

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (SPEAKING ENDORSEMENT)

Paper 0993/11
Reading and Writing

Key messages

In **Exercises 1 – 4** it is suggested that candidates focus on the question word (how, what, where, when) to ensure they respond correctly. They should focus on reference and linking words in the texts (e.g. those, this, the former, however, but, on the other hand, while, whereas etc.) as these are important to the understanding of a text.

In **Exercise 1**, candidates should provide key details and a brief response – and not copy long chunks of text – to avoid including incorrect details. Candidates should avoid trying to paraphrase the wording in the text.

In **Exercise 2**, candidates should consider the message and focus of each paragraph, and not be distracted by a single key word or synonym. Locating the correct answer often involves following discourse markers in consecutive sentences in the paragraph as a whole. What constitutes the answer to a question may also be implied, so candidates should be able to recognise inference.

In **Exercise 3**, answers should be brief notes providing key details and supply verbs, nouns or adjectives as necessary. There should be one note per bullet point and any additional notes cannot be credited. Candidates should avoid trying to paraphrase the wording in the text.

In **Exercise 4**, the details in each option, A, B, C, of a question will be mentioned in the text. However, only one option will contain the details that fully and accurately correspond to the central focus of the question.

In **Exercises 5 and 6**, candidates should develop their response fully, ensuring the requirements of the task are fulfilled. They should aim to write the maximum rather than the minimum number of words required. Responses below 120 words are unlikely to cover the topic adequately or the task sufficiently.

For **Exercise 5**, all three bullet points must be addressed, and it is a good idea for candidates to clearly refer to each one, possibly writing several related ideas to demonstrate development. A salutation and closing formula should be included but candidates **should not** recreate the layout of an email using 'From', 'To', 'Subject' or 'Date' information. For **Exercise 6**, if candidates use the ideas in the prompts, these must be expressed in their own words and developed. Candidates are encouraged to further develop the topic with their own ideas.

General comments

Candidates should attempt a response for each question, considering the entire paper and dividing the time available according to the difficulty and total points for each exercise, so that time is allocated appropriately.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

This exercise was very well attempted by the majority of candidates. It is important that each question is carefully read in order to identify the targeted details and to avoid any distracting textual information.

Question 1

This question was well answered. The most common incorrect response was 25 years, the length of time Breathe Easy events have been organised.

Question 2

This question was well answered. Incorrect responses included 'From the Breathe Easy app', 'Tram' or 'Website', places tickets could be bought, but not at a discount.

Question 3

This question was well answered. Incorrect responses included activities that were not for younger visitors such as dance show, cookery demonstration and jewellery making workshop.

Question 4

This question was very well answered. Incorrect responses included other types of film referred to in the text, or ways in which the family films were shown. Candidates should read carefully to ensure they understand the text sufficiently to select the right response.

Question 5

This question was very well answered. Some incorrect responses referred to the people who provided the product samples (local producers), or to the Breath Easy book, which was for sale.

Question 6

This question was very well answered, and a significant number of candidates gained all three marks available. Occasionally, fewer than three details were given. A more common incorrect response was 'contributed recipes'.

Exercise 2

This matching exercise was very well-attempted. Generally, **Questions (b)** and **(i)** proved the most challenging. There were no noticeable consistently incorrect responses for other questions.

Candidates needed to ensure that information in the section of text selected fully supported their choice of answer, while looking for the rephrasing of the ideas, rather than simply spotting the same words or phrases in the question and text.

Question 7

- (a) This question was very well answered. Candidates needed to identify someone who explained what they did with the money they earned. This was expressed in C as 'a new skateboard. My Mum suggested that I used the money to get it, so that's what I decided to do.'
- (b) This question proved more challenging. Many candidates chose D rather than A, the correct response. Candidates were required to find the text about someone who mentions something that affected which activity they did. They seemed to misunderstand 'When school got busier...I did not have time to do the shopping trips' in section D. This referred to why the writer stopped doing an activity. The correct response, A, mentions an activity the writer was too small to do (carry the rubbish), and the activity he actually did (sweeping leaves).
- (c) This question was well answered. Candidates were required to find in the text someone who describes a technical skill they learnt which has helped other people. Most candidates correctly identified B from the phrase 'I managed to repair it with no problems at all – and since then I've been able to fix all sorts of things for my friends and family.'
- (d) This question was very well answered. C was the most common incorrect response, possibly because of the phrase 'I do not have to do it anymore.' However, there no reason is given regarding why the writer stopped doing the activity.

