



## Listening Part 2 – Sentence completion

### Teacher's notes, transcript and answer key

The following worksheet is intended to help your students prepare for Part 2 of the Listening paper of the Cambridge First exam. The audio file can be downloaded from onestopenglish, and the transcript is included below for your convenience.

### Transcript

**Narrator:** You will hear a man called Max Bolton, who is an expert on trees, talking about the horse chestnut tree. For questions 9–18, complete the sentences with a word or short phrase.

You now have 45 seconds to look at Part Two.

**Male speaker:** Most people in the UK probably take the horse chestnut tree for granted. Go to any park or village green and, chances are, you'll be able to spot one. However, the horse chestnut is not actually native to the UK. As far as the history of the species go, it actually arrived in Britain fairly recently, during the 1600s.

It was introduced to the UK from Turkey, and was initially considered a curiosity, grown only by plant collectors. This new tree looked very exotic to the British, who had never seen it before: people marvelled at its vivid green leaves, dramatic pink and white flowers in spring, and then the spiky green fruit casings in autumn, which contain glossy brown chestnuts, which give the tree its name and are also known as conkers. Indeed, the conkers were considered so precious, collectors would place blankets on the ground underneath the trees, in order to collect them.

Soon garden designers such as Capability Brown began planting the tree in large numbers. The British architect Sir Christopher Wren ordered a stretch of horse chestnut trees a mile long to be planted at Bushy Park in London, on the approach to Hampton Court Palace. You can still see this Chestnut Avenue today, and indeed every May there is a 'chestnut Sunday' in the park, which includes a parade, music and displays about Bushy Park's history and wildlife. As the horse chestnut began to be planted in greater numbers, inevitably the seeds – the conkers – from this

noble tree began to spread and self-seed in parks and gardens around the country. And today the horse chestnut tree is considered as British as fish and chips.

Where does the name for the tree come from? Some people say it's because when the tree's leaves fall in autumn, they leave a scar on the tree. This scar is in the shape of a horseshoe. More likely, though, is that people used to collect the tree's conkers when they fell to the floor. They would then grind them up and use them as horse food.

Actually, the conkers of the horse chestnut tree are poisonous to most animals, so you won't find any famous recipes containing the nuts. Instead, conkers are used to play a game of the same name, where the conker is threaded on to a string and smashed into an opponent's conker until one of them is destroyed.

The horse chestnut tree might appear to be a hardy species. Each autumn the deciduous tree loses its leaves, only to spring back to life the following year. It can live for 300 years and can reach up to 40 metres high. However, recently, the horse chestnut tree has come under threat from a pest called the leaf-miner moth. The moth lays its eggs on the leaves of the horse chestnut, and when the larvae hatch, they burrow into the leaf, damaging it in the process. The leaf-miner moth was first discovered in London in 2002, and is thought to be spreading by as much as 60 kilometres every year. Experts are still unsure how best to combat this pest, and are monitoring trees that have the disease.

**Narrator:** Now you will hear Part Two again.

### Answer key

- |                       |               |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| 9. park               | 14. planted   |
| 10. Turkey            | 15. food      |
| 11. flowers           | 16. game      |
| 12. conkers/chestnuts | 17. 300 years |
| 13. a/one mile        | 18. larvae    |



## Listening Part 2 – Sentence completion

You will hear a man called Max Bolton, who is an expert on trees, talking about the horse chestnut tree. For questions 9–18, complete the sentences with a word or short phrase.

Worksheet

**The horse chestnut tree**

Max says that it is easy to find a horse chestnut tree at a village green or in a (9) \_\_\_\_\_ in the UK.

The horse chestnut tree actually originated in (10) \_\_\_\_\_ .

When the horse chestnut tree first arrived in the UK, people were amazed by its bright green leaves and striking (11) \_\_\_\_\_ .

In the early days, the tree's (12) \_\_\_\_\_ were very valuable.

Chestnut Avenue in Bushy Park has a row of chestnut trees (13) \_\_\_\_\_ long.

The horse chestnut tree began to spread throughout the country as a result of so many of them being (14) \_\_\_\_\_ .

The name of tree is most probably related to its use as horse (15) \_\_\_\_\_ .

The fruit of the horse chestnut is not used in cooking, though it is a key part of a British (16) \_\_\_\_\_ .

The horse chestnut can reach heights of 40 m and can have a lifespan of up to (17) \_\_\_\_\_ .

Recently, some horse chestnut trees have been damaged by the (18) \_\_\_\_\_ of a leaf-miner moth.