

*Welcome to the CELP sample test for the Michigan State University Certificate of English Language Proficiency. We will begin in just a few moments...*

*“LISTEN TO THIS!” MSU-CELP Test of English Listening Ability*

*This section of the test is designed to assess your listening abilities. You should have the following items in front of you: a test answer sheet, a test booklet, and a Number 2 pencil. If you are missing any of these items, raise your hand, and a test proctor will assist you.*

## **INSTRUCTIONS:**

- *This listening section has three main parts. Part 1 consists of several short conversations, and Part 2 has longer conversations. Part 3 contains a speech and an extended conversation.*
- *There are 40 questions on this listening test. For each question, choose the ONE BEST answer.*
- *For each question, find the letter on the answer sheet that corresponds to the answer you have chosen. Use your pencil to completely fill in the circle for your answer.*
- *If you are not sure of the answer, take your best guess. Unanswered items will be scored as incorrect.*
- *You are allowed to write in the test booklet.*

*DO NOT turn the page until you are told to do so.*

*Okay, you may now turn the page.*

## **Part 1: Short Conversations**

*For each question in your test booklet, you will hear a short conversation. Each conversation has a short title to tell you what it is about. Listen to the conversation and choose the letter of the choice that best answers the question that appears in your test booklet. You will not hear the question; you will see it and read it. You will read it quietly to yourself. Use your pencil to mark your answer on your answer sheet. You are allowed to take notes in the test booklet. Now look at Example X, and listen to the following conversation.*

*Example X: Walking across campus*

Male:                      Hi, Mary. Where are you going?

Female:                  I'm going to the library.

Male:                      Really? I thought it was closed.

Female: No, they started their new hours last week.

*The choice that best answers the question is A, "the library."*

*Raise your hand now if you have any questions.*

### 1. Lifestyle changes

Female: Hey, Aaron, you look great! In fact, I barely recognized you; you've changed so much since I saw you last year.

Male: Oh, thanks. You know, about a year ago, I decided on my own to lead a healthier life. I realized that my poor health habits had caught up with me and weight gain, shortness of breath, and lack of energy pretty much took the enjoyment out of my everyday activities. But now I have a great energy level and I can do all the things that I enjoy.

### 2. A traffic ticket

Male: Good evening. May I see your license and registration please? Do you have any idea why I pulled you over?

Female: Um, no, Officer. I'm just on my way home from work. I'm pretty anxious to see my kids, but I'm pretty sure I didn't run through any stoplights or go over 55.

Male: No. You're right; there is nothing wrong with your driving. But are you aware that your left tail light is not working? That's a serious safety hazard that we usually issue tickets for. However, I see you don't have any previous citations on your record, so I am going to make a note of this and just let you off with a warning this time. If you get pulled over again, though, and that light hasn't been fixed, be prepared for a pretty hefty fine.

Female: Okay, thank you so much, Officer. I had no idea the light was out. I'll make sure to get it fixed right away.

### 3. In traffic

Female: Why in the world do people drive like that? Look at him—after he cut us off, he went through that intersection just after the light turned red! If he isn't careful, he'll hurt or kill someone!

Male: He looks like a maniac, but you never know. Maybe he's just an idiot in too much of a hurry, or maybe he's a parent whose child just went to the hospital or had some other emergency...

Female: I guess you're right, but he's still driving very recklessly! Well, we're almost to the office. After that, I'll be glad to park the car for a few hours!

### 4. What a storm!

Female: Did you hear the thunderstorm last night? It woke me up several times!

Male: Did we hear it? Lightning struck the old oak tree in our front yard! It split the top part of the trunk in two! We were just lucky that neither the lightning nor the tree hit our house!

Female: My goodness! That is frightening! Was there any other damage to your property?

Male: Not to our property, but the lady across the street had a tree branch land on the roof of her garage. That will be an expensive repair! We were all still without lights when I left for work, but I think the power will have been restored by the time I get home.