- (e) This question was well answered. The advice received about how to do the activity is clearly linked to ‘My dad suggested I use a smaller brush’ in A.
- (f) This question was well answered. The most common incorrect response was A, possibly due to the words and phrases ‘angry’, ‘calmed me down’ and ‘some things you can not get upset about.’. However, there is no indication in A that the writer was in trouble for something they did.
- (g) This question was well answered. D was the most common incorrect response, possibly because this section mentions the writer’s little sister being keen to take over.
- (h) This question was very well answered. Most candidates correctly chose **section A** which referred to an important life lesson concerned with not getting upset about certain things.
- (i) This was a challenging question for a significant number of candidates. C was the most common incorrect response. Although in this section, the writer compares himself to his sister when skateboarding, the activity described in **section C** is washing cars. Candidates had to locate the section comparing different people’s experiences of doing one of the four activities to earn money, which was D, doing shopping.

Exercise 3

Many candidates performed well in this note-taking exercise. Notes could not be credited if key information was omitted or if incorrect information was added. Candidates should avoid writing notes in their own words when they can directly use language from the text as the meaning may change.

Question 8

This section was very well attempted, and many candidates provided three correct notes from the possible five options. Candidates had to identify different, discrete reasons why people go on a virtual tour of a museum. Some candidates omitted the negative idea required, and as a result notes such as ‘crowded that you feel everyone is the same room as you’ or ‘wait in queues’ could not be credited. They are what happens in an actual museum not reasons for attending a *virtual tour* of a museum. Occasionally, a note relevant to Question 9 was given, for example ‘audio descriptions’ or ‘information accurate’.

Question 9

This section was very well attempted, and the majority of candidates identified four correct responses out of a possible five.

Exercise 4

This exercise requires candidates to answer six multiple choice questions. Each one provides three options A, B or C and candidates enter their answer by placing a tick in the box by their chosen response. In this series, the text was about a young snowboarder. The information required for **Questions 10 to 14** was in the order within the text, while **Question 15** required candidates to consider the purpose of the text as a whole. Successful candidates were able to use cohesive devices, such as linking words and referencing, as well as the paraphrasing of ideas in the questions, to locate information that supports their chosen option. Options can be either supported or negated by information in the text, or may not even be referred to. In general, candidates seemed to find **Questions 13, 14 and 15** challenging.

Question 10

This question was generally well answered. Candidates needed to find in the text Gemma’s opinion of the place where she learned to snowboard. Option A was the correct response. Most candidates successfully matched the paraphrase, ‘the instructors were so willing to help her achieve her best’ to the question. They recognised that B was an incorrect answer as the snowboarding centre was not ‘part of a large chain’ but ‘one of only a handful’. Option C, ‘having real snow at the centre would be an advantage’ was negated by Gemma’s view that she ‘could practise in conditions which did not change according to the weather’.

Question 11

This question was generally well answered. Candidates were asked to select the reason why gymnastics was mentioned in paragraph 2. The correct answer was C, which was ‘to show how one sport supports

another'. A key idea in the text was that both gymnastics and snowboarding require participants to have 'a really good idea of where you are in the air, when you are jumping and turning'. The demonstrative pronouns in 'this is essential in snowboarding as well' and 'that ability proved to be a real plus' helped candidates with this chain of reasoning. A minority of candidates selected options A or B. Option A was incorrect as, although Gemma did gymnastics as a child, there was no mention of it generally being suitable for younger people. As for option B, there was no indication in the text of the reason for her to 'change sports'.

Question 12

This question was very well answered. Candidates needed to identify how Gemma felt 'about the trophy she won in 2020. B was the correct answer as 'worried about causing damage to it' was paraphrased as 'I can not help imagining how I'd feel if anything happened to it'. A minority of candidates chose A, 'surprised by how large it was', but the size of the trophy is not mentioned. Option C, 'disappointed because not many people would see it', is negated by the statement that 'she's always more than happy to show it off'.

Question 13

This question was quite well answered. A significant number of candidates correctly identified C as the answer as the phrase in the text 'she focused on improving her fitness' shows that 'she made good use of the unexpected free time'. The most common incorrect answer was B, 'it gave her the chance to go and watch her friends compete'. Although it is mentioned that she supported her teammates, this was via 'videocalls and messages'. Option A, regarding a complex recovery process, was clearly incorrect as 'the injury was not too bad' and 'there were no concerns...about her getting over it'.

Question 14

This question was fairly well answered. Candidates had to identify which phrase 'This' refers to in line 31. This was a challenging question given the two clauses in the preceding sentence, 'She's becoming very well-known in the sport due to the fact that she's entering competitions again after her injury'. Many candidates incorrectly selected option C, 'entering more competitions'. To be successful, they had to note that the correct answer related to a 'new development', and therefore had to be option B, 'becoming very well-known'. This was further supported by the following sentence regarding her TV appearances and interviews. Candidates should be reminded that it is necessary to pay attention to the sentences following referencing words as well as those preceding them.

