C1-C2 ENGLISH LISTENING WORKSHEET

Christmas Decorations: When Is Too Early?

10 November 2026

Good Morning Britain - Early Christmas decorations debate (approx. 4:49)

Amanda Holden has put her Christmas decorations up in early November. Kerry Katona welcomes the festive cheer, while Sophie Hermann believes celebrating too soon makes Christmas less special. Listen to their fast-moving debate, regional British accents, humour and interruptions.

Before your lesson: Watch the video once without captions, then replay difficult sections. Write brief notes in the spaces provided; use an additional page for longer answers. Complete the vocabulary tasks and prepare for discussion.

Watch the Good Morning Britain video on YouTube

Listening Comprehension

Answer in your own words. Interpret contrasts, reasons and humour where relevant.

No.	Listening question and answer space
1.	How does the introduction show that decorating early is both widespread and controversial?
2.	Which two German Christmas dates does Sophie mention, and how do they support her view about the length of the season?
3.	What reasons does Kerry give for decorating so early, and how do her family circumstances strengthen her argument?
4.	What seasonal work has Kerry decided not to do this year, and what change in priorities does she describe?
5.	How does Kerry respond when people call early Christmas decorations tacky? Explain both her words and attitude.
6.	Why does Sophie reject the idea that disliking early decorations means she dislikes Christmas?
7.	How does a presenter describe Kerry's decorating strategy, and when does Kerry say she takes everything down?
8.	What does Sophie advise Kerry about real Christmas trees, and what does Kerry reveal about her own experience with them?
9.	What happened to Sophie's Christmas tree during her first Christmas in England, and what timing does she now prefer?
10.	What distinction does Kerry make between buying presents and wrapping them, and how does a presenter respond?

Phrase Match

Match each exact expression heard in the video (1-10) to its contextual meaning (A-J).

Expressions (1-10)	Meanings (A-J)
1. on board	**A.** use or enjoy an opportunity as fully as possible
2. way too early	**B.** made an experience feel lively or exciting
3. over and done with	**C.** make a period or event last longer
4. brought it alive	**D.** much earlier than seems reasonable
5. at that point in my life	**E.** do not misunderstand the point I am making
6. make the most of it	**F.** increase something gradually rather than all at once
7. Stay in your own lane	**G.** in agreement and willing to support the idea
8. Don't get me wrong	**H.** at a particular stage in my personal circumstances
9. stretch out	**I.** completely finished and no longer needing attention
10. build it up steadily	**J.** concentrate on your own choices instead of judging others

Synonym Match

Match each exact transcript word (1-10) to its closest contextual synonym (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. revealed	**A.** suitable
2. tacky	**B.** gloomy
3. tradition	**C.** tasteless
4. hazard	**D.** understated
5. miserable	**E.** killjoy
6. bonkers	**F.** danger
7. low-key	**G.** gradually
8. appropriate	**H.** disclosed
9. steadily	**I.** crazy
10. Grinch	**J.** custom

Use the New Language

Choose five words or expressions from the lesson and write one original sentence for each.

No.	Your original sentence
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Discussion Questions

Use the video as a starting point. Give reasons, compare experiences and challenge each other's arguments.

Student A - Personal experience	Student B - Opinions and analysis
1. How early do you usually start celebrating Christmas or another major festival?	1. Does stretching out a celebration over several months inevitably make it less special?
2. Have you ever thought somebody's decorations were tacky or impressive? What caught your eye?	2. When does calling someone's taste tacky become unfair or snobbish?
3. Which childhood festive tradition do you still enjoy, or wish you could bring back?	3. How much responsibility do retailers have for extending the Christmas shopping season?
4. Do shorter, darker days affect your mood? What helps you feel more cheerful?	4. Should family traditions be preserved, or adapted freely when circumstances change?
5. Have you ever taken time off work to make the most of a family occasion?	5. Can early festive decorating genuinely improve mental well-being during dark winters?
6. Would you prefer a real Christmas tree or an artificial one? Why?	6. Do children benefit more from a long build-up or from anticipation and surprise?
7. Do you prepare for celebrations well in advance or leave everything until the last minute?	7. Do celebrities influence ordinary people's expectations of celebrations too much?
8. What is the funniest disagreement you have had about a holiday or family tradition?	8. How can public festive events be inclusive without assuming everyone shares the same traditions?

60-Second Argument Challenge

"Christmas decorations should never go up before December." Take a position. Give two reasons, acknowledge a counterargument and use at least two expressions from Phrase Match.

Access the Video Transcript

The conversation includes regional British pronunciation, quick interruptions, jokes and informal expressions. The complete edited transcript appears after the answer key, beginning on page 5.

