates to ...

- ☐ empty supermarket space.
- ☐ current flexible working space offered.
- ☐ rented out business property.
- ☐ potential future office space.

7. The five-day work week ...

- ☐ is still popular among employees.
- ☐ is preferred by employers.
- ☐ is getting unpopular.
- ☐ causes more traffic.

8. Working flexibly brings the advantage of ...

- ☐ being able to enjoy your local community.
- ☐ saving time and money.
- ☐ populating empty suburbs.
- ☐ all of the above.

9. The recent efforts of Tesco's partner, IWG, concentrate on ...

- ☐ urban centres in the UK.
- ☐ the capital.
- ☐ industrial sites.
- ☐ the South of England.

10. The business of upmarket office space ...

- ☐ is too young to predict its future success.
- ☐ is very competitive.
- ☐ is expanding.
- ☐ has few regulations.

Post-listening

1. Post-pandemic “back to the office” strategy (group discussion and decision-making)



Task:

Imagine your class is the board of directors of a company whose employees have been largely allowed to work from home during the pandemic. You are now developing a “back to the office” strategy.

Question for discussion:

Should your company implement a hybrid work model permanently or return to a five-day in-office workweek?

These two models are up for discussion:

Model 1: “Back to normal”

- five-day model requiring physical presence at the office from Monday to Friday

Model 2: “Flex is best”

- hybrid work model requiring physical presence only on two days a week; the other days can be spent working remotely (e.g., at home, at co-working spaces in the local community)

Directions

- Form groups of three.
- Carefully consider the pros and cons of both models. Think about areas like communication, teamwork, workflow, work-life balance, the environment, costs for the company and employees, etc. You can also draw ideas from the recording.
- Meet with another group, and discuss your ideas. Make a decision together.
- Present your decision to the class, and give your reasons.

Tip for teachers! For a more heated discussion, use the fishbowl method for group discussions on the next page.

Fishbowl method (group discussions)

Preparation

- Form two groups.
- **Group 1** supports the in-office model.
- **Group 2** supports the flexible model.
- The students of each group prepare arguments in favour of their position.
- Form a big circle of chairs for everyone.
- Put three chairs in the middle of the circle to form a smaller inner circle,.

Discussion

- Two students (one member of each group) sit down in the inner circle.
- The third chair remains empty and will be used by “guest speakers”.
- The two students in the inner circle start the discussion. The students in the outer circle listen.
- If a student from the outer circle wants to join the discussion, he or she can use the third chair for “guest speakers”.
- The first two speakers can also leave the inner circle to allow a student from the outer circle to join the discussion.

2. New projects in empty spaces! (project work with presentation and writing)

It's time to get creative and build your own project in an empty space. You'll find several options of empty spaces below. Choose one, and create a concept of how to use it. This can be a community project, a money-making business, or a project for a good cause.

Directions

- Work in teams or on your own.
- Choose an empty space and create your concept.
- Fill out the “project profile” (next page) with keywords.
- Present your project to the class.
- Write an “About Us” section for your project website to introduce and advertise your idea.

Empty spaces

- A:** Room at your school
- B:** Closed indoor public swimming pool
- C:** Closed airport with landing strip
- D:** Old red phone box
- E:** Abandoned sailing ship at the harbour
- F:** Your own idea of an empty space you know or imagine

| PROJECT PROFILE | |
|--|--|
| What's the name? | |
| What does it look like? What can you do there? | |
| Why create it? What needs does it meet? | |
| Who benefits from it? | |
| When can it be used and for how long? | |
| How did you get the idea? | |
| Does it cost to use it? | |
| How do you fund it? (sponsors, budget, revenue, ...) | |
| Do you have a slogan for it? | |

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Answer key

Pre-listening

1. Individual student answers. Students might mention and elaborate on some of the following points:

School

- wearing masks, Covid testing, airing classrooms, social distancing
- hybrid teaching methods, distance learning, independent studying, more technology
- smaller classes (for some periods of time)
- cancelled classes and class trips
- disadvantages and advantages of learning from home

Social life and spare time

- spending more time with fewer people
- friendships may have strengthened but harder to get to know new people
- cancelled events and plans, not being able to travel
- youth clubs, sport facilities, cafés shut or open to fewer people
- businesses in the neighbourhood that have vanished or flourished
- taking precautions to go to gatherings (e.g., testing, masks), appreciating celebrations more (birthdays, summer meet-ups)
- tension among friends about taking precautions and getting vaccinated
- missing old hobbies but finding new activities
- doing more online and outside

General feelings

- missing a more carefree lifestyle
- feeling of loss and having missed out on important moments and events
- learning to deal with disappointment, monotony, pressure under difficult circumstances
- appreciating friends and social get-togethers more
- missing travelling but having discovered new activities in and around hometown

2. Covid vocabulary practice

| | | | | |
|----|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| a) | waving | elbow bump | <u>handshake</u> | bumping feet |
| b) | working from home | video conference | hybrid meetings | <u>commuting</u> |
| c) | masks | <u>contact tracing</u> | ventilation | hand sanitizer |
| d) | furlough | lay-off | short time | <u>staff shortage</u> |
| e) | zoom fatigue | <u>social distancing</u> | overtime | burnout |
| f) | essential | overworked | <u>redundant</u> | overwhelmed |
| g) | <u>bonus pay</u> | relief package | emergency pay | financial aid |

Explanations

- a) handshake – greeting avoided during pandemic
- b) commuting – more common before pandemic vs ways of working during pandemic
- c) contact tracing – done after an infection vs preventive measures
- d) staff shortage – not having enough workers vs having too many
- e) social distancing – keeping distance (and reducing contacts) as a precaution vs specific strains on employees
- f) redundant – not needed or without a job vs being indispensable and having too much work as a result
- g) bonus pay – extra pay (to reward efforts during pandemic) vs money spent to help a difficult situation (the economy, people who lost jobs, etc.).