### 5. Computer problems

Female: Can you please tell me if I damaged my laptop when I spilled coffee on it yesterday? I was able to wipe most of it up, and I used a cool hair dryer to dry it out. It seems fine, but I'd like to know if there is some hardware damage I can't see.

Male: Sure, I can check it over, but I'm not sure it will help you. With spills, sometimes problems don't always show up right away, and often they're pretty random, so they're hard to diagnose.

### 6. Looking for a car owner

Male: Excuse me! Is anyone here the owner of a red Toyota sedan parked near the entrance to the parking lot?

Female: I have a red Toyota. I'm parked in the first space by the street. Is there something wrong?

Male: I'm terribly sorry, but I scraped the right side of your car when I was backing up. I'll certainly pay for your damages.

### 7. Getting directions

Female: Hi there. Are you from around here?

Male: Not exactly, but I do a lot of business here. Why do you ask?

Female: Well, no one seems to be able to direct me to the Folk Art Museum. I thought it was somewhere near here.

Male: Oh! It just so happens that I print their brochures, so I definitely know where they are. You're close! Walk up to the light in front of us. Then walk two blocks west and turn south before you cross the intersection. The museum is the second building on your left.

Female: Thank you so much!

### 8. Calling the doctor's office

Female: Good morning. Dr. Carlsen's office. How can I help you?

Male: Yes, thanks. I'm supposed to see Dr. Carlsen Thursday at 2:50, but I just realized that I have to take my son to soccer practice by 3:15, so I don't think I'll be able to make it. Is there any way I could reschedule my appointment for earlier that day?

Female: Hmm. Let me see here...actually it looks like the doctor is all booked for this Thursday. If this is just a routine check-up and you have no urgent issues to discuss with the doctor, I can pencil you in for next Tuesday at 1:30. Will that work for you?

Male: Yes, that would be fine. Thanks so much for your help.

## Part 2: Longer Conversations

*In this section you will hear longer conversations. Before each conversation you will read three to five questions. Listen to each conversation and answer the questions that appear in your test booklet.*

### Talking with the apartment manager on the phone

*Questions 9 through 12 are based on the following conversation between an apartment manager and a tenant. Read questions 9 through 12 now.*

*Okay, now listen to the conversation: "Talking with the apartment manager on the phone."*

- Male: Hello. Is this the apartment manager for Woodland Hills?
- Female: Yes, it sure is. How can I help you?
- Male: Well, I think the heating unit in my living room has stopped working because I have turned the knob all the way up and it is still freezing in here!
- Female: Oh. Have you tried turning it completely off for a while and then restarting it? There should be a little red light glowing next to the power switch to indicate that it is working.
- Male: Yeah, I tried that this morning. I see no lights and it isn't making any noise at all.
- Female: Hmm. This definitely sounds like something our maintenance guy should take a look at. Do you want me to schedule you an appointment with him? It looks like he will be by the office around 9:00 tomorrow morning. Will that work for you?
- Male: I'll actually be in class at that time. I suppose he can come when I'm not home, but I'd really rather get this taken care of tonight, if possible. I've already waited a day, hoping that this was just a temporary problem.
- Female: Well, our maintenance guy usually doesn't work on Sundays, but I do see that he was called out for an emergency in apartment B10 tonight. I suppose I can call him and see if he doesn't mind stopping by your place afterwards. What is your apartment number?
- Male: I'm right down the hall in B16, so that should be convenient for him.
- Female: Yep. Okay, I'll let him know to visit you as soon as he's done. If for some reason you don't see him before 6:00 tonight, make sure to call me back because our office closes then.
- Male: Okay, thanks a lot! Bye.

*Now answer questions 9 through 12.*

### Thinking about college

*Questions 13 through 16 are based on the following conversation between a man and a woman. Read questions 13 through 16 now.*

*Okay, now listen to the conversation: "Thinking about college."*

Female: I can't decide if I want my son to stay home next year and attend a university here, or if I should allow him to move to another city to attend school.

Male: What does he want to do?

Female: He's not sure. There is an excellent pre-law program at a university in Troy, but that's three hours away. Well, he likes the idea of studying there, but he has friends who will stay here, and his girlfriend may stay here, too. But then, he has only been dating her for a month.

