

# Guide to Pearson Test of English General

Level 3 (Upper Intermediate)



**November 2011**  
**Version 5**

# Ofqual Accreditation

Pearson Test of English General (PTE General) tests are accredited as 'ESOL International' qualifications by the regulators of external qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Ofqual, the Welsh Assembly Government and CEA respectively).

ESOL International qualifications are designed for candidates who are not native speakers of English and who wish to achieve a high quality, internationally recognized qualification in English that is available and recognized world-wide and, at the highest level (NQF level 3 / CEF C2), candidates who are preparing for entry to higher education or professional employment in the UK or elsewhere.

ESOL International qualifications are designed to reference the descriptions of language proficiency in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF). The levels in the CEF have been mapped to the levels in the National Qualifications Framework for England Wales and Northern Ireland (see, *Pathways to Proficiency: the alignment of language proficiency scales for assessing competence in English Language*, DFES / QCA, 2003).

In the process of accreditation the six levels of PTE General have been allocated to levels of the National Qualifications Framework. PTE General tests are accredited under the following titles in the UK:

PTE General level	Accredited title	Accreditation number
PTE General A1	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 1)	500/1903/X
PTE General 1	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 2)	500/1962/4
PTE General 2	Edexcel Entry Level Certificate in ESOL International (Entry 3)	500/1961/2
PTE General 3	Edexcel Level 1 Certificate in ESOL International	500/1926/0
PTE General 4	Edexcel Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International	500/1964/8
PTE General 5	Edexcel Level 3 Certificate in ESOL International	500/1963/6

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# Introduction to the guide

## Who is it for?

The *Guide to Pearson Test of English General* is designed for anyone preparing students for the test or who wants to learn more about it.

## What is in the guide?

This guide contains five key parts:

An introduction to Pearson Test of English General including what it is, how it has been developed, who takes it and the skills tested. Key features of the test are outlined, including realistic themes, authentic sources and integrated skills. Information about test delivery and test results is also given.

The second part gives an outline of preparation resources that will be made available.

The third part provides general information about scoring within the test and the relationship between PTE General and the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEF) (Council of Europe, 2001).

In the fourth part an overview is provided of the formats of the spoken and written tests.

The final part of the guide gives an explanation of each section within the written and spoken tests at Level 3. This includes a description of the item types, skills assessed, tasks, objectives, timings and stimulus information. In addition, details about scoring and the marking criteria are presented.

# 1. Introduction to Pearson Test of English General

## Overview

### What is Pearson Test of English General?

PTE General is an assessment solution at six different levels (A1, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5) designed to assess and accredit general English language proficiency. These tests are provided in partnership with Edexcel Limited, the largest UK awarding body for academic and vocational qualifications. Edexcel Limited is the official awarding body for PTE General.

The tests are recognized globally and are accepted by universities, employers and national education authorities in many countries as evidence of a required standard of English.

### Development of PTE General

PTE General is the revised suite of tests formerly known as the London Tests of English. The changes to the tests were based on extensive consultation with test centers, teachers and test takers in a number of countries. The revision process was monitored at every stage by an independent Technical Advisory Group (TAG) made up of some of the world's leading language testing experts (further information about the TAG is available within the research area of [pearsonpte.com/research/Pages/home](http://pearsonpte.com/research/Pages/home)).

During the revision process, the descriptors within the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF) (Council of Europe, 2001) were used to guide the writing of the specification for each item type in the test and to describe the required performance of test takers at each CEF level (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2). In relating the test scores to the CEF, Pearson follows the procedures as recommended in the Council of Europe manual *Relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)*, available at [http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1\\_EN.asp](http://www.coe.int/T/DG4/Linguistic/Manuel1_EN.asp).

### Who takes PTE General?

PTE General is intended for learners of English who are speakers of other languages (ESOL). At the different levels the test items do not require any prior knowledge of the world beyond what people may need at a comparable level in their own language to function in their social, academic or professional life.

Children younger than 14 may prefer to sit tests from the suite of Pearson Test of English Young Learners, information for which is available at [pearsonpte.com/PTEYOUNGLEARNERS](http://pearsonpte.com/PTEYOUNGLEARNERS).

### What skills are tested?

PTE General assesses the four skills: listening, reading, speaking and writing. Test takers are required to successfully complete real life tasks, such as writing messages, understanding talks and presentations, understanding newspaper articles or participating in conversations.