Question 15

This question was quite well answered. Candidates had to consider the overall purpose of the article. Most candidates correctly identified the correct answer A, that it described 'the career and achievements of a young sportsperson'. A number of candidates chose B, 'to warn other sportspeople of the work involved in becoming successful'. These candidates may have chosen this response due to occasional words associated with warnings, such as 'risk' and 'pretty scary', but there is no overall sense of the article being aimed at other sportspeople. Option C, 'to persuade people who are interested in sports to follow their dreams' was also quite commonly chosen, perhaps because of the upbeat tone of the article. However, the heading and paragraph topics shows that the article is biographical rather than persuasive.

Exercise 5

In this exercise, candidates complete an email task based on fulfilling the requirements specified in three bullet points. It is also important that candidates relate the email to the context set in the exercise, in this case telling a friend about a visit to a new shopping mall. For a mark in the highest level, candidates should demonstrate an excellent sense of purpose whilst fully developing relevant content for all bullet points. Candidates should use an appropriate and consistent style. The mark for language will depend on the accuracy, complexity, range and organisation of the language used.

Most candidates wrote at least 120 words, so their response was adequately developed. A few wrote less than 85 words, which significantly impacted on both the content and language marks. However, candidates should aim to write 160 words in order to ensure all the bullet points are developed, and the email fulfils all the criteria for a top-level response.

From a content point of view, candidates were able to engage with and relate to this task. Many candidates achieved content marks at the top level and their email was fully developed and relevant in an appropriate style and register, with an excellent sense of purpose. They were required to write an email to a friend about

a visit to a recently opened shopping mall. There were three task requirements given as bullet points in the question. Candidates do not need to give equal focus to these but must address all three. They had to say what they liked about their visit, describe a problem they had there, and plan to visit the mall again with their friend. Most candidates did address all three bullet points. A few lost marks and were restricted to a lower level because of omitting any reference to a particular bullet point. Candidates should be encouraged to be cover a bullet point fully, so there is no doubt they have focused on this. There were candidates who signalled the start of a new bullet point with a new paragraph and topic sentence, clearly fulfilling that particular aspect of the task.

Some candidates effectively started the email by enquiring about their friend and their family, and giving the reason for the email, writing for example, ‘How are you, how are your family? I miss you so much. I’m writing this email to tell you about my recent visit to a shopping mall’. Others apologised for a late response, giving excuses such as exams or school workload.

There was a range of things candidates liked about the mall such as the brands, the facilities and the décor, along with the cleanliness and the helpful staff. Often several positive aspects were referred to, ensuring full development of the bullet point.

Regarding the problem encountered, candidates faced issues with lost wallets, a lack of public toilets, getting lost, not having sufficient time, escalators, or an item being sold out. This part of the email was often very well developed with information about how the problem occurred and how it was resolved. Some candidates connected it to the third bullet point by assuring their friend that the problem would not be an issue on the next visit or suggesting ways it could be avoided in future.

The third bullet point was often the least developed, with a significant number of candidates merely inviting the friend to accompany them to the mall next time. There was scant reference to a plan, as in ‘I decided to give the mall another chance and hope you can visit it with me’. There were candidates who fully covered this aspect of the email, suggesting when and how they could go with the friend, and what they could do there as in, ‘I was wondering if we could catch a movie next week and have a fancy dinner in the mall. We could take the bus as it’s easier’. It was quite common for candidates to round off using the third bullet point to bring the email to a close, hoping the friend would reply soon as in, ‘Hoping to hear from you soon – do not let the dust settle.’.

A suitable opening paragraph acknowledging the recipient and giving a reason for writing, along with a natural ending should result an appropriate style which creates a connection with the target reader and enhances the sense of purpose and audience.

In terms of vocabulary, several candidates produced a wide range of common and less common vocabulary appropriately to convey an informal style as, ‘The architecture was out of this world.’ Some candidates used phrasal verbs correctly and appropriately as in ‘I was blown away by the interior design’, ‘You’ve got to check out this arcade’. Some candidates succeeded in incorporating less common sayings into their emails such as ‘It felt like I had just walked into a house fit for royalty.’.