Male: Ha ha. I forgot how complicated these decisions can be! When I went to college, the only consideration my parents and I made was about the program.

Female: I know! These days young people have such involved social lives! Maybe it would be good for him to go to the school at Troy. He really wants to study law, and his grades are excellent. I'm sure he'll be accepted there.

Male: That sounds like a good plan. He'll grow up a lot faster if he moves away, too, you know! And I know your son will always stay in touch with his parents. He's a fine young man!

Female: Thanks, John. I always appreciate talking to you.

*Now answer questions 13 through 16.*

### **Listening to a meditation CD**

*Questions 17 through 20 are based on the following conversation between two friends about a meditation CD. Read questions 17 through 20 now.*

*Okay, now listen to the conversation: "Listening to a meditation CD."*

Female: Hi, Jim. You look relaxed. What are you listening to?

Male: Hi, Laura. Just a second. Let me turn this down. I'm listening to a meditation CD. It's not just relaxing, but it's supposed to help increase my brain's functions, too.

Female: I didn't know you were interested in meditation! But how can you do that here in the bus? Shouldn't you meditate in a quiet environment?

Male: Here, listen to this for just a moment.

Female: Wow. That's interesting—sounds like some kind of chimes, and rain, but there's also something else there—what are those tones?

Male: Have you ever heard of binaural beats? The theory is that by sending different beats to each ear, your brain has to create new neural pathways to comprehend what it is hearing. The beats are hidden by the tones and the white noise made by the sound of falling water. The chimes are just for relaxation, I think. I've only been listening to this CD for a few days.

Female: That's pretty fascinating, Jim. I think I've heard of binaural beats used in some kinds of therapy before. White noise—is that just any sound that covers other sounds?

Male: I think white noise is best explained like the color white: white is the presence of all color, and white noise is the presence of all sound frequencies. So, really the

sound of water is not quite white noise, but it works in a similar way. The sounds here on the bus don't distract me at all when I'm listening to the CD.

Female: So how long do you listen each day?

Male: This CD lasts an hour, but I just listen on the way to work on the bus. Beats reading the paper!

*Now answer questions 17 through 20.*

### **Part 3: Extended Discourse**

*In this section you will hear a speech and an extended conversation. You will listen to each passage twice, and then you will answer a series of questions.*

#### **Dangerous waters**

*Questions 21 through 30 are based on the speech of the owner of the pet store. He is very active in trying to prevent the spread of invasive aquatic species. Listen to what he tells you. Read questions 21 through 30 now.*

*Okay, now listen to the speech: "Dangerous waters."*

The problem isn't just, or even mainly, about aquarium owners and private gardeners. Really, the fault lies with government and commercial activities. They've done more—by accident *and* intentionally—to spread aquatic species than anything pet owners have done. But it's everybody's responsibility to be careful and to try to prevent the spread of invasive species.

I mean, look here, at this fish in this tank. It's called a carp. I don't even sell carp to people—I just keep this here as an example for when folks like you come in looking to fill their aquariums. Basically, these carp were intentionally introduced to some of the local rivers and ponds a few decades ago. It was done to increase the fish available for fisherman, to increase tourism and the money the government could get from selling fishing licenses. But nothing that was already living in the rivers, no native species, could catch and eat the carp. So, they just spread unchecked through the whole state because there's really no such thing as unconnected water.

Now, the first reaction of a lot of people is to say, "Well, who really cares? It's this fish or some other fish." But that isn't the way it works, unfortunately. One of the most valuable resources in an environment is its biodiversity—basically, the variety of species a habitat has. Biodiversity is important because it gives a habitat some resilience. If a disease or a parasite crops up that kills one species, well, you've got other species around to step up and fill in the gap. No biodiversity means that there's nothing around to fill that gap. The Irish potato famine is a good example of this in agriculture—when the potato crop got killed by a disease, there was nothing else for the people to eat.