The skills are tested at the six levels matched to the descriptors in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, A1 to C2 (see part 3 Scoring, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

## Key features

### Realistic themes, authentic sources and tasks

The item types in each PTE General test are grouped together around topics referred to as themes. These are used in item types across language skills, for example listening and reading or reading and writing. Themes in levels A1-2 tend to relate to familiar and routine matters, such as home and shopping. At levels 3-5 they can be more abstract, such as global issues like pollution and conservation. The written component of the test contains three themes and the spoken part two. Sections 7 and 8 in the written part are thematically linked. Sections 12 and 13 in the spoken part are related by theme.

Most of the texts used to assess reading and listening, particularly at levels 3-5, are authentic. They are sourced, for example, from books, magazines, newspapers, websites, radio broadcasts, recorded messages and podcasts. Hence PTE General is a measure of real, practical English.

Test takers are asked to listen once to the recordings in Section 1 of the test. In sections 2 and 3 candidates listen twice.

### Integrated skills

PTE General incorporates integrated skills. This is important because when communicating in English students are often required to combine several language skills to perform a task, for example listening to information and writing about what is heard.

### Test delivery

Scheduled test sessions are in May, June, and December. PTE General consists of a written paper-based test and a spoken test, which are delivered through a number of registered centers in over 30 territories globally.

Registered test centers delivering PTE General are typically schools, language schools and colleges. Each prospective center is required to provide evidence to ensure that the tests will be conducted according to the regulations as part of registering to become a test center. In some territories there are locally based agents or representatives.

Information about test session dates, test center locations, registering to take PTE General or registering to become a test center is available at [pearsonpte.com/TestCenters/Pages/Resources](https://pearsonpte.com/TestCenters/Pages/Resources).

### Test results

Test results are made available five to eight weeks after the date that the test was taken. Test centers can view results of test takers they have registered via Edexcel Online, our secure online results service. This service is made available to most test centers upon approval to deliver PTE General. Alternatively, results can be delivered by secure post if required.

Two to three weeks after receipt of results, test centers will receive test certificates.

## Test structure

PTE General consists of a written and a spoken test.

The written test is made up of nine sections at all levels and assesses listening, reading and writing.

Written test (all levels)	
Sections	Skills
1	Listening
2	Listening and writing
3	Listening
4–7	Reading
8–9	Writing

The spoken test consists of three sections at levels A1 and 1, and four sections at levels 2–5. It assesses speaking.

Spoken test (A1–1)	
Sections	Skills
10	Speaking
11	Not featured at these levels
12	Speaking
13	Speaking

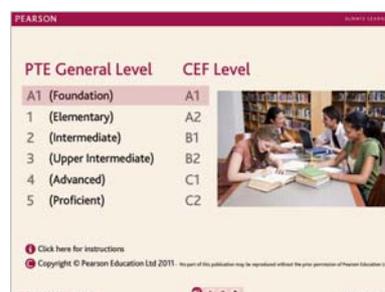
Spoken test (2–5)	
Sections	Skills
10	Speaking
11	Speaking
12	Speaking
13	Speaking

## 2. Preparation

### What resources can I use to prepare test takers for PTE General?

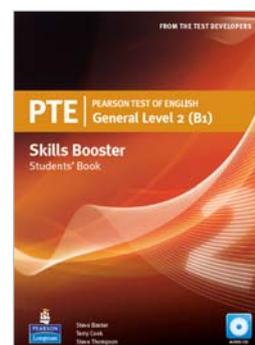
#### Tutorial

The *PTE General Tutorial* provides an interactive tour of the test to give you a detailed overview of the tasks and skills assessed at each of the six levels.



#### Skills Booster

The *PTE General Skills Boosters* offer guided practice of tasks within the test, grammar and vocabulary activities, a writing guide and five practice tests. They can be purchased at levels 2–5 and consist of a Teachers' Book, Students' Book and audio CD.



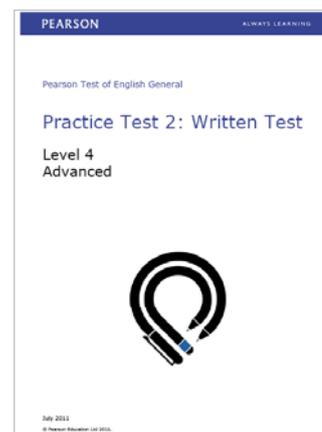
#### Skills Pod

The *PTE General Skills Pod* recommends over 100 published general ELT courses that provide material for teachers to use with test takers to develop skills assessed within the test.



#### Practice Tests

Three practice tests at most levels with audio, transcripts and answer keys are available to download for free.