Regarding grammatical structures, there were candidates who demonstrated a wide range of simple and complex structures with a high level of accuracy as in, ‘Surprisingly, I felt extremely comfortable during my time there because the mall was so big that it was literally impossible to be in a crowded area. The stores are very inclusive, meaning they have stores for a low budget girl, like me, and products that cost an arm and a leg. If only I was rich ...’. Some candidates demonstrated a range of simple structures and attempted to use complex structures, with generally good accuracy, where errors did not generally impede as in. ‘Yesterday I went to the shopping mall that have just opened in the centre of the town...It have five levels’.

There was a range of common grammatical errors. Some candidates made the wrong choice of tense or verb form: ‘...my card has been declined...’ ‘I recently visit a shopping mall...’ ‘It may have accidentally fell...’ ‘There where everywhere kids...’ There was lack of subject/verb agreement: ‘It have plenty of shop’ along with the misuse of prepositions: *while in the third floor you can find make-up stores...* ‘...we sat down in a bench... There were also errors in collocations: ‘It was not only extraordinary vast...’ ‘...I like the building structure beautifull...’

Candidates demonstrated a range of linking words and cohesive devices and generally chose those appropriate for an informal email, for example, To start with, I was amazed...’ As you are aware...On the flip side...’ ‘Apart from that...’ ‘At first...’ ‘On the plus side...’. Occasionally, candidates would begin the final paragraph with ‘*in conclusion*’, which is formal and more appropriate when writing essays.

A few candidates used commas instead of full stops, writing paragraphs that should have been composed of several sentences, which instead consisted entirely of one. This could interfere with communication.

Candidates should try to ensure language used is accurate, appropriate and demonstrates a range of structures and vocabulary, along with correct punctuation and spelling. Paragraphs should be included to guide the reader. Overall, most candidates communicated clearly, using a range of language and an appropriate style and register.

Exercise 6

In this exercise candidates may be required to write an article, a review, a report or an essay for a particular target audience. They should read and consider the task carefully in order to ensure a relevant response. There are four comments or prompts which can provide ideas for candidates on the subject, and they may include these using their own words if they wish. Candidates are very much encouraged to include other points and ideas relevant to the task, and to develop the views in the prompts if they choose to express these. The style should be appropriate for the type of task.

Candidates were expected to write an article for a school magazine about what makes a film enjoyable. A significant number of candidates developed the content very well in a consistently appropriate style for a school magazine, others fulfilled the task with at least a generally good sense of purpose and audience. A few considered the advantages and disadvantages of films, which affected the focus of the task and was slightly inappropriate. Some candidates discussed how a particular film exemplified what could make a film enjoyable, and this approach was successful if they selected the aspects that achieved this. If the article was more about telling the narrative of the film, it was not so appropriate. Most candidates mentioned the ideas in the prompts, with some development, and many were able to include ideas of their own.

Regarding classmates' comments, some candidates were able to expand well on why they liked films with real events. They gave reasons such as they are informative and educational, they are more realistic, and they teach life lessons. As for using famous actors, this is more likely to guarantee the quality of a film, though it was also suggested having new faces was important and a role should be filled by the right actor. Ideas connected with the length of films considered how long films can become boring, or difficult to follow. Candidates suggested that films on similar topics can be predictable.

Original ideas suggested by candidates included film topics being easy to relate to, having an interesting plot, employing good special effects and having a good director. They also mentioned the importance of ambience, and that watching with friends or family and having the right snacks could enhance a film.

Candidates achieved the higher levels through the use of original ideas either alongside or instead of the given prompts and through developing their ideas very well with a good degree of detail. Most candidates discussed both aspects of a film that make it enjoyable, and also those which detract from this, the implication being that such aspects should be avoided.

From a language point of view, several candidates attempted a wide range of complex structures, incorporating common vocabulary and less common vocabulary associated with the film industry. These candidates showed a high level of accuracy with only occasional errors, effectively organising and sequencing the response, using a wide range of linking words and/or other cohesive devices. This meant they gained marks in the top level. This level of language is exemplified in: 'In modern society, with the advent of online streaming services and with the exponential growing popularity of TV series, most people think that watching films is not as enjoyable anymore.'

Some candidates attempted more complex language which included some errors that did not interfere with meaning as in: '*... they encourage too keep watching the film.*' A small number of candidates received marks in the lower levels employing generally simple structures with frequent errors, which often affected communication and showed a lack of control.

