Moodle 1.9 Testing and Assessment

Chapter No. 7
"Listening Tests"
In this package, you will find:

A Biography of the author of the book
A preview chapter from the book, Chapter NO.7 "Listening Tests"
A synopsis of the book’s content
Information on where to buy this book

About the Author

Jason Myrick is interested in testing and assessments and computer delivery methods for testing. He has spent many hours playing with Moodle and teaching colleagues how to deliver tests with it. He decided that instead of a piecemeal approach, he would write a book that contained the basics of how to use Moodle to deliver tests and assignments for assessment. He is currently developing a research proposal for a PhD in testing with a focus on computerized assessments.

I want to thank all the wonderful people at Packt Publishing for giving me the opportunity to write this book. This book would not have been possible without the work of Dilip, Vincila, Priya, and all the others who have helped me along the way.

I also want to thank my editors, Jac, Julian, and Meeta, for all the feedback they provided. It was through their comments and corrections that the book came to be what it is.

Finally, I want to thank my family and friends for their continued support.

For More Information:

Moodle 1.9 Testing and Assessment

This book is a practical guide to testing in Moodle. You will initially learn to create different types of questions such as True/False, multiple choice, short answer, and so on. After you have learned how to create questions you will follow a step-by-step process to create complete tests by tweaking various options. Once you have gone through how to set up a complete Quiz, you will learn how to create and set up a Lesson, which can be used to create simple vocabulary or flash card tests or complex, multi-branched assignments.

Once you have finished with the Lesson module, you will learn to test and assess students through work submitted using the Workshop module. This module also provides an opportunity for self- and peer-assessment of student work. Once finished with Workshop, you will learn how to create a variety of skill-specific tests: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. After the skill-specific test section, you will learn how to set up and use Gradebook, Moodle's grading module.

By the end of this book, you should be familiar with a variety of ways to set up questions and test and assess your students using many of Moodle's modules and features.

For More Information:
What This Book Covers

Chapter 1, Testing with Moodle Quiz: In this chapter we will look at Moodle's Quiz module, introduce some of the main features, and learn to create True/False questions.

Chapter 2, Multiple Choice Quizzes: In this chapter we will continue to explore the Quiz module, develop multiple choice questions, and look at some question formatting issues.

Chapter 3, More Question Types: In this chapter we will look at all other question types available in the Moodle Quiz module, as well as how to create each one.

Chapter 4, Creating a Quiz: In this chapter we will learn how to create a complete quiz using the Quiz module, as well as use some new options.

Chapter 5, Using Lesson: In this chapter we will look at Moodle’s Lesson module. We will look at the setup, details, and how to create a Lesson for use in your classes.

Chapter 6, Using Workshop: In this chapter we will look at the Workshop module. We will look at the setup, details, and how to create a Workshop for use in your classes.

Chapter 7, Listening Tests: In this chapter we will look at a variety of ways to test listening skills using Moodle. We will look at uploading audio files, adding listening tasks, and using Forums with audio.

Chapter 8, Testing Reading: In this chapter we will look at a variety of ways to test vocabulary and reading skills using Moodle. We will look at how to make a QuizPort reading test, creating timed readings, and how to make flashcards.

Chapter 9, Testing Speaking: In this chapter we will look at a variety of ways to test speaking skills using Moodle. We will look at Nanogongs, using Skype, and two new contributions, VoiceBoard and VoiceShadow.

Chapter 10, Testing Writing: In this chapter we will look at a variety of ways to test writing skills using Moodle. We will look at pre-writing activities, writing portfolios, and setting up writing assignments.

Chapter 11, Using Gradebook: In this chapter we will look at the Moodle Gradebook, how it is set up, used, and how to create one in your course.

For More Information:  
Listening Tests

So far, we have looked at options for creating tests in Moodle. What we have not looked at yet are skill-specific tests, but we will now. The first skill we will be looking at will be listening. Testing listening is an integral part of many tests, especially in language courses. Listening tests are typically used to check comprehension of lectures, discussions, dialogs, speeches, and so on; to test for the ability to listen for details such as dates, time, names, or sounds, and so on; to test things like prediction; and so on. When we make listening tests in Moodle, these are the kinds of things we will be trying to do.

In this chapter, we will work through several aspects of setting up listening files and listening tasks and show you how to integrate them into the tests you are creating. We will look at:

- Downloading and setting up a recorder
- Uploading audio files
- Making the MP3 links
- Adding listening tasks to quiz
- Using forums with audio
- Multiple vs. single-play files

Using audio files

To create listening tests, we need audio. There are millions of places to get audio files. You can make them yourself, download them, link to them, or buy them. The first things we will look at in this chapter are how and where to get the audio you want to use in your site.