## Test Tips

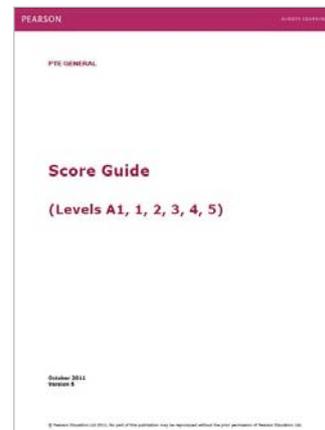
Over 50 test tips are provided for teachers preparing test takers for PTE General at all levels.



## Other resources

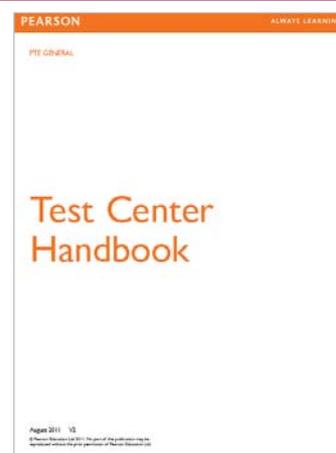
### Score Guide

The *Score Guide* gives detailed information about how sections of PTE General are scored and provides written and spoken samples of test taker performance with commentary for selected tasks.



### Test Center Handbook

The *Test Center Handbook* guides test centers through the process of registering for and administering the test. .



All resources listed and others are available from the Pearson Tests of English website at [www.pearsonpte.com/resources/Pages/home](http://www.pearsonpte.com/resources/Pages/home).

### 3. Scoring

#### Overview of scoring

The PTE General written test is scored out of 75 and the spoken test out of 25.

Figure 1 shows the sections, skills tested and the maximum number of score points that can be achieved for the written paper at levels A1-1.

Sections	Skills	Score points
1	Listening	10
2	Listening and writing	10 (5 listening, 5 writing)
3	Listening	10
4	Reading	5
5	Reading	5
6	Reading	8
7	Reading	7
8	Writing	10
9	Writing	10
<b>Total</b>		<b>75</b>

Figure 1. Distribution of score points: written test (all levels)

Figure 2, on the next page, shows the sections, skills tested and the maximum number of score points that can be achieved for the spoken test at levels A1 and 1, and levels 2–5.

Detailed information about scoring is available within the *Score Guide* at [pearsonpte.com/PTEGeneral/Pages/PTEGeneralScoreGuide](https://pearsonpte.com/PTEGeneral/Pages/PTEGeneralScoreGuide).

Sections	Skills	Score points
<b>Levels A1 - 1</b>		
10	Speaking	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
12	Speaking	
13	Speaking	
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>
<b>Levels 2-5</b>		
10	Speaking	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
11	Speaking	
12	Speaking	
13	Speaking	
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>

Figure 2. Distribution of score points: spoken test (A1-1; 2-5)

## Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

The six levels of PTE General have been designed to be aligned to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEF), a widely recognized benchmark for language ability. The CEF includes a set of language levels defined by descriptors of language competencies. The alignment process as described in the manual (Council of Europe, 2009) distinguishes a number of activities (specification, familiarization, standardization training/benchmarking, standard setting and validation). Although Pearson has gone through these activities, continual validation work is carried out using the most recent administrations of the test.

The framework was developed by the Council of Europe (2001) to enable language learners, teachers, universities and potential employers to compare and relate language qualifications gained in different educational contexts.

The CEF describes language proficiency in listening, reading, speaking and writing on a six-level scale, grouped into three bands: A1–A2 (Basic User), B1–B2 (Independent User), C1–C2 (Proficient User). Figure 3 overleaf indicates what students should be able to do at different CEF levels relevant to PTE General.

Students at this level:	Council of Europe levels	PTE General
<p>Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.</p>	<p>Proficient User C2</p>	<p>Level 5 Proficient</p>
<p>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts and recognize implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</p>	<p>Effective Operational Proficiency Proficient User C1</p>	<p>Level 4 Advanced</p>
<p>Can understand the main ideas of complex texts on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</p>	<p>Vantage Independent User B2</p>	<p>Level 3 Upper Intermediate</p>
<p>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</p>	<p>Threshold Independent User B1</p>	<p>Level 2 Intermediate</p>
<p>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</p>	<p>Waystage Basic User A2</p>	<p>Level 1 Elementary</p>
<p>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</p>	<p>Breakthrough Basic User A1</p>	<p>Level A1 Foundation</p>

Figure 3. CEF Descriptors relevant to PTE General  
© Council of Europe

## 4. Test format

### Overview

The overall timing for the written test at Level 3 is **2 hours**. The information in Figure 4 indicates for sections of the written test at Level 3: the skills assessed, item types, objectives and the maximum number of score points awarded.