Overall, most of candidates succeeded in communicating the message clearly, writing a developed, appropriate article, which fulfilled the task.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (SPEAKING ENDORSEMENT)

Paper 0993/21
Listening

| Question Number | Key |
|-----------------|-----|
| 1 | C |
| 2 | B |
| 3 | A |
| 4 | D |
| 5 | D |
| 6 | A |
| 7 | B |
| 8 | C |
| 9 | B |
| 10 | C |

| Question Number | Key |
|-----------------|-----|
| 11 | A |
| 12 | C |
| 13 | A |
| 14 | B |
| 15 | B |
| 16 | A |
| 17 | C |
| 18 | B |
| 19 | B |
| 20 | A |

| Question Number | Key |
|-----------------|-----|
| 21 | C |
| 22 | B |
| 23 | C |
| 24 | B |
| 25 | A |
| 26 | B |
| 27 | H |
| 28 | E |
| 29 | B |
| 30 | G |

| Question Number | Key |
|-----------------|-----|
| 31 | A |
| 32 | F |
| 33 | A |
| 34 | C |
| 35 | B |
| 36 | C |
| 37 | A |
| 38 | A |
| 39 | C |
| 40 | B |

Key messages

- Candidates should be reminded to take care when transferring their answers from the question paper onto the answer sheet and to shade only one lozenge for each question.
- Candidates should listen carefully all the way to the end of each speaker's turn, to ensure they select the correct detail and can effectively rule out any other detail that acts as distracting information.
- Candidates should be encouraged to read each question/statement very carefully to ensure they listen for and select the correct relevant detail/idea.

General comments

The paper consisted of 40 multiple-choice questions and, overall, was well answered by most candidates.

Candidates listened to 5 exercises which consisted of monologues (e.g., voicemail messages, extended explanations and extracts from a radio programme), informal dialogues, informal and semi-formal interviews and a longer semi-formal talk. The exercises gradually increased in difficulty and complexity and tested a range of listening skills from listening for specific information (e.g., a place to meet, the cost of everyday items, a type of TV programme, a description of a favourite photo) to listening for more complex ideas (e.g., opinions, attitudes, feelings, advice, reasons, personal preferences, and experiences) and understanding the connections between these ideas (e.g., mutual decisions and agreements). The script for each question also contained distracting information, in addition to the targeted key idea, in order to test the level of detail and the range of grammatical and lexical structures candidates are able to understand.

On the whole, most candidates dealt better with items that focused on identifying specific information which was stated rather than implied. Approximately half of all candidates dealt very well with items which focused on more complex ideas, such as speakers' opinions, and items in which key information was implied rather than explicitly stated.

Comments on specific questions

Exercise 1

In this part of the test, candidates listened to 8 short recordings on familiar topics and selected one visual prompt from four options. On the whole, candidates performed very well in this part, particularly in **Questions 1–3, 4 and 8**.

Candidates were slightly less successful with **Question 5**. In **Question 5**, the speaker explains what his favourite holiday photo is, and many candidates were tempted by option **B** here. They may have been distracted by the use of the adjective 'attractive' in the recording.

There was no clear pattern in the incorrect responses in the remaining questions.

Exercise 2

In this part of the test, candidates answered two multiple-choice questions per recording. Many candidates tended to be more successful with **Questions 9, 11, 12 and 18**, which targeted feelings, reasons, future arrangements and personal advice in the context of free time and school activities.

Candidates were less successful with **Questions 13, 14 and 16**. These questions required listening for a specific detail and took the form of either a monologue or an extended monologue. Questions which required listening for gist, and included implied ideas tended not to be answered as well. This was particularly true for **Questions 10 and 17**.

In **Question 10**, several candidates wrongly selected option **B**. Many were possibly tempted by '*There must be loads of places like that for teachers to choose from and tons of fascinating things for students to see and learn about.*', which was a general comment made by the speaker, rather than his suggestion for the next trip. **Questions 13 and 14** both targeted a specific detail related to the speaker's new guitar. In **Question 13**, option **B** was wrongly selected by almost half of all candidates. The price of the guitar was £116. The distracting detail of £125 in option **B** also included the case for the guitar and therefore was not the correct response. The majority of candidates gave the correct response to **Question 14** though a large number selected the distracting idea in option **A**. In **Question 17**, just over half of all candidates gave the correct response here. Many appeared to have missed the reference to '*I'm supposed to investigate...*' which introduced the topic of the girl's homework, and selected option **A** in error.

Exercise 3

This part of the test required candidates to follow a longer talk about penguins and complete each of the 8 statements with one of the three multiple-choice options. On the whole, candidates dealt well with most of the questions in this exercise.