Watch the video and compare the spoken dialogue with the transcript

Answer Key

Listening Comprehension

1. [0:00-0:39] The presenter says one in ten Britons already have decorations up, while Amanda Holden decorated on 2 November. The resulting disagreement reached her radio show, where Ed Balls was described as being on board.
2. [1:05-1:17; 3:25-3:43] Sophie says German tradition involves putting up decorations on 24 December and removing the tree on 6 January. Starting much earlier could make the festive period excessively long and less special.
3. [1:49-2:23; 4:11-4:21] Kerry says dark, miserable mornings can lower people's moods, so decorations make home feel cheerful. She also has many children, including two young stepdaughters who have made Christmas exciting again.
4. [2:11-2:42] She normally performs in pantomime, which has prevented her from enjoying Christmas. This year she is taking a break to spend more time and energy with her family.
5. [2:42-3:10] Kerry jokingly calls herself tacky, says it is her middle name and tells critics to stay in their own lane. She refuses to be embarrassed and believes Christmas music and decorations make people happier.
6. [3:10-3:55] Sophie says she loves Christmas as much as anyone, but extending the celebrations for too long makes them less special. She also questions whether children will remain excited after two months.
7. [3:55-4:11] The presenter says Kerry starts low-key and builds the decorations up steadily over two months. Kerry says she takes them straight down once Christmas and New Year are over.
8. [1:25-1:44; 4:27-4:34] Sophie likes real Christmas trees but recommends waiting until around mid-December to put one up. She advises Kerry not to use a real tree if decorating so early. Kerry says she has never had a real tree.
9. [1:17-1:44] Sophie put a real tree up on 1 December, but by Christmas Eve it had dried into a brown crisp and become a fire hazard. She now suggests around mid-December.
10. [4:34-4:49] Kerry has already started her Christmas shopping but traditionally wraps the presents on Christmas Eve. A presenter says they are an early wrapper and prepare well in advance.

Phrase Match

1=G, 2=D, 3=I, 4=B, 5=H, 6=A, 7=J, 8=E, 9=C, 10=F

Synonym Match

1=H, 2=C, 3=J, 4=F, 5=B, 6=I, 7=D, 8=A, 9=G, 10=E

Example Sentences With the Phrases

No.	Example sentence with the Phrase Match expression
1	The committee was on board with the proposal once the risks had been explained.
2	The end of September would be way too early to start our Christmas celebrations.
3	I wanted the renovations over and done with before my family arrived.
4	The school fair was rather dull until the children's laughter brought it alive.
5	I realised that at that point in my life, I valued family time more than extra work.
6	We have only one day in Edinburgh, so let's make the most of it.
7	When a stranger criticised her hobby, she replied, "Stay in your own lane."
8	Don't get me wrong, I love Christmas, but November still feels too early.
9	Some retailers try to stretch out the festive season into early autumn.
10	The organisers decided to build it up steadily rather than reveal everything immediately.

Teacher note: Accept accurately paraphrased listening answers supported by the video. Timestamps are approximate. Discussion and original-sentence tasks are open-ended. The full edited transcript begins on the next page.

Full Video Transcript

Good Morning Britain - Christmas decorations debate | approx. 4:49

Edited for punctuation and readability from the user-reviewed transcript. Natural informal grammar and overlapping speech are retained. A few unclear words remain marked rather than guessed.

0:00-0:16 | Introduction

Presenter: Just over 50 days to go, but one in ten Brits have already got their decorations up.
Presenter: Yesterday on the programme, we revealed Amanda Holden had put hers up on the 2nd of November, and the debate on the topic made it to her radio show.

0:16-0:39 | Amanda Holden's radio show

Amanda Holden: Lyn in Sutton is watching GMB at the moment, as well as listening to us. And she said, "Amanda, Ed Balls is on GMB saying, 'Merry Christmas.'"
Amanda Holden (continuing to quote Lyn): "I think Amanda Holden's right."
Amanda Holden: And then they showed the video of my house and the decorations. And Lyn says, "If Ed's on board, then Christmas is on."
Amanda Holden: And I've got to tell you, so me and Ed are on board.

0:39-1:05 | Introducing the debate

Presenter: Christmas is on, and the antlers are on, aren't they, Ed?
Presenter: Is it tacky to start your Christmas now? Get your decorations on?
Kerry Katona: Of course it's not!
Presenter: We're so tacky. That's why we...
Presenter: TV personality Kerry Katona has put her decs up and doesn't think it's tacky. Made in Chelsea's Sophie Hermann, like me, thinks it's way too early.
Presenter: So we're dressed in green because we're the Grinch, aren't we?