For More Information:
Creating audio files

Creating your own audio files can be fun and rewarding. By creating your own files, you can make the content exactly what you want and you can build up a library of audio files, which can be used in later tests or for review. In addition, students listening to their instructor's voice can make the listening tasks easier since students should be used to the sound of your voice, which can help them focus on the listening task itself. However, you don't have to limit your audio recordings to yourself. You can use your students, your co-workers, friends, family, or anyone else.

Creating audio files in Moodle is easy. There is a variety of software packages out there that can be used to record audio. The one we will look at is Audacity, the recorder I use. It is free, it's open source, but best of all, it is very easy to use. First, you need to go to the Audacity website and download it. Go to http://audacity.sourceforge.net/ and download the latest version of Audacity. Once it is downloaded and installed, open it and you will see the next screenshot:

![Audacity screenshot](image)

What we will be looking at now are six round buttons in roughly the center of the screenshot. The button with the circle in it is the Record button. When you have your microphone set up and you are ready to record, click on the button and begin speaking. When you have finished recording, click on the Stop button. To listen to your recording, click on the Play button and you will hear what you just recorded. If you don't like it, go to File | New to open a new recorder and try again.

When you have a file you like, then we need to save it. Go to File | Save Project As, then give the project a name and it will be saved. It is important to save your audio this way because it will allow you to go back and make changes to the recording later, should you need to.

For More Information:
Now that we have saved the audio file, we want to import it into our course. Unfortunately, as good as Audacity is, it can't do this alone. We need to download an MP3 encoder. Audacity uses the LAME MP3 Encoder, which can be downloaded for free via a link in Audacity's site or directly from http://lame.buanzo.com.ar/. Find the version you need based on your system and follow the instructions to install the LAME MP3 Encoder.

Once the LAME MP3 Encoder is installed, you will go to File | Export as MP3. This will open a Tag Box, which allows you to name and categorize the file. When you finish entering the information related to the file, click on the OK button and the file will be saved as an MP3 file. Once we have the MP3 file, we can then import it into Moodle. The first time you do import into Moodle, you will need to make the LAME MP3 Encoder work with Audacity. This is very easy to do and the instructions on how to do it are located at http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq?s=install&item=lame-mp3.

**The Tag Box**

The Tag Box is a good way to organize your sound files. By creating specific Album Titles and adding descriptive Comments, such as Aboriginal Art Listening Task, you can easily pick out the files you want to use.

There are many other things you can do with Audacity. A few things you can do are alter the sound quality, add background music, and quickly edit tracks. As you can see, there is a lot to learn about this software package, but it is easy and fun to use. The more you play with it, the easier it will get to use. I'll leave you to explore all the options Audacity offers on your own.

**Importing audio files**

Moodle has a built-in MP3 player, which is very simple, and easy to use. That is what we are going to work with. First, make sure the multimedia plugin filters are turned on. This is done in the Admin | Modules | Filters page. In the Settings page, make sure to enable the MP3 filter.

Now that we have a recording saved as an MP3 file, we want to import it. First, go to the course you want to import to. In the course, we will need an activity or resource to place the recording in. You can use several of Moodle's modules to do this in. A basic one we can use is Compose a Webpage in the Add a Resource drop-down menu.

For More Information:
First, you need to click on the **Turn editing on** button. Once this is done, go to the **Add a Resource** drop-down menu and click on **Compose a web page**. In the **Name** textbox, enter the name for the page. In the **General** section, enter some kind of description. Once this is done, move down to the **Compose a web page** section.

This is where we are going to put the MP3 player. In this section, we can enter any text we want. What we have so far is shown in the next screenshot:

As you can see, we have given a clear title to the listening. This is important when students are on the site and searching for the assignment. In the **General** section we have given a clear description of the activity. In the **Compose a web page** section, we have copied the **General** section text and underneath that, we have placed an extra line with an 'X' at the end. This is where we are going to put our MP3 player.

The first thing we need to do is create a link. You probably remember how to do this, but if you don’t, no problem. First, we need to highlight the text we want to use for the link. Notice the 'X' we entered after the final sentence? We will select this text and then go to **Create a web link** icon, the chain icon located to the left of the anchor in the formatting area.

