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*Prepare for Global Success*

# Speaking Test

Familiarisation for test-takers

# Things you must know

- Test duration is 12-14 mins
- Test is conducted on the computer *or* face-to-face
- It is like a one-to-one interview / interaction
- The test has 5 parts
- Part wise approximate timing :
  - Part 1: 2-3 mins
  - Part 2: 1 min
  - Part 3: 1-2 mins
  - Part 4: 2-3 mins
  - Part 5: 3-4 mins

# Task Requirements

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- **Part 1:** Answer questions on family, home, interests, study, work and other familiar topics
- **Part 2:** Read aloud four sentences
- **Part 3:** Talk on a given topic for 1 min. Candidates are provided verbal prompts and have 30 seconds to prepare their talk

# Task Requirement

- **Part 4:** Make comparisons between two pictures on a related theme. Candidates need to talk for 1-2 mins
- **Part 5:** Answer general questions on topical subjects related to the theme of the pictures (in Part 4). Candidates are required to express their views and feelings, expand and support their ideas and provide extended responses

# Difficulty Level and Marking

- In the Speaking test the assessment is based upon your overall presentation and scores are awarded on the Assessment Criteria explained above.
- Final marks are awarded basis the performance across all the Parts.

# What skills are tested?

## Task achievement

*Task Achievement basically grades you on whether 'you have answered the question' or done what you were required to do. It marks whether you have covered all requirements of the task sufficiently and if you spoke, highlighted and illustrated the key points when speaking.*

# What skills are tested?

## Fluency and Coherence

*This checks your ability to talk with normal levels of continuity, rate and effort and to link ideas and language together to form coherent, connected speech. Key indicators of fluency are speech rate and speech continuity.*

# What skills are tested?

## Pronunciation

*Your ability to produce comprehensible speech to fulfil the speaking test requirements is marked under Pronunciation. Key indicators of Pronunciation are the amount of strain caused to the listener, the amount of speech which is unintelligible and the noticeability of L1 influence (first language influence)*



# What skills are tested?

## Grammar and Vocabulary

*This assesses your range and approximate use of grammatical resources. The key indicators are the length and complexity of the spoken sentences, the appropriate use of subordinate clauses and the range of sentence structures, especially to move elements around for information focus. It also covers the variety of words used and the precision with which meanings and attitudes can be expressed. This tests your ability to use appropriate words and to circumlocute.*

# Tips for the Speaking Test

# Useful Tips

- Stay calm
- Don't put on an accent. Speak naturally
- Don't give memorised answers
- Use the preparation time to plan your thoughts
- Give accurate answers
- Speak clearly
- Use 'stress' and 'intonation' to make what you speak interesting. Don't speak flat without expression
- Don't speak too fast and don't speak too slow

# Useful Tips

- Remember to use correct tenses
- Remember your knowledge is not being tested and therefore don't worry about the correctness of any information
- Don't keep quiet. Use fillers like 'well', 'so', 'let me think' to give yourself time to prepare what you will say without leaving a long pause
- Don't keep thinking of a good or a difficult word to impress, when you can do with an easy and simple word
- Practice speaking in English on a daily basis

# Useful Tips

- Don't let the fact that the test is recorded make you nervous
- Don't worry if you make a grammatical mistake. You are being assessed on various things, not just your grammar
- Try to use a wide range of vocabulary during the test. Develop your vocabulary
- Don't worry if the recording is stopped or in a face to face test the examiner stops you before you have finished. The test is carefully timed and the timings for each part must be observed. Try practicing your timing for each part

# Useful Tips – Computer based test

- Manage your time well, as the overall timings of the test are 14 minutes only.
- Don't click the 'Re-play' button to listen to each question twice.
- Start recording without wasting time between one question and the next.
- When you click 'Record' button, check the amount of time you have to answer that question.
- Try to talk for all of the allowed time for each question.

# Preparation Tips

- Spend time speaking, listening and reading in English rather than in your own language so you cultivate the habit of ‘thinking in English’. In fact you must try to speak English wherever you can and whenever you can as it will help you build confidence.
- Make sure you know how to talk about your own work and study experiences and future plans - Become familiar with the relevant language by reading articles on the internet about it, for example, your chosen profession and about university courses

# Preparation Tips

- Make sure you know how to express your opinion on a range of general topics, giving examples and reasons to explain why you think as you do. Become familiar with the relevant language listening to radio or watching TV programmes in which people give their opinion
- If there are students in your surrounding whose first language is English, try to make contact with them. You could exchange conversation sessions with them. Say for e.g. half an hour in English and half an hour in your first language
- Spend time speaking, listening and reading in English rather than your first language.
- Learn to 'think' in English rather than in your first language and then translating



# Preparation Tips

- Part 1
  - Explain your answer by giving reasons for what you say
  - Be prepared to answer questions using different tenses and verb forms

- Part 2
  - Begin with reading the given sentences silently to understand their meaning before you to read them aloud, but do not take too long
  - Read the sentences with suitable intonation and relevant pauses so as to make the meaning clear

- Part 3
  - Use the 30 seconds preparation time to make notes about what you will say to cover the three points given.
  - While preparing, make notes of your ideas. You don't need to write full sentences. Remember that points are for you and so write notes in a manner that suits you best.
  - Don't go off-topic nor include irrelevant information. Plan your talk.
  - Weigh up both sides of a question and give examples to support this. This will help you to tackle the more challenging questions in Part 5.
  - Relating abstract topics to examples helps you to deal with a question more clearly.

- Part 4
  - Don't go off topic. Plan your talk
  - Make good comparisons and focus your talk around the comparison of the pictures
  - Work out the common theme of the two pictures. This will also help you tackle questions in Part 5
  - Aim to speak for 2 minutes
  - Give your opinion and develop your ideas by talking of what may have happened before or after what you see in the pictures

# Preparation Tips

- Part 4... contd.
  - Express your opinion and develop your ideas by offering examples of what you mean.
  - Always give an opinion! It doesn't matter what your opinion is – you are being assessed on your language, not your ideas. Examiner wants to hear how wide your range of language is

- Part 5
  - Develop the topic, express your views and broaden the scope of your answer
  - Try to include examples in your talk
  - Talk for all of the allowed time for each question

# Preparation Tips

- Part 5 – some useful phrases for giving your opinion
  - In my view....
  - As far as I'm concerned....
  - That's a difficult question....
  - To be honest, I think....
  - Generally speaking, I'd say....
  - I'm not sure what I think about that....
  - I have mixed views on that....
  - Well, on the whole, I tend to agree that....
  - My view is that....
  - It seems to me that....

# Analysing your problems

Try analysing your potential problem areas such as:

- Get nervous when speaking
- Start thinking of big words to use and hence keep quiet while thinking
- Cannot understand the question
- Don't plan. Just start speaking and then lose the topic and unable to connect ideas



# Test Booking & Administration

- Book your test through an 'Authorised Centre'.
- Vantage Siam is the 'Authorised Centre' for Thailand
- Test is administered through an 'Authorised Centre'
- Test administration details are confirmed by the 'Authorised Centre'
- For general enquiry email to: [info@vantage-siam.com](mailto:info@vantage-siam.com)  
Website: [www.englishatvantage.com](http://www.englishatvantage.com)