1:05-1:44 | The German Christmas tradition

Presenter: When is the right time to put your decs up?
Sophie Hermann: Well, in Germany, actually, the tradition has it that you put up all of your Christmas decorations on the 24th, so the kids only see [unclear].
Presenter: In December?
Sophie Hermann: Yes. Really special.
Presenter: I think that's a bit too late.
Sophie Hermann: Last year, I had my first Christmas in England. I put up a Christmas tree on the 1st of December. By the 24th, it was dried to a brown crisp. It was a fire hazard, actually.
Presenter: Yeah, so you're not going to do it on the first. So when will you do it?
Sophie Hermann: I think now, because I like a real tree, I think maybe towards mid-December.

1:44-2:23 | Kerry's Christmas enthusiasm

Presenter: Right, mid-December. Kerry Katona, that's way too late for you.
Kerry Katona: It's over and done with by then!
Presenter: At your house?
Kerry Katona: Well, you see, for me, it's over and done with by then. You know what it is? I think because these early mornings are so dark and miserable, let's give our house a nice cuddle and a hug and decorate.
Kerry Katona: I've got an orphanage at home, Susanna. You know, I've got that many kids! I like to decorate. Look, there you go. Doesn't that look lovely?
Presenter: Was that yesterday?
Kerry Katona: That was on the second, same as Amanda. Got it all up.
Kerry Katona: But I do panto every year, but I've took this Christmas off because I never get to enjoy it. So now I want to enjoy it.
Kerry Katona: I've got two little stepdaughters who are three and five, so they've brought it alive as well now.

2:23-2:42 | Taking Christmas off

Presenter: So who's playing Rudolph in Woking, then?
Kerry Katona: Not me, not this year, so don't get your tickets!
Presenter: It'll be rubbish without...
Kerry Katona: Well, get your tickets, but maybe not if you want to see Kerry!
Kerry Katona: No, I'm not doing it this year. I want to... You know what? I'm at that point in my life where, where do I want to give my time and energy? And this Christmas I want to make the most of it with my family.

2:42-3:10 | Is early Christmas decorating tacky?

Presenter: What do you make of people saying it's not just too early, but it is tacky?
Kerry Katona: Oh, I'm Kerry Katona! I'm tacky!
Sound: [Laughter]
Kerry Katona: Tacky is my middle name!
Kerry Katona: Do you know what I mean? Stay in your own lane.
Kerry Katona: I don't care. You know what? As soon as you play that Christmas music, everybody in the studio puts a smile on their face.
Kerry Katona: It lights up the room. [Unclear phrase.]
Kerry Katona: It makes everybody happy, and I think we should be happier. The world's gone bonkers. Let's be happy and tacky!

3:10-3:55 | Does celebrating early make Christmas less special?

Presenter: Sophie, it is a good argument. Christmas brings sparkle and joy into our lives.
Sophie Hermann: Don't get me wrong, I might look like the Grinch, but I love Christmas as much as the next man.
Sophie Hermann: But I do think the longer you stretch out that period, the less special it gets. You know, how long can you stretch that out?
Sophie Hermann: I think maybe the end of November would be appropriate because otherwise, in Germany again, we then get rid of the tree on the 6th of January. So then, you know, it's quite long.
Sophie Hermann: And I feel like also for the kids, I completely understand that. I don't have kids, so maybe I would do it...
Kerry Katona: Take one of mine! I've got loads! Bring them over!
Sound: [Laughter]
Sophie Hermann: But, you know, are they still going to be that excited after two months?

3:55-4:11 | Kerry's decorating strategy

Presenter: But I think you're getting this wrong, because the Kerry strategy is you start low-key and then you build it up steadily over the next two months.
Kerry Katona: [Unclear response.]
Presenter: You know it's going to go up, isn't it?
Kerry Katona: Well, I'll be honest with you. As soon as Christmas, New Year's is done, it's straight down.
Presenter: Oh, wow!

4:11-4:34 | Christmas and people's moods

Kerry Katona: It is straight down. I think because it gets so dark so early, people's moods go a little bit lower.
Kerry Katona: I think just, like, Christmas spirit, and it is all in the spirit. It just makes everything look...
Presenter: You'll have your Easter eggs up on the first of January, wouldn't you?
Kerry Katona: Hey, I'm a D-lister! I know the Easter man, let me tell you!
Sophie Hermann: But Kerry, then don't do a real tree. That's my only advice.
Kerry Katona: I've never had a real tree.

4:34-4:49 | Christmas shopping and wrapping

Presenter: When is your Christmas shopping done, Kerry?
Kerry Katona: I'm already on it.
Presenter: But when is it finished?
Kerry Katona: Well, I do the wrapping on Christmas Eve. It's a tradition. I do it on Christmas Eve.
Presenter: I'm actually an early wrapper.
Kerry Katona: Yeah.
Presenter: Weirdly, yeah. We get prepared already throughout the...
Sound: [Video ends mid-sentence.]