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**For More Information:**

Once we click on the Create a web link button, a menu will appear asking for a URL, Title, Target, and Anchors. The menu with the link and title included is shown in the next screenshot:

![Insert Link](image)

If you know the URL, type it in. If you don't, click on the Browse button and you will see a new menu, also titled Insert Link. At the bottom of the screenshot below, you can see another Browse button. If you click on this Browse button, you will see your computer's files. Locate and select the appropriate file, then click on Open. This will cause the file's location to be placed in the textbox next to the Browse button.

Once the file location is there, click on the Upload button and the file will be added to the course. Here is what it looks like after a file has been uploaded.

![Insert Link](image)

Now that the file is in place, we can add it to our web page. Simply click on the link in the File Browser area and the menu with the file will disappear and you will again see the original Insert Link menu with the URL added. We will need to add a title, and we can see that Alternative Energy is what we entered for ours.

For More Information:
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You can also see the Target and Anchors drop-down menus. We will not worry about these now, so just leave them as they are. Click on the OK button and the link will be added to the 'X' at the end of the final line of the Compose a web page textbox.

Now, we need to do a little modification in the HTML to make this look correct. Click on the Toggle HTML Source button located in the formatting menu; it looks like this: <> Clicking on this button will show the code. We need to remove the 'X' we linked to in the code. This will get rid of the 'X' in the textbox and leave only the MP3 player.

First we need to find the 'X' in the HTML. It is located between the <a> and </a> commands. Simply delete the 'X' leaving everything else as it is. Here are two screenshots showing the before and after shots.

```
You are in TEXT MODE. Use the [<>] button to go back to WYSIWYG MODE.

Listen to the audio about alternative energy sources. Take notes about important concepts, dates, and technologies as you listen.<br />
<br />
Press the play button to listen to the file. <a title="Alternative Energy" target="_blank" href="http://www.language-testing.org/moodle/file.php/6/Alternative_Energy_Audio.mp3">X</a>
```

The 'X' is located at the end of the of the text, just before the </a>. What we are going to do is remove it. Just select it and click on Delete. After we have finished, we see the following screenshot:

```
You are in TEXT MODE. Use the [<>] button to go back to WYSIWYG MODE.

Listen to the audio about alternative energy sources. Take notes about important concepts, dates, and technologies as you listen.<br />
<br />
Press the play button to listen to the file. <a title="Alternative Energy" target="_blank" href="http://www.language-testing.org/moodle/file.php/6/Alternative_Energy_Audio.mp3"></a>
```

As you can see the 'X' has been removed and now we need to Save and display the new page. When we do this, we see that our text, minus the 'X', and audio file have been added to the page along with a simple MP3 player. The result is shown in the next screenshot:

Listen to the audio about alternative energy sources. Take notes about important concepts, dates, and technologies as you listen.
Press the play button to listen to the file.

---

For More Information:
Clicking on the play button will let anyone viewing the page listen to the recording. This recording can be listened to as many times as the listener desires.

So, this is how to create an MP3 player in Moodle. There are other players you can use, but this is the one we will use for now. So, now that we are able to make our own recordings, import them, and create a player, let's start testing our students' listening skills.

**Listening questions in Quiz**

Now, we will revisit our first few chapters and head back to Quiz. There are often times when we want to incorporate listening questions into Quiz and other tests. Whether we want to have students listen for details, gist, main ideas, or anything else, Quiz is a good place for adding listening them to tests because there are so many ways you can include them.

The first thing that we need to do is create test to use. The topic we are going to cover is Shakespeare's Plays. We'll create a title, a short description, and follow all the other steps needed to make a Quiz in Moodle.

Once the Quiz is created, we're ready to start with the question creation.

**True/False with audio**

The first thing we need to do is decide on our question type. The first question we will make is going to be a simple True/False item.

We will now go through the steps to create the True/False question. First we will add a name and text for the question.

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### Multiple Question Formats

If you decide to include multiple skill-based (for example, Listening, Reading) questions in your tests, it is a good idea to title the questions with something like 'Skill – Question Title – Question Type'. By following this type of naming procedure, you will place all the skills together in the Question Bank. You will also be able to quickly determine which skills you are working with and where to place them in the test.

Now that we have the text in the question, we will add an additional character marking where the player will be located. Anything is fine, but I always use an X. You also have the option of simply using a word, like player, but whatever you do, you need a place to make a link.

---

For More Information:

Now we repeat the process that was explained earlier. Select the X and click on the **Insert a web link** button. Browse to locate the file, and then upload it. Click on the link and enter a title in the **Title** textbox, then click on **OK**.

Once you have followed these steps, you click on the Toggle HTML Source button and remove the 'X' from between the <a> and </a>. Then click again on the Toggle HTML Source button to turn off the HTML view.

