

EA K 2024 Part1 Listening comprehension: 4 Housewarming Invitation

Housewarming Invitation

The following is a conversation between two friends meeting up in a cafe. The recording is in four sections and you can listen to the options in each section three times. For each question, decide which of Mark's responses is the most polite.

4.1

Listen, and choose the most polite response.

Elaine: **So, Mark! I haven't seen you for ages. How have you been?**

Option A Pretty good, but it's been a while. How are things?

Option B I've been doing really good, thanks! And yourself?

Option C Everything's going well with me. How about you?

4.2

Listen, and choose the most polite response.

Elaine: **Well, I've just moved to a new apartment right here in the city centre. I'm so pleased with it.**

Option A Oh, I'm glad to hear that. Your old place was really out of the way.

Option B Wow, congratulations! The city centre is such a great location!

Option C Well, good luck with that. There should be a very big change for you.

4.3

Listen, and choose the most polite response.

Elaine: **Actually, I'm planning a housewarming party the week after next. Probably on the Saturday evening. Do you think you can make it?**

Option A Oh no, I'm sorry! I'm afraid I'm heading off on a trip for work that weekend.

Option B Mmm, no can do. I've a trip to a conference planned for that weekend.

Option C Ah, no I can't make it. I'm already booked to travel on business that weekend.

4.4

Listen, and choose the most polite response.

Elaine: **Oh, that's too bad. Well, maybe you can come round for dinner sometime after your trip.**

Option A That's a good idea! I'll message you for possible dates when I'm back from the trip.

Option B Yes, I would really love that! Let's get in touch after your party to arrange something.

Option C That works for me. Contact me in a couple of weeks and I'll let you know my schedule.

Here's a detailed explanation of why the selected responses (**4.1b**, **4.2b**, **4.3a**, **4.4b**) are the most polite choices, along with reasoning for why the other options are less appropriate.

4.1 Elaine: *So, Mark! I haven't seen you for ages. How have you been?*

- **Chosen Response (4.1b):** *I've been doing really good, thanks! And yourself?*
 - **Why it's best:**
 - This response is friendly, enthusiastic, and polite. It acknowledges Elaine's question with gratitude ("thanks!") and reciprocates interest by asking, "And yourself?" This maintains a balanced and courteous tone in the conversation.
 - The phrase "really good" sounds casual and upbeat, fitting for a friendly context.
 - **Why not (4.1a):** *Pretty good, but it's been a while. How are things?*
 - "Pretty good" is informal,
 - The transition to "How are things?" lacks the smoothness of "And yourself?" which feels more natural and considerate.
 - **Why not (4.1c):** *Everything's going well with me. How about you?*
 - While polite, this feels slightly more formal and less warm compared to (4.1b). The enthusiasm in (4.1b) makes it more engaging for a friendly catch-up.
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4.2 Elaine: *Well, I've just moved to a new apartment right here in the city centre. I'm so pleased with it.*

- **Chosen Response (4.2b):** *Wow, congratulations! The city centre is such a great location!*
 - **Why it's best:**
 - This option shows enthusiasm ("Wow, congratulations!") which conveys genuine happiness for Elaine's news.
 - Complimenting the location ("such a great location!") adds warmth and positivity, making the response feel supportive.
 - **Why not (4.2a):** *Oh, I'm glad to hear that. Your old place was really out of the way.*
 - While polite, it subtly criticizes Elaine's old apartment ("really out of the way"), which might unintentionally come across as negative.
 - **Why not (4.2c):** *Well, good luck with that. There should be a very big change for you.*
 - "Good luck with that" can sound dismissive or indifferent, as if the speaker isn't genuinely interested.
 - "There should be a very big change" sounds vague and lacks the personal warmth of (4.2b).

4.3 Elaine: *Actually, I'm planning a housewarming party the week after next. Probably on the Saturday evening. Do you think you can make it?*

- **Chosen Response (4.3a):** *Oh no, I'm sorry! I'm afraid I'm heading off on a trip for work that weekend.*
 - **Why it's best:**
 - This response starts with an expression of regret ("Oh no, I'm sorry!") which softens the refusal and shows that Mark values the invitation.
 - "I'm afraid" is a polite way to introduce bad news, and the explanation about work adds a reasonable, non-personal reason for declining.
 - **Why not (4.3b):** *Mmm, no can do. I've a trip to a conference planned for that weekend.*
 - "No can do" is overly casual and dismissive, lacking the polite tone expected in this context.
 - The response sounds abrupt without any acknowledgment of regret.
 - **Why not (4.3c):** *Ah, no I can't make it. I'm already booked to travel on business that weekend.*
 - This is polite but lacks the warmth and regret expressed in (4.3a).
 - Starting with "Ah, no" feels slightly abrupt compared to the softer introduction in (4.3a).

4.4 Elaine: *Oh, that's too bad. Well, maybe you can come round for dinner sometime after your trip.*

- **Chosen Response (4.4b):** *Yes, I would really love that! Let's get in touch after your party to arrange something.*
 - **Why it's best:**
 - This response is enthusiastic and positive ("I would really love that!"), showing genuine interest in the suggestion.
 - "Let's get in touch" is proactive, suggesting a willingness to follow up, and mentioning the party keeps the conversation connected to Elaine's earlier plans.
 - **Why not (4.4a):** *That's a good idea! I'll message you for possible dates when I'm back from the trip.*
 - While polite, this shifts the responsibility to Mark, which can seem less considerate.
 - It also feels a bit formal compared to the warm and engaging tone of (4.4b).
 - **Why not (4.4c):** *That works for me. Contact me in a couple of weeks and I'll let you know my schedule.*
 - This response sounds transactional and puts the burden of follow-up on Elaine, which could seem less courteous.
 - "That works for me" lacks the enthusiasm of (4.4b), making it feel less warm.

Summary of the choices:

The chosen options (4.1b, 4.2b, 4.3a, 4.4b) are the most polite because they:

1. Show genuine enthusiasm and interest.
2. Use expressions of gratitude, congratulations, or regret appropriately.
3. Maintain a friendly, warm, and considerate tone throughout the conversation.