3. Vocabulary preparation

Students only need to name one synonym and antonym for the options provided.

| Word from recording | Synonym | Antonym |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| pleased (para. 3) | happy, satisfied | unhappy, dissatisfied |
| to transform (para. 7) | to revamp (para. 8), to change | to keep, to maintain, to preserve |
| to trial (subhead) | to test out (para. 1), to try out | to conclude, to end |
| redundant (subhead) | unnecessary, superfluous | necessary, needed, essential |
| tie-up (para. 2) | collaboration, cooperation | division, separation |
| rival (para. 8) | competitor, opponent | collaborator, supporter, ally |
| to emerge (para. 2) | to arise, to develop | to disappear, to fade |
| venture (para. 4) | project, endeavour | — |
| to spur on (para. 5) | to drive, to push | to slow down, to halt, to stop |
| vibrant (para. 7) | lively, energetic, bustling | lifeless, quiet, sleepy, dead |

Listening comprehension

1. ☒ to make use of empty space. (subhead, para. 2)
2. ☒ offers several different work options. (para. 2)
3. ☒ happy (para. 3)
4. ☒ is one of many partnerships of the retailer. (para. 4)
5. ☒ is likely to remain. (para. 5)
6. ☒ potential future office space. (para. 6)
7. ☒ is getting unpopular. (para. 7)
8. ☒ being able to enjoy your local community. (para. 7)
9. ☒ the capital. (para. 8)
10. ☒ is expanding. (para. 8)

Post-listening

1. Possible pros and cons

Model 1: "Back to normal"

PROS

Teamwork

- easier to work together, speak with each other, ask questions, comment, get feedback, etc.
- better team spirit, informal chats boost creativity, flow of ideas, and collaboration
- in-person communication and meetings are very valuable and cannot be replaced
- employees who work together closely have a similar work rhythm

Workflow

- better workflow due to better teamwork
- some tasks need to be done at the office, also at short notice (printing, mailing, reception work, managing stock, auditing, getting signatures, ...)
- time management is easier without distractions at home

Work-life balance

- better separation of work and home
- employees can switch off better after work

Costs

- no extra costs for employees for electricity, heating costs, water, etc.

Others

- more opportunities to get to know people from other teams; better networking opportunities and understanding of the company

CONS

Workflow

- noise and distractions at the office can make people less productive

Work-life balance

- commuting costs employees time, money, and energy to get to work every day
- employees want at least some days to work from home for a better quality of life

Environment

- not environmentally friendly: more commuters mean more cars on the road

Others

- the pandemic has changed the working world and companies need to adapt
- there is a new normal; pre-pandemic work models seem outdated
- pre-pandemic model has become unpopular; companies may lose employees or don't attract new talent

Model 2: “Flex is best”

PROS

Workflow

- better performance (more energy, greater freedom boosts motivation)
- some people work better in quiet home environments; more efficient to complete certain tasks without the noise and interruptions in an office

Work-life balance

- less time, money, and energy spent on commuting
- easier for employees to combine professional and private responsibilities (easier to arrange doctor’s appointments; working parents can coordinate family schedules more easily, etc.)

Environment

- more environmentally friendly because people commute less

Costs

- financially beneficial for employers: companies can rent out empty office space; save electricity, water, heating costs, etc.

Others

- more popular model among employees
- could revive areas as employees spend more time in their community and can find affordable housing further away from workplace

CONS

Teamwork

- teams scattered across multiple locations; people see each other in person only irregularly
- harder to maintain good communication and team spirit with colleagues
- people who work together closely fall out of sync when they have different work rhythms

Workflow

- distractions at home interrupt workflow
- time management can be harder; jumping back and forth from professional and private responsibilities
- more independence and self-motivation needed

Work-life balance

- lines between professional and private life blur
- harder to switch off after work
- people may catch up with work later in the day, workday feels longer

Others

- loss of contact between people and different teams who don’t work together closely
- harder to keep social skills, people may unlearn how to act in a professional environment
- fairness factor: is the model feasible for all employees? Or are there teams who can only do their jobs when in the office and don’t benefit from it like others?

2. Individual student answers

Ideas students have will probably centre around sports, culture, food, entertainment industry, recreation, education, housing, youth and communal projects, shopping, etc.

- co-working space
- pop-up store, clothes swap location, second-hand clothing store, shopping centre
- book exchange, community library
- language café, teaching centre, homework help
- exhibition space, art gallery, museum, community arts and crafts centre
- concert venue, rehearsal room for music bands or dance groups
- community centre, youth club, meeting place for young and old
- park, (indoor) playground, botanic garden
- skate park, amusement park, sports ground, gym, yoga studio
- community kitchen, café, restaurant, waffle house, canteen, delivery service
- repair café
- hotel, hostel
- housing, flats, emergency shelter

Useful phrases for the “About Us” section on the project website

- “Hi everyone! We are ... (project name) – a new ... in your town!”
- “Our goal is to ...”, “What we do is ...”, “We offer ...”, “You can enjoy ...”
- “One morning when we ... we thought what this city needs is ...”
- “You can do all sorts of things at ... (project name): ...”
- “A day at (project name) usually looks like ...”
- “This place used to be a run-down / abandoned / unused ... but we’ve transformed it into this ... How we did it you may ask? Well, firstly ...”
- “Our project is sponsored by / will be funded by its own revenue and entrance fees ...”
- “Don’t miss out and visit us!”, “Come around and see for yourself!”



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