Once this is done, I will select the correct answer, in this case False, and add feedback for each answer.

Finally, we go to the bottom of the screenshot and click on the **Save** button. This will create the item. We will see the item is now placed in the Question Bank and when we click on the **Preview** button, this is what we see:

![Listening Test Preview](image)

Now, when a student sees this item, they will be able to click on the item as many times as they want to listen to the audio. Once they have finished listening they choose their answer and click on the **Submit all and finish** button and their response will be saved.

That's all there is to creating a listening item in True/False.

**Multiple Choice with audio**

This is set up in a very similar fashion. The only difference between a True/False item and a Multiple Choice is the number of options available for the answer.
Here is an example of a Multiple Choice item with a listening component.

As you can see, it is very similar and just as easy to produce.

**Images and audio**

Let’s say that you do not want to write the question for students to see. Maybe you want the students to look at a picture and respond to some questions about it or identify something in the image based on the audio.

Notice the text next to the player in the following image. These types of instructions can easily be recorded and added to the audio file, requiring the student to do even more listening.

The Moodle MP3 player has settings that will allow you to force the audio to be played immediately upon loading the page, once the full audio has downloaded, or after a set amount of time. To adjust the player to perform these functions, you can check the Moodle docs at [http://docs.moodle.org/en/index.php?title=MP3_player&oldid=60361](http://docs.moodle.org/en/index.php?title=MP3_player&oldid=60361). These docs give you the information you need to find the player settings and tell you what you need to do to make this work. The section you need to look for is **MP3 Playback Options**.

To add an image and audio to a question, we simply need to insert the audio and image as we have done before. Using the **Insert Image** button will allow us to place an image in the question and using the **Insert a Web Link** button will enable us to add the audio.

For More Information:

Listening Tests

Let's say that we want to test our Spanish class on prepositions of location. We take an image of a room and record ourselves making a statement about the location of something. For example, we might say, in Spanish, 'It is on the table, next to the television.' Here is an example of what a Multiple Choice Quiz question containing an audio file with an image and text can look like:

![Image of a room with a television and a bed]

Press the play button. Listen to the instructions. Then answer the question.

Choose one answer:
- a. La almohada
- b. El televisor
- c. La cama
- d. El libro

Other question forms with audio

It is possible to add audio to all the other question forms as well. You would follow the same procedure as shown in the previous screenshot to add the audio to the description.

Some things you can do are create audio prompts for essays or create short answer or calculated items where students are required to enter the appropriate response. There are many possibilities for listening questions in Quiz, and you will, I'm sure, have more ideas than I can think of. The sky's the limit, so enjoy playing with the options you have available and be creative.
Multiple audio in questions

As seen in the previous screenshot, we added audio to the question. What I’d like to show you now is how to add more than one. This is not going to be used by everyone, but there will be occasions when it will be useful to know how to do it.

Let’s use another multiple choice item for our example. In our class, let’s say we have been studying the plays of Shakespeare and we have reviewed several of the major scenes in several major plays. We want to determine whether or not students are able to identify the play with the ‘Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow’ soliloquy.

We go through and set up our question as normal. The question text will read, **Which of the following soliloquies was in Macbeth?** Once we have finished with this, we need to create the audio files.

We have a few options here. The first, and simplest, is for us to record the soliloquies ourselves using Audacity. If this does not work for you, or you are shy about your own voice being used, we can use Audacity to record directly from streaming audio files. Basically, it will record whatever is coming out of your speakers. So, you can go online, find one of the many sources of free audio files, stream the audio, record it, and then edit it down to the parts you want. The instructions for doing this are on the Audacity site and vary based on your system and set up. Once the audio is ready for use, we go to the question text and begin to enter our audio responses.

We are going to include four audio files in this question. First, we set up the link to each audio file and then turn on the HTML Source button. Once we have done this, we see something like the following screenshot:

```
1. <a href="http://www.language-testing.org/moodle/file.php/6/hamlet1.mp3" title="To be or not to be">X</a>
2. <a href="http://www.language-testing.org/moodle/file.php/6/romeo1.mp3" title="Oh romeo romeo wherefore">X</a>
3. <a href="http://www.language-testing.org/moodle/file.php/6/macbeth1.mp3" title="Tomorrow and tomorrow">X</a>
4. <a href="http://www.language-testing.org/moodle/file.php/6/othello1.mp3" title="Thus do I make my soul my purse">X</a>
```

We can see here that we have titled each of the audio files with a quote from the play instead of the name of the play so when the students scroll over the player, they will not see Macbeth, or the like. Now, we will go back and delete each of the X’s from the lines.
Listening Tests

Once that is done, we will go to the Response section and enter a number corresponding with the numbers in the Question Text. I would recommend turning off numbering and turning off the shuffle function for these types of questions. They will only serve to confuse students and there may be errors made from a mistake in choice selection instead of in lack of knowledge due to the shuffled responses.