Questions 20 and 21 were attempted very well by the vast majority of candidates. **Questions 19, 23 and 24** were also fairly well attempted by many candidates. Overall, candidates did not demonstrate the same level of success in **Questions 25 and 26**. **Question 25** targeted a specific detail, which was the number of hours the average trip takes for penguins to catch food in the summer months. The correct response was 48 hours. Less successful candidates tended to select option **C**, which refers to the time spent at sea catching food for only a minority of penguins. In **Question 26**, candidates were asked to select the main aim of the speaker's research project. Many were tempted by the idea in option **A**. Less successful candidates may have missed the reference to other projects and their main aims, but not the speaker's, and may not have differentiated between the two aims: '*Different research teams have different primary goals. While ..., another I know of is focusing on the effects global warming is having on penguins...*'.

Exercise 4

In this multiple-matching part of the test, candidates were required to match statements to the correct speakers. The statements expressed a range of reasons why the speakers chose their university degree courses. Candidates chose 6 correct statements from a list of 8.

While the majority of candidates selected the correct ideas for speakers 3 and 4 (**Questions 29 and 30**), there were mixed responses for the rest of the speakers (**Questions 27, 28, 31 and 32**). There was no clear pattern of incorrect answers for **Questions 31 and 32**. However, candidates sometimes provided statement **C** '*It was a subject I'd loved for a long time*', in error, for **Question 27**. They may have been steered towards this idea because of the speaker's regret '*I'd love to say I chose literature because I'd always had an appreciation of the subject. The truth is...*', which was possibly understood by many as the real reason. In **Question 28**, a few candidates were tempted by statement **A** '*Someone I knew was already doing the course.*' as the reason for the speaker choosing the course. However, the speaker rules this idea out by referring to this fact as a '*nice coincidence*', which appears to have been missed by many candidates.

Exercise 5

In this part of the test, candidates were required to listen to a semi-formal interview with a man who makes cakes for a living and answer 8 multiple-choice questions. Overall, there was a very good level of success in this exercise, as many candidates gained 6 out of the available 8 marks. Candidates did particularly well in **Questions 33, 37 and 38**. They were also successful in selecting the correct responses to **Questions 35, 36 and 40**. **Questions 34 and 39** did not reflect the same level of success.

Question 34 targeted what the speaker's opinion of his first boss was. Some candidates selected option **B**. They may have been wrongly tempted by the mention of money: '*...complained constantly about not making more money*'. In **Question 39**, some candidates selected the distracting detail in option **B**, expressed by the speaker in the script as '*I'm aiming to experiment with making biscuits and puddings – if I ever have time*'. Those who selected this option may have overlooked the fact that the question targets a plan that the speaker has already started working on, not something that he might do in the future.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (SPEAKING ENDORSEMENT)

Paper 0993/31
Speaking 31

Key messages

- Please use the Teacher's/Examiner's Notes to prepare thoroughly before delivering the exam.
- It is advisable to watch the Speaking test video on the Cambridge website before delivering the exam.
- Please ensure that all parts of the examiner's script are read exactly as they are written, including the parts after the preparation time and when the short talk finishes.
- Ask the questions, including those for the warm-up, as they are written, unless a candidate has difficulty understanding.
- Use follow-up questions on Page 6 of the Teacher's notes for eliciting further discussion for **Part 1** and **3** of the test and supporting candidates with **Part 2**.

General comments

Overall, a good range of speaking assessment cards was used by the centres to deliver the test.

Introduction

This was generally read as per the script. However, sometimes it was read very quickly by the examiner. Please read the Introduction clearly, giving the candidate enough time to process the information.

Warm-up

Generally read as per the script. However, sometimes questions were omitted or too much emphasis placed on one question. Please use all three questions where possible to allow the candidate to warm-up on a range of vocabulary.

Part 1: Interview

Generally carried out as per the script. Sometimes, questions were changed or omitted. Please read the questions exactly as they are written. Please use all three questions to allow the candidate to demonstrate a range of structures. Some of the weaker candidates would have benefitted from the use of extension questions.

Part 2: Short talk

Mostly conducted as per the script, sometimes the timings of the preparation periods were too short or too long. Sometimes, candidates would have benefitted from the use of additional questions. On one or two occasions the examiner interrupted the candidate during their talk.

Part 3: Discussion

Generally carried out as per the script. However, sometimes the questions were changed or paraphrased. Please read the questions exactly as they are written. Some candidates would have benefitted from the use of extension questions.

Application of the marking criteria

Generally, this was applied satisfactorily to all criteria.

Grammar

Slightly generous on one or two occasions.

Vocabulary

Slightly generous on one or two occasions. One or two slightly severe.

Development

Slightly severely on two or three occasions.

Pronunciation

Examiners applied this well in most cases. One or two slightly generous.

Administration

Recordings

Centres are reminded that this is a formal exam, and a quiet secure room should be allocated for the conduct of the tests.

Documentation

Generally accurate. However, sometimes candidates were not in candidate number order.

