



## Ambitions

### Task: Trevor Noah

#### Activity 1: Listening

Welcome to a practice listening task for the GESE 11.

You are going to hear a talk about a well-known television personality. You will hear the talk twice. The first time, just listen. Then I'll ask you to tell me generally what the speaker is talking about. Are you ready?

#### Audio Script

If you enjoy comedy, you have certainly heard of one of the most beloved, uprising and ambitious television hosts and comedians, Trevor Noah. He is well known for his unique sense of humor and directness. Having said that, have you ever wondered how he got to where he is today?

His story starts with his parents in South Africa, son to a father of swiss-german ancestry and mother part of the Xhosa tribe. A year after his birth, something incredibly controversial happened. Interracial sexual relationships were made illegal. He was raised in the African town of Soweto, by his mother and grandmother. He received a private Roman Catholic school education at Maryvale College in Johannesburg. His mother would remarry twice after, giving Trevor two more siblings. Unfortunately, she would also be the constant victim of physical abuse with her spouses. Sadly enough, this would include being the survival victim of a gunshot through the leg and head from one of her spouses. In regard to this, Trevor Noah's good-heartedness made him confront his step-father on the telephone about the event, later feeling that not only did he have his life threatened, but also he would have to move from Johannesburg to Los Angeles.

In spite of everything, things really started to take off for Trevor Noah after he relocated to Los Angeles in 2011. It took him no time at all to start finding job opportunities since he always had a driving ambition to keep moving up in his chosen career path. For instance, he was the first South African stand-up comedian to have been seen on *The Tonight Show* in 2012. Later in 2013 he would also go on *The Late Show with David Letterman*, also becoming the first there. Amongst other job opportunities, it was in 2014 that he would become a recurring contributor on *The Daily Show*. After all the blood, sweat and tears that were produced for him to get where he had gotten in his career, he would have his big break in 2015, when he would be offered and given the opportunity to replace John Stewart as the host of *The Daily Show*. However, relatively quickly after being offered this position, Trevor Noah was criticized with the claim that he had some off-colour jokes about women. This could have been the end of his career, if it weren't for the fact that he stood up for himself perfectly well by stating that this was neither true, nor was it a representation of the comedian that he had evolved into.

To sum it all up, it is absolutely jaw-dropping to see how he has become one of the most famous hosts in the United States nowadays. He has reached one of the highest possible levels that most comedians and T.V. hosts can only dream about achieving. If Trevor Noah had not left South Africa, it would not be seen what single-minded determination and going the extra mile can do for a person who is starting over, but still remains ambitious and dead-set on their career path. Considering this, many have commented on the importance of having an ambitious attitude. So it seems clear that rarely will a person obtain sheer happiness, if they don't follow their dreams and ambitions in life.

Can you tell me in one or two sentences what the speaker was talking about?

Now listen to the talk again. This time make some notes as you listen, if you want to. Then I'll ask you to tell me about the point of view of the speaker, Trevor Noah's early life and life after moving to Los Angeles.

Now tell me about the point of view of the speaker, Trevor Noah's early life and life after moving to Los Angeles. You have one minute to talk.

This is the end of the listening task.

**Answers:**

Point of View	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow dreams and ambitions in order to obtain sheer happiness</li> </ul>
Early Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Born to father of swiss-german ancestry and mother of the Xhosa trib; Interracial relationships were illegal a year after his birth</li> <li>● Received private education from a Catholic school</li> <li>● mother a victim of physical abuse from her spouses</li> <li>● confronted his step-father and had to flee from Johannesburg to Los Angeles.</li> </ul>
Life after moving to Los Angeles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Relocated to Los Angeles in 2011</li> <li>● The first South African stand-up comedian on <i>The Tonight Show</i> and <i>The Late Show with David Letterman</i></li> <li>● Became a recurring contributor on <i>The Daily Show</i></li> <li>● Became the host of <i>The Daily show</i>, replacing John Stewart, in 2015</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Criticized about jokes against women; defended himself against it</li></ul>
--	---

Marks: +\_ / +10

**Grammar Used in the listening task:**

- **inversions: not only....but**
- **compound adjectives: jaw-dropping / well-to-do**
- **modifiers: absolutely / extremely / incredibly / totally**
- **Past participle as adjective: the most wanted player / a written document / a confused girl**
- **superlative + postmodifier + noun: best possible location / highest possible level**
- **adverb + enough: surprisingly enough / sadly enough / luckily enough**
- **adverb + adverb: perfectly well / extremely well / relatively quickly**
- **Mix Conditional: If society had realized this mistake earlier, it would be a different world today.**
- **Perfect Infinitive**