Once everything is completed and we save the question, we see the next screenshot:

Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to add audio to the answers, so we can't make a question like that in Quiz. However, we will look at some other options in a few minutes.

Using video

Video can be an extremely useful tool for listening tests. Conversations between characters, monologues, and lectures can all be used for listening comprehension and listening for details testing. There are a few ways to add video to your listening tests. We can embed videos, link to them, or upload them to our course.

The biggest sites today, sites like YouTube, Dailymotion, and Hulu, offer a variety of videos and categories that can be used for classes and testing purposes. Since YouTube is the biggest and offers the largest variety of videos, in multiple languages, we will use it as our main source for video.

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Chapter 7

Linking video

The first option for adding video is using a link. First, we will look at simply copying and pasting a link into the question text. Then, we will look at adding a link to a video by using the same method we used for adding a link to the MP3 files we just saw.

The first thing we need to do is decide what the listening task will be. We have decided that we want our students to be able to identify a play by watching and listening to a famous soliloquy. We will use the 'Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow' one once again.

Our next step is to find a video we want to use. We want to have a large selection available to choose from, so we will use YouTube. We do a simple search in YouTube and we quickly locate several videos that look useful. After watching several, we select the one we want to use and now we need to create our question.

We will be using a Short Answer question format in Quiz, so I open the Question bank in the Quiz I am working with and select Short Answer under Add a New Question. I enter in the text of the question, enter the answer, and feedback.

Next, we copy and paste the link from the YouTube address bar and paste it in the textbox. This will directly link the question to the video from the site and students will see what they are supposed to view in the question.

Following these instructions we see something like the next screenshot:

![YouTube video link in Moodle](www.packtpub.com/moodle-1-9-testing-and-assessment/book)
The same effect can be accomplished by using the **Insert a Web Link** button. We need to have some text to create the link. So we can either, as I usually do, insert an 'X' or some other text, then highlight it and click on the **Insert a Web Link** button, which will bring up the **Insert Web Link** menu. Since we have already copied the address for the video we want to view, we simply paste the address from the YouTube site into the **URL** textbox. This will give us the same question format as the previous image, but instead of a link to the video as the **Title**, we have the option to title it whatever we'd like. This can be useful especially if the site name gives students information about the video they should not have, for example, if the site we used for the video was titled Shakespeare-Macbeth.org or something similar.

**Embedding video**

Embedding video is a little more complex but still easy to do. It is like linking, but the user will access the video from inside Moodle. This time we will use a simple True/False item to show how this works.

Assuming that we already have a question we want to use, the first thing that we need to do is find a video we want to use. We will use the same Macbeth video as we used for the linking explanation.

Looking at the video's page on YouTube, we can see directly under the video a button called **<Embed>**. Clicking on this button will open a window below with several options including colors, borders, and size. We will not worry about these now, but feel free to play around with the video settings if you want. We are only going to look at the most important thing here, the HTML snippet. The HTML snippet, which should already be highlighted for you, is really all we need from here. We will simply copy the snippet and go back to the question. Now we can embed the video in the question.

In the question, we are going to ask the students to watch the video, then identify whether or not the scene is from Macbeth. We write our question text. When this is finished, we click on the **Toggle HTML Source** button and paste the address where we want it. The before and after screenshots that show the changes made when embedding the video are as follows:

| You are in TEXT MODE. Use the [<>] button to go back to WYSIWYG MODE. |
| Watch the video.<br/>Is this scene from Macbeth? |
This will produce a question that looks identical to the linked videos described previously, except it will be embedded and not a link. When finished, click on the **Save** button at the bottom of the page.

**Listening tasks**

Now that we know how to add audio and video files, let's look at some ways to test listening. When testing listening, we design questions around specific listening skills. We can test for listening comprehension, listening for details, listening for gist, listening for specific sounds, and several other listening skills. We also have pre- and post-listening tasks we can ask our students to complete. Here we will show some possible listening test ideas.

**Listening for sounds**

One of the simplest ways to check listening skills and have students listen for sounds is using the Quiz Module and setting up audio files with the sound you want the student to be able to hear.