Internal moderation

Please carry out and show internal moderation for all candidates if more than one examiner is used. When more than one examiner is being used, please try to ensure that all examiners are delivering the exam in the same manner.

Comments on specific questions

General advice

Part 1

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. To achieve the best marks, candidates should ensure they use, or attempt to use, a range of past tenses when asked about a past event, a range of adverbs and comparative forms when asked to compare, give an opinion or talk about how important something is.

Part 2

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular approach was to develop the talk by explaining the advantages and disadvantages of each option and then giving a final opinion on which option they would prefer and why.

Part 3

Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length.

Speaking assessment A

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. (e.g., Question 2, *When I was younger, I played hide and seek a lot. It was a lot of fun. I used to love playing video games and technology played an important role in my life.* And Question 3, *I think the best games are played with others. They are usually team games and involve a lot of movement and social interaction compared to games played alone.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

The most popular choice was going to a shopping centre. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, for example – *'In my opinion, going to a shopping centre would be more fun, as my friends don't really enjoy walking. On the other hand, the shopping centre can be quite expensive, more expensive than a walk in the countryside.'* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option or focused on just the advantages or disadvantages.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to outdoor activities, shopping online, walking to school or work and buying less. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *Once I bought the wrong size of shoes. I needed to go back to the shop and replace them. I was able to do this more easily than if I had bought the shoes online.*) Pronunciation was clear, and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment B

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses, modals and comparative forms. (e.g., Question 2, *In our country we have carnival. There is a queen of carnival and lots of music. I went there last year and it was beautiful.* And Question 3, *I think that big celebrations are better than small ones. The bigger the better!*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

The most popular choice was helping with small animals at a local zoo. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *In my opinion, helping with small animals at a local zoo would be more fun, as plants don't really do anything. They don't move and you can't interact with them. However, it depends on what kind of small animals they are. I'm not sure I would like to help look after snakes.* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option or focused on just the advantages or disadvantages.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to looking after animals, whether animals should live in zoos, young people doing voluntary work and the importance of green spaces in cities. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *Young people are the future of the world. Everybody has to learn about different species. So many are disappearing, we have to take care of them and their habitats.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included

mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment C

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses, modals and comparative forms. (e.g., Question 2, *I recently visited amusement parks in the US. Here there are a lot of attractions. I rode a lot of rollercoasters and saw some amazing views.* And Question 3, *We need to visit a lot of different places to learn about each other and be a little more respectful of other traditions and cultures.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was a sports star. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, for example – *I guess social media stars, influencers, have a back story that would make them interesting, but I think that a sports star would be the option for me. If they want to be successful, they have to shine. They have to have discipline.* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to role models, becoming famous on social media, speaking in front of a large group and the lives of famous people. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. e.g., *It's really easy to become famous on social media, you just upload some videos. It's much harder to stay famous as you have to create new content every day!* Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment D

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. (e.g., Question 2, *I wore special clothes to a traditional celebration. It was a cloudy day, but I wore a skirt. I felt good.* And Question 3, *I think it's very important to wear clothes that reflect who you are as a person. First impressions are really important – based on what you were wearing, maybe I would like you more.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was going to a zoo. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *In my opinion, going to a concert would not be as good as going to a zoo. This has more benefits, for example you can be close to an animal and learn about their features and characteristics.* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to online concerts, playing a musical instrument at school, keeping animals in zoos and working with animals. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding

relevantly at length. e.g., *I don't really like the sound of many musical instruments because they make so much noise! When people are practising, they sound like someone is screaming!* Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment E

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. (e.g., Question 2, *I took part in football, basketball, volleyball and motocross. I love watching football. I have watched a lot of football with my dad. I really like this because it is something we can do together.* And Question 3, *I think everyone should try to learn some sport in school. We play a lot of basketball in PE classes, but it shouldn't be a 'must', people have to want to do it.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning. To achieve the best marks, candidates should ensure they use, or attempt to use, a range of modals when asked to talk about whether people should take part in something or not.

