

IELTS LISTENING – The British Library
S45T2



IELTS listening The British Library listening practice test has 10 questions...

Tony Walters: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to your very own tour of the British Library on this lovely afternoon. My name is Tony Walters and I'm your guide for today. Could I please see your tickets for the guided tour?



Attempt Free Listening Test...

Questions 11-15
Complete the sentences below.
Type **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

The British Library

11 The reading rooms are only open for group visits on

12 The library was officially opened in

13 All the library rooms together cover meter square.

14 The library is financed by the

15 The main function of the library is to provide resources for people doing

I'd also like to remind you that any tickets bought today do not include a visit to the reading rooms. I'm afraid we don't do visits on Fridays – or any weekday during working hours, so as not to disturb the readers. But if you do want to see those rooms, the only day there are tours is on **q11 Sundays**. So, I don't want anyone to be disappointed about that today. OK? Thank you. Right. We'll start with a brief introduction. As many of you know, this is the United Kingdom's National Library and you can see that this is a magnificent modern building. It was first designed by Sir Colin St John Wilson in 1977, and inaugurated by Her Majesty the Queen more than twenty years later, in **q12 1998**.

As you can see, the size is immense and the basements alone have 300 kilometres of shelving – and that's enough to hold about 12 million books. The total floor space here is **q13 100,000** square metres and, as I'll show you, the library houses a huge range of facilities and exhibition spaces, and it has a thousand staff members based here in the building – so, you can appreciate the scale of our operation.

In fact, this was the biggest publicly-funded building constructed in the United Kingdom last century. It is still funded by the **q14 government** as a national institution, of course, and it houses one of the most important collections in the world. The different items come from every continent and span almost 3000 years.

The library isn't a public library, though – you can't just come in and join and borrow any of the books. Access to the collections is limited to those involved in carrying out **q15 research**, so it's really a huge reference library for that purpose, and anyone who wants to consult any materials that are kept here can formally apply to use the library reading rooms.

Right, well, here we are, standing at the Meeting Point on the lower ground floor just to the right of the Main Entrance. I've given you all a plan of the building so that we can orientate ourselves and get an idea of where we'll be going. Now outside the Main Entrance, you'll see the wide Piazza with the stunning sculpture of Newton.

Questions 16-20
Label the plan below.
Type **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer.

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The sculptor was Paolozzi, but it's based on the famous image by William Blake – and it's definitely worth a closer look. On the other side of the Piazza from the statue is the **q16 Conference Centre**, which is used for all kinds of international conventions – we'll take a quick look inside at the end of our tour.

Looking ahead of us now, you'll see that we're standing opposite the staircase down to the basement where you'll find the cloakroom, and to the left of that, we have the **q17 information desk** where you can find out about any current exhibitions, the times of the tours and anything you need to know – if you don't have a tour guide. As you can see, on this lower ground floor we also have a **q18 bookshop** – that's the area over to the left of the main entrance. You'll be free to browse there when we get back to the ground floor.

Now, opposite the main entrance on this floor we have the open stairs leading up to the upper ground floor. And at the top of them, in the middle of the upper ground floor, you can see a kind of glass-sided tower that rises all the way up through the ceiling and up to the first floor. This is called the **q19 King's Library** – it's really the heart of the building – it was built to house the collection that was presented to the nation in 1823 by the King. You can see it from every floor above ground. When we go up there, you'll find the library's Treasures Gallery on the left. Can you find it on your plan? That's the exciting one, so we'll be visiting that first, but we'll also take a look at the **q20 stamp display** situated behind it, on the way to the cafe – a lot of people miss that. The Cafeteria runs along the back of the floor and, in the right-hand corner, you'll find the lifts and toilets... ha, always good to locate them. The other main area on that floor is the Public Access Catalogue section and I'll show you how that operates when we get up there...

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