For example, say we are teaching English as a Second Language students and we want to determine whether or not they are able to differentiate between *ship* and *sheep*. We can simply record the single word or sound we want the students to be able to identify into an audio file and create a two-answer question. The question text could be something like, **Listen to the audio. Which word do you hear?** We add the audio and in **Answer 1** we enter *ship* and in **Answer 2** we enter *sheep*. An example of what it would look like is shown in the next screenshot:
Grading this type of item is automatic, so all you need to do is assign a point value appropriate to the task and difficulty of the item.

Listening for vocabulary (Cloze Listening)
Another commonly used listening activity is what is known as Cloze Listening. Typical Cloze Listening activities have a set number of words then a blank space. In Moodle, we can do this in one of the following two ways. We can use Embedded Answers (Cloze), which will create a drop-down menu for each missing word and the students will have to choose what they hear. The second option, one which is much more difficult for students, is creating Short Answer items. We will look at both as well as one question containing both.

Embedded Answers (Cloze) Listening
The first option we will look at is a simple audio file with a Cloze activity. Depending on the source of the material, chances are you will either have text that needs to be recorded or you will have located an audio file and need the text. If you have the text, all you need to do is record it. If we have an audio file we want to use, but no text, this takes a bit more work. The first thing we need to do is get the audio transcribed into text.

To transcribe text, we have a few options. If the audio is from a famous source, a book, movie, song, and so on, chances are you will be able to find the text online. If the audio is something less well-known you will either need to spend the time listening and typing out the text yourself or using a speech-to-text converter. There are a few commercial products available for this.

Once we have the text available, we want to create an embedded question using the text. We will decide which words need to be identified and set up the question accordingly. For our text, we will use a famous soliloquy from Shakespeare and make our Cloze listening question from it.

To set up the question, I simply go to the Quiz Module and find the quiz I want to use or I create a new one. Once in the Quiz, I need to create an Embedded (Cloze) question. Here is what our Embedded Answer (Cloze) question looks like after we have created the item and included the audio as shown in the next screenshot:
Grading this is done automatically; however, you need to determine the point value for the question. This question, as it was created, was worth 10 points but it is a fairly simple task. With items like this you may want to limit the entire question to 5 points or something else. Regardless of what you decide to do, make sure you are assigning a fair value in points-to-difficulty when creating multiple responses in a single item.

**Short Answer**

We can do the same thing with Short Answer. These items are more difficult because they require students to type in the correct response. Using the same text and audio used previously, we can see what this would look like:

Listen to the audio. Enter the missing word by typing it into the textbox.

```
“She should have died ,
There would have been a for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
 in this petty pace from day to day,
To the last of recorded time;
And all our yesterdays have lighted
The way to death. Out, out, brief
Life’s but a walking shadow, a poor
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is no more. It is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and
Signifying nothing.
```
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Again, this will be graded automatically. Remember that if you want to give feedback to one of these questions, you will need to follow the rules we outlined in the Short Answer description in the Quiz section.

Mixed format

It is also possible to use Short Answer Cloze, Multiple Choice Cloze, and even Numerical Cloze in a single question. To create this type of item, simply insert the type of item you want in the appropriate place. Here is an example of what a Short Answer and Multiple Choice item looks like before we save it. Note I have left the 'x' link visible so you can see where the audio player will be.

Listen to the audio. Answer the questions.

1. The man speaking is originally from [1:MULTICHOICE::%100%india%-%England-%The US-%Australia].
2. In his free time he likes to [1:SHORTANSWER::%100%hike-%100%go hiking-%100%go on hikes~].
3. He is [1:MULTICHOICE::%100%35-%45-%55-%65] years old.
4. His favorite food is [1:SHORTANSWER::%100%pizza~].

Now that we have everything in place, we are going to place the MP3 player in the question and then save the item. Once we have done this, we see the following:

Again, this item will be graded automatically, so you and the students will be able to see the grades immediately.

Listening for gist, main idea, and comprehension

Listening for gist or main idea is making sure the students understand the core message being presented. Listening comprehension tasks can also be used in a similar fashion. You can use a variety of means to do this, one of which is by using the Essay question in Quiz.

For More Information:
Let's say we are teaching about a current event. We take audio from a source and we want to make sure our students are able to listen and understand what the main idea of the report is. To set up this kind of activity we are going to use Essay.

The first thing we need to do is find our audio. There are many sites out there with free audio samples and reports. Where you should look really depends on what you are teaching.

Let's say that our class has been working on *The Prince* by Machiavelli. We want the students to listen to a part of a chapter and let us know the gist of what Machiavelli was taking about. Again, we have a few options about how we will do this. The first is we can sit down and read the parts we want. This technique allows the students to be immediately comfortable with the reader since they are already used to your voice. This also has the advantage of allowing you to read only the sections you want.