Well, invasive species just ruin biodiversity. In a habitat, there's a bunch of species competing for the same food, and invasive species just push all the others aside. Twenty years ago, you could find all kinds of different fish in the pond out back of the store here. Nowadays, it's really just carp, carp, and more carp.

So, that's carp and it's bad enough. But then sometimes people come in here, maybe it's the first time they own an aquarium, and they just go ahead and buy what looks pretty. But it's not always something that fits well with what they already have at home. Like maybe you buy some of this plant here, this water grass, because you like the reddish-purple colors. But when you get home you realize it can't live at the same water temperature you have in your own tank. So what do you do? Well, you probably throw it out or maybe even flush it down the toilet. Now, nine times out of ten, that stuff will die. But every once in a while, it holds on, then it starts to grow, then it starts to thrive, and then you've just introduced another invasive species.

So, I tell my new customers two things. First, let me help you when you come in. Tell me what you've got, tell me what you want, and we can work out a plan so that you can have a beautiful aquarium that works as its own habitat without you having to throw things away. Saves you money and effort, too. Second, if you decide you don't like something, or if you need to throw something away, just feel free to bring it back here and I'll take care of it for you—no charge.

Anyway, that's my speech—now what can I help you find today?

*Now listen again.*

**[repeat passage]**

*Now answer questions 21 through 30.*

### **New vacation policy**

*Questions 31 through 40 are based on the following conversation between two employees at a coffee break. They are discussing upcoming changes to their employer's vacation policy. Read questions 31 through 40 now.*

*Okay, now listen to the conversation: "New vacation policy."*

- Male: So, Sandra, did you read that memo about the new rules for vacation and sick days?
- Female: No. When did that get sent out? I thought I checked my inbox this morning, but I might have missed it...
- Male: Yeah, it just came about an hour ago.
- Female: I guess I can read it all when I get back to my desk, but can you give the details of it in a nutshell?
- Male: Okay, so you know how right now all our sixteen paid days off are called "flex days," and we can basically use them for either vacation or sick time, depending on what we need? Well, starting January 1, they are going to be designated as nine vacation days and seven sick days and you have to schedule your vacation days at least a month in advance.
- Female: Why are they doing that? Either way, they still have to pay us for those days.
- Male: Well, I think they are trying to make sure that people only use sick days if they're really sick. Management probably got tired of hearing rumors about how so-and-

- so called in sick one week and comes back in Monday with a tan, talking to his buddy about how much the kids loved the beach.
- Female: Yeah, I suppose it *is* hard to schedule someone to cover sick days. They usually end up offering overtime—which is pretty pricey—and then to hear the guy was just vacationing... Well, I guess I'd want to fix that, too.
- Male: Sure. I don't really mind the change about separating sick days from vacation days. What bugs me, though, is this new policy about when they will pay sick days. Apparently, the first day you call in sick, you don't get paid. But if you call in sick two days in a row, then you get paid for both.
- Female: What? How does that make any sense?
- Male: I know. So, my kid gets sick and has to stay home from school Friday... I have to take the day off to stay home with her and then I don't get paid just because she happened to get sick at the end of the week? I mean it's like they want me to call in sick on Monday as well.
- Female: Yeah, that's ridiculous. This new system is going to make people lie just to get the benefits they are entitled to. What genius do they pay to think up these great ideas?
- Male: Someone at corporate, I guess. At least, that's who the memo is from...
- Female: Well, if you ask me, it's a mistake for companies to start treating their employees like criminals. I'll bet 95% of us are just trying to do our job, obey the rules, and call in when we absolutely need to. The other 5% that might be cheating the system are going to find ways to do that no matter what.
- Male: I know what you mean. But hey! What can we do about it? With this economy I just feel lucky I've never been laid off and can keep working to provide for my family. I'm certainly not going to make any comments that would make me the next target!
- Female: You've got a point there. And speaking of not getting fired, we probably better get back to work...

*Now listen again.*

**[repeat passage]**

*Now answer questions 31 through 40.*

*Stop. This is the end of the CELP listening test. Do not turn the page until you are told to do so.*