

Unit 3 Genetics

Biology: Genetics and human traits

Listening skills: Following a discussion on organising study

Speaking skills: Agreeing, disagreeing and reaching consensus

1 SPEAKING

- a Work in pairs. Discuss what the word *genetics* means to you.
- b Read the *Genetics fact file*. What information surprises you most? Tell your partner.

Genetics fact file

- 1 We share 98% of our genetic material with chimpanzees.
- 2 We share 90% of our genetic material with mice.
- 3 Human beings have 25,000 genes each.
- 4 1,000 cell nuclei are the same size as the full stop at the end of a sentence.



- c Think of people you know (family, friends, colleagues). What examples of genetic similarities and differences can you think of?

2 LISTENING

- a **CRITICAL THINKING**
COMPREHENSION AND ANALYSIS FOR ORGANISATION

For their next tutorial Andy, Kathy and Emma were asked to prepare the following seminar presentation.

Nature or nurture: what is the role of genetics and human traits? Referring to the attached reading, consider the role of genetics in traits such as fingerprints, eye colour, intelligence, handedness and twins. Ensure that you give an integrated and coherent presentation that is evidence of joint effort and cooperation.

Answer the questions.

- 1 Do they need to mention all of the human traits?
- 2 What do you think would be a good plan for the structure of this presentation? How could the information be organised?
- 3 What would be a good way for the three students to work together to plan their presentation?

- b **3.1** Listen to the three students discuss their planning of the presentation. Answer the questions.
- 1 Is their plan for the structure of the presentation similar to your ideas?
 - 2 Are their ideas about working together the same as yours?
 - 3 Which student seems most worried about planning the presentation?
 - 4 Which student seems to prefer leaving planning to the last minute?

- c **3.1** Listen again and complete 1–7 in the tables.

Presentation topics

Student name	Area of focus
Andy	genetics & (1) _____
Kathy	genetics & (2) _____
Emma	genetics & (3) _____

Study timetable

Task	When?
do individual background reading and preparation	(4) _____
meet to discuss and liaise over presentation content	(5) _____
do final revision	(6) _____
deliver presentation	(7) _____

- d **3.2 Skills focus** Listening for small discourse markers

Listen and read the first part of the discussion. Complete the gaps. More than one word can go in some gaps.

ANDY So if we have to do the presentation next Tuesday that gives us exactly seven days to get ready.

KATHY¹ _____ only if you include the weekend.

ANDY That might be a good time to meet and ² _____ talk it through.

KATHY³ _____ I'm going away this weekend.

ANDY Oh. ⁴ _____ What do you think Emma?

EMMA Well, I'm ⁵ _____ like Kathy – I've got a few things to do at the weekend.

- e Answer the questions.

- 1 What kind of words were missing?
- 2 Do they affect the meaning?
- 3 Are these words common in spoken language?



3 LANGUAGE FOCUS

Agreement and consensus

- a** **3.3** Listen for the expressions below in six extracts from the discussion. Which word do the students use?

- 1 I don't think *that'll* / *that'd* work.
- 2 Are we all *fine* / *OK* with that?
- 3 It sounds like Monday is the *better* / *best* option.
- 4 I *imagine* / *guess* so.
- 5 I don't think that's a *great* / *good* idea.
- 6 I'm not *sure* / *certain* about that.
- 7 Any *problems* / *objections*?
- 8 If that's *OK* / *all right*?
- 9 *That'll* / *That'd* work really well.
- 10 That *settles* / *decides* it.
- 11 So let's just *recap on* / *sum up* what we've agreed.
- 12 Is there anything else we haven't *looked at* / *considered*?

- b** Answer the questions.

- 1 In expressions 1–12 is it possible to use both alternatives?
- 2 In which expressions does the meaning change?

- c** **3.3** Listen to the six extracts again. Put the expressions from 3a into the four categories below.

1 agreeing _____	2 disagreeing _____
3 asking for consensus _____	4 reaching consensus _____

- d** Cover the expressions in 3a and 3c. Complete the dialogue using expressions that include the words in brackets.

A Let's make an essay plan.

B ¹*I don't think that'll work.* (think / work)

A Why not?

B We haven't done any reading yet.

A We can plan the main sections with reading.

B ²_____ (so)

A And then we can do the reading over the weekend.

³_____? (if / OK)

B Well, I've got another assignment to do. How about mid week as a deadline?

A OK, then. ⁴_____ (sounds / option)

B I can read these two articles and you can read the other two.

A ⁵_____ (not sure)

B Why not?

A I think we both need an overview. But we don't need to read in a lot of detail.

B All right. ⁶_____ (settles)

A So ⁷_____ (recap / agreed)

B We do a rough plan now and skim read the articles for next Wednesday.

STUDY SKILLS: WORKING TOGETHER

In tutorials and seminars, you will sometimes need to work together with other students on tasks and projects. Why is it important to ... ?

- listen to what other students say
- try to reach a consensus

4 PRONUNCIATION

Tones when agreeing and disagreeing

- a** **3.4** Listen to the three disagreeing expressions and underline the stressed words.

- 1 I don't think that'll work.
- 2 I don't think that's a good idea.
- 3 I'm not sure about that.

- b** Why are there a lot of stressed words in these examples?

- c** **3.4** Listen again to the tone of the disagreeing expressions. Does it ... ?

- 1 rise and then fall at the end
- 2 fall and then rise at the end
- 3 stay flat

- d** **3.5** Compare the tone of two agreeing expressions. What is the difference? What does it show?

- 1 I guess so.
- 2 That'd work really well.

5 SPEAKING

- a** Work in pairs. You and your partner have been asked to prepare a joint presentation on genetics and human traits as outlined in 2a. Discuss the following:

- the structure of your presentation
- who will talk about different topics
- when you will meet to work on it

Read one of the role cards (for Student A or B) and prepare what you are going to say. Do not read your partner's role card. Use expressions from 3a.

- b** Plan your presentation together and agree on the structure and content.

- c** Work in a new pair. Tell each other how your role play went. What was easy? What was difficult? Think about the following:

- reaching agreement on the structure of the presentation
- reaching agreement on how much planning to do
- using the examples of the language from 3a
- using stress and tones as you spoke