Another option is using an audiobook. Now, there are copyright issues, so make sure you aren't doing anything illegal! There is a way around this, at least for 'the classics'. You can go to several free audiobook sites and find free MP3 files to use. One site is LibriVox (http://librivox.org), a site with a vast library of books in the public domain read by regular people with a variety of styles and accents. Librivox has a nice bonus as well, the page with the listening files for the book you have chosen also holds a link to the entire text of the reading. This is very useful should you want to use the text later for some type of comprehension task. If you decide to use this site, it is simple and you will quickly figure out how it works. There are many other sites offering similar things, so feel free to search and find the one you like. Regardless of the site you choose, you will need to make sure that your students' computers are all set up to play the files.

Now, our options here are directly linking to the page, directly linking to the file, or we can use our Audacity recorder to record what we hear directly from the site and then upload the recording to Moodle and use the Moodle MP3 player.

If you decide to link to the page, make sure the students know exactly which file to select and listen to. An image of the file to select and/or specific instructions on where to go are usually sufficient. In the **Insert Link** menu, in the **Target** area, you have the option to choose to have the page open in a new window. This is the option you should choose, since the student will be able to go back and forth between the page and the question.

If you decide to link to the file, the student will simply need to click on the link on the page and the file will begin playing. If the file you are linking to is an MP3, the Moodle player will be shown. In this case, you will want to adjust your question text accordingly.

For More Information:
If you want to upload the file and use the Moodle MP3 player, you can. There are several ways to do this. First you can save the file, and most of the time this will be an option. Occasionally, you won't be able to. In this case, you can use Audacity to record the file and upload it yourself. To do this you need to open Audacity, click on the Record button, and then open the file you want to record. Audacity will record what you are hearing through the computer. Once you have finished, you can edit the file down and cut out the space at the beginning and end if necessary. Once this has been done, you add the file just like we did with the True/False and Multiple Choice items. An example of what this looks like with the audio recorded by Audacity and uploaded as an MP3 file is shown in the next screenshot:

Grading these types of questions is not automatic, so you will need to go through each student's response individually. This can be time consuming, but it will give you a clear idea of what each student took away from the listening and this type of test question can really help identify students with strong and weak listening comprehension skills.

Using forums for listening tests

Forums are another place where we can deliver listening material to students. They are one of the core components of Moodle and one that we haven't looked at before. Forums have a lot going for them: they are great places for students and teachers to interact, they allow us to see posts and replies, and the instructor can to create several different types.

There are a few settings in Forum that we have not looked at, and we will not look over all of them. There are a few that are important to be aware of however.

For More Information:
**Forum Type**

Directly under the Forum Name, at the top of the page, there is the Forum Type drop-down menu. This menu has four settings.

**A single, simple discussion**

This is the most basic forum. It is a single discussion based on a given topic. The posts are all seen in a nested form. They can be useful in many ways, particularly for class or group discussions and assignments.

**Standard forum for general use**

This is a Forum where anyone is able to start as many discussion topics as they would like. This forum offers the most flexibility and is the default setting.

**Each person posts one discussion**

This type of Forum allows each member of the course to post a single new thread. The thread can then be viewed by other members of the course and they will be able to reply. This is a good way to set up Forums for self- and peer-review work.

**Q & A Forum**

For testing purposes, this is probably the one you want to use. This Forum requires each student to submit their work before they are able to see anyone else's submission. This will stop students from viewing another student's work before their own is completed, thus reducing copying or cheating.

For the assignment we are going to create, we will use the Q & A Forum because we do not want students to see what their classmates think will happen next.

**Grading**

The second setting we want to look at is how to grade a Forum. There is a Grading drop-down menu, which contains several ways to give final scores:

**Average of ratings**

This takes the score of all the Forum posts, adds them together, and divides by the number of posts. It is the simplest way to determine scores in Forum and it is also the default setting.

**Count of ratings**

This method of giving a score is based on the number of posts made. This is one that is not used as much as others, but it can be useful if you require a certain number of posts, say over the term or year.

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For More Information:

Listening Tests

**Maximum rating**
Using this setting will take the highest graded post and use that as the final grade. This is very useful for self- and peer-review assignments.

**Minimum rating**
Using this setting takes the lowest rated post and gives that as the final grade. This setting can force students to make carefully constructed posts at all times because any poor quality post will cost them points.

**Sum**
This Forum setting takes every post made and adds them all together to give a grade. This can be useful if you want to give a number of points for each post or if you want to have the student work in stages. The total score will never go over the maximum grade allowed for the Forum.