Part 2 – Short talk

A surprise. Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was a party at your house. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, (e.g., *as, however*) Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option or focused on just the advantages or disadvantages.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to surprise parties, spending a lot of money to have fun, the importance of birthdays to different generations and working in a restaurant. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *A lot of people don't like surprise parties, they find them quite scary. I would be quite anxious! I would have that feeling of being out of control. I think most people like to know what's happening.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment F

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. (e.g., Question 2, *My friends and I planned a party at my house. We had quite a hard year and wanted to celebrate school finishing for the summer. It was a great party; everyone came, and we had lots of fun.* And Question 3, *Sometimes things happen out of the blue and you have to go back to the drawing board and start again, make a different plan.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning. To achieve the best marks, candidates should ensure they use, or attempt to use, a range of modals and conditionals when asked to give reasons about why something might happen.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was a fitness club. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *Both clubs would give you the chance to develop new skills or improve ones you already have. For example, an art club helps you to express your creativity, and a fitness club can give you discipline and help you to look and feel better.* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option or focused on just the advantages or disadvantages.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to spending your free time, schools helping students keep fit, artist as a career choice and making friends online. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *I spend quite a lot of my free time doing hobbies, such as playing chess online. We analyse games and techniques as well. I think being an artist would give you creative freedom, but you'd have to be really passionate about your art to stand out.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment G

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses (e.g., Question 2, *My computer just froze while I was doing some work, so I switched it off and switched it on and everything was fine.* And Question 3, *Spending a lot of time online can cause eye strain. I prefer to spend time in the park, having fun with friends. It's more interesting and healthier to be active.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was helping older people with shopping. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *If you live in an area where there is a lot of rubbish, then there would be a lot of bags to fill. That would be a real drawback. I would prefer to help older people with their shopping as it is something that helps the community more...* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option or focused on just the advantages or disadvantages.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to helping each other at school, young and old people spending time together, good neighbours and banning plastic packaging. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *I don't think that banning plastic packaging will reduce litter. People will still throw rubbish. If you throw your rubbish you have to pick it up, no matter what it is.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment H

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. (e.g., Question 2, *I watched a film at home recently. It was really magical, full of amazing creatures and villains. We ate popcorn.* And Question 3, *I think it's very difficult to make a film, even the casting of the characters, working with green screen and then there's the budget that controls the timeline for production.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning. To achieve the best marks, candidates should ensure they use, or attempt to use, a range of adverbs and gerunds when asked how difficult it is to do something.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was showing the friend around their local city or town. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *If we stayed at home we could bake, or chill and hang out but I would rather show my friend the local sights and do activities. We can still catch up at a restaurant or a café.* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option or focused on just the advantages or disadvantages.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to free time, knowing your local area, talking to friends online and having the same interests as your friends. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *It's better to relax during your free time, or do things that you find relaxing. Life can be pretty stressful, so I usually take a nap, take my time to do things.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment I

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses. (e.g., Question 2, *I watched a very famous influencer online, on social media. They were just modelling some clothes in a beautiful location!* And Question 3, *It must be difficult for people, if they want to go for a walk along the shore they might be followed, people always want to take their photo, the paparazzi are always there.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense, omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was a games room. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *We have a library at school where we can do quiet study. What our school is really missing is a place where we can hang out, play board games, enjoy our recess.* Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to studying in silence or to music, learning from computer games, parents making decisions about their children's free time and life-long learning. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *My grandmother is a perfect example of someone who has kept learning all her life. She still learns things even now, she has always been interested in everything, with the attitude of a much younger person. She's amazing.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.

Speaking assessment J

Part 1 – Interview

Strong responses to all three questions were relevant and well-developed using a wide range of vocabulary and a range of simple and complex structures with particular emphasis on appropriate verb tenses (e.g., Question 2, *I tried horseback riding and fell off and broke my elbow. Now I prefer to play football.* And Question 3, *Having a hobby can help us to get away from our normal life. I play a lot of sports, such as volleyball and tennis and so have a lot of different friends. However, if a person doesn't like doing activities...*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to good effect. Weaker responses were limited to simple vocabulary and simple structures with inaccuracies (subject/verb agreement, only using the present tense,

omitting words in sentences). Pronunciation was not always clear, and intonation was rarely used to convey intended meaning.

Part 2 – Short talk

Strong responses included a range of structures (conditionals, comparatives) and topic specific language. The most popular choice was writing about a recent school event. Stronger candidates used linking phrases, e.g., *Everyone at school will know about this event, whereas not everyone at school is from this town, so they may not know the place that is being written about*. Weaker responses tended to focus on the chosen option and say very little about the second option.

Part 3 – Discussion

Four questions based on the short talk relating to your local area, school magazines and newsletters, journalism as a job, news on social media. Strong responses included using a wide range of vocabulary to discuss a variety of ideas, facts and opinions using a range of structures and responding relevantly at length. (e.g., *Well, you can find news on social media, but it's hard to know if it is fake news. It's probably better to try other channels if you want to know the truth. I listen to a lot of podcasts.*) Pronunciation was clear and intonation used to convey intended meaning. Weaker responses included mainly relevant answers using a limited range of structures and vocabulary, but did not develop their responses.