For example, let's say we are working on predicting and we want our students to watch or listen to a brief clip of something and then to predict what will happen next. We can find the audio or video and embed or link it to our Forum. In the forum, we ask our students to listen and then predict what will happen next. We can also have the Forum divided into several parts. For example, we can set up a pre-listening activity, a listening activity, and a post-listening activity.

Another benefit to using forums is that you can discuss issues with your students and keep a record of revisions and shifts in thought or understanding. Here is an example of a Forum set up with an audio component.

![Audio Clip](https://www.packtpub.com/moodle-1-9-testing-and-assessment/book)

Now, look at the replies. You can see I have already gone ahead and replied and assessed the student. Here you can see what they look like. The replies are seen in a flat, nested form.

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For More Information:
Chapter 7

As you can see, the teacher can see the student's response and can use the drop-down menu in the lower right-hand corner of the student's post to assign a grade. The teacher can then add a new post, with a new recording, and continue the thread. These kinds of extended tasks can be very useful to observe student growth over the course of the term.

Obviously, predicting is not the only way to test listening in Forums. We can test comprehension, gist, or even ask opinions based on audio or visual clips. In addition, these forums are great places to set up self- and peer-reviews. Setting up forums where students work alone to revise their work or where classmates can see what other students are working on can be a good way to assess students.

**Podcasts**

Using podcasts is another way to test students' listening skills. One way to do this is to locate useful podcasts for the course you are teaching and asking students to listen, then testing them on the material either using Quiz, Forums, or some other activity that fulfils the skill you want to test.

The second option is creating your own podcasts. In Moodle, there is a podcast module that you will need to enable. To do this, you will need the Administrator to install the Ipodcast module. The instructions and files are located at http://docs.moodle.org/en/Ipodcast_module. This can be an effective method of testing listening comprehension because you are able to focus on the area being discussed and the student will find it easier listening to your voice as opposed to someone else's. You can set up a variety of essay and comprehension questions based around podcasts.

For More Information:

Multiple playing of audio files versus single attempts

When giving listening tests, it is usually important to control the number of times a student is able to listen to a track or file. This enables us to put all students on an equal footing in regards to the test and helps conserve time. While there may be times when this is not true, nearly all tests do limit listening tasks to one or two times.

Unfortunately, there is no way of setting up the built-in Moodle MP3 player so that it plays a single time. There is, however, a way around this. We have the option of installing a different player. One player that has been developed specifically for testing in Moodle is Matt Bury's Moodle MP3 Player for Tests. It can be downloaded from http://code.google.com/p/moodle-mp3-player-for-tests/ and an explanation of how it is used is found at http://code.google.com/p/moodle-mp3-player-for-tests/wiki/HowToUse. It is a simple-looking player, much like the Moodle MP3 player, but with a bit more functionality. The next image is an image of the player taken from the site hosting the download:

This player allows many options in the audio setup, including the key ability to play files automatically and limiting the number of times a student is able to listen to the file. In many tests this type of setting is necessary or desirable. The setup takes a bit of work, and it is not too difficult for those with a bit of HTML skill, but it could be a bit overwhelming for those without any coding experience. Most likely your institution's system admin will be able to help you get it working.

Summary

Listening is an important skill for many fields and positions, and tests usually contain a listening component. In this chapter, we have gone over some of the ways you can add listening items to your Moodle-based tests, but we have by no means gone through all of them. We have looked at how to upload audio, insert a player, and gone through how to create a variety of question types in a variety of activities. All these things can be extremely useful when testing. However, we really have only scratched the surface.

For More Information:
There are so many plugins and additional hacks and players and resources that we simply don't have the space to get into here, although the Moodle MP3 Player for Tests mentioned earlier is something you will probably want to set up on your site.

What we have done in this chapter is given you the basic tools you need to get started with testing listening. When you come to something you want to try out that wasn't covered here, you should have the building blocks to learn more yourself. If you want to learn more or ask questions about how to do something, the forum http://moodle.org/mod/forum/view.php?id=1301 in the Moodle Language Teaching area focuses on using listening. While it is not the most active of forums, there are many members and they are almost certainly able and willing to help with issues you come across.

One final note, many of the activities described in this chapter will take up a lot of space. Your system administrator may not be happy with large files being uploaded to Moodle. Before you begin uploading a lot of video or audio files, you might want to check with the system administrator to let them know what you want to do and make sure there aren't any problems or space issues. They will appreciate it!

Now that we have looked at listening tests, we will move on and look at some reading test options in Moodle.
Where to buy this book


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