### Written test

Sections	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Score points
1	Listening	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances	10
2	Listening and writing	Dictation	To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	5 listening 5 writing
3	Listening	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	10
4	Reading	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	5
5	Reading	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text	5
6	Reading	Open-ended question	To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts	8
7	Reading	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text	7
8	Writing	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence (90–120 words)	10
9	Writing	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination (150–200 words)	10
<b>Total</b>				<b>75</b>

Figure 4. Level 3 (Upper Intermediate) written test

The overall timing for the spoken test at Level 3 is **7 minutes**. The information in Figure 5 indicates for sections of the spoken test at Level 3: the skills assessed, item types, objectives, timing and the maximum number of score points awarded.

## Spoken test

Sections	Skills	Item types	Objectives	Timing	Score points
10	Speaking	Sustained monologue	To assess ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest	1.5 minutes	25 score points in total; distributed across the marking criteria
11	Speaking	Discussion	To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	2 minutes	
12	Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously about two related pictures and interpret some aspect of them	1.5 minutes	
13	Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately	2 minutes	
<b>Total</b>				<b>7 minutes</b>	<b>25</b>

Figure 5. Level 3 (Upper Intermediate) spoken test

## 5. Description of item types

### Written test

This part of the guide presents a description of the item type within each section of the written test. This includes what it tests, what test takers have to do, the item type objective, stimulus information and details on scoring.

#### Section 1

##### Listening

##### 3-option multiple choice

Section 1 comprises a *3-option multiple choice* item type. It assesses listening skills. It tests ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances.

**This is the Pearson Test of English General Level 3. This test takes 2 hours.**

##### Section 1

You will have 10 seconds to read each question and the corresponding options. Then listen to the recording. After the recording you will have 10 seconds to choose the correct option. Put a cross (☒) in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example.

**Example:** The speakers are

- A Tom's work colleagues.
- B Tom's friends.
- C Tom's parents.

1. What type of organisation is 'Atlantic Travel'?

- A an American travel agency
- B an expensive travel agency
- C an all-round travel agency

2. How do the women feel about Paris?

- A It's better not to visit in summer.
- B It's an adventurous destination.
- C It has very good art galleries.

3. What are travellers who had booked with 'Suntrips' entitled to?

- A full compensation from the government
- B air travel to their holiday destination
- C help with booking new hotel accommodation

4. The speaker is a

- A presenter.
- B housing officer.
- C local resident.

5. The main attraction of the Oxford Fashion Museum's new exhibition is
- A footwear.
  - B headwear.
  - C swimwear.
6. What are the speakers doing?
- A complaining
  - B discussing
  - C disagreeing
7. Where are the cheapest items to be found?
- A throughout the shop
  - B at the back of the store
  - C next to the cashier till
8. What is the woman saying about the way her village has changed?
- A Most things remain unchanged.
  - B Only a few things haven't changed.
  - C She doesn't recognise her old school.
9. What does the speaker want the audience to do?
- A join a debate about the future of media
  - B use Internet technology more
  - C buy and read more newspapers
10. What is the woman doing?
- A asking
  - B advising
  - C explaining

(Total 10 marks)

## Task

Test takers listen once to ten short recordings, either monologues or dialogues, and answer a single 3-option multiple choice question (or complete a sentence) for each. There are ten questions to answer (or sentences to complete); one per recording.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
<p>To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- identifying the speaker's role</li><li>- identifying the speakers' relationship</li><li>- identifying the topic</li><li>- identifying the situation</li><li>- recognizing the function</li><li>- understanding idiomatic expression</li><li>- understanding expression of feeling</li><li>- understanding expression of attitude</li></ul>	<p>Short authentic recordings, one or two speakers Including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- request for goods or services</li><li>- request for action</li><li>- request for information</li><li>- factual information</li><li>- expression of feelings</li><li>- offer</li><li>- invitation</li><li>- apology</li><li>- criticism/expression of dissatisfaction</li><li>- suggestion</li><li>- persuasion</li></ul>

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of ten score points can be achieved in this section of the test.



## Task

Test takers listen to one person speaking and write exactly what is heard with correct spellings. The extract is played twice, the second time with pauses, giving time to write down word-for-word what is heard. There is one dictation to complete and one recording.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	Instructions, news bulletins, announcements, broadcast features and factual information. The extracts are authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language

## Scores

This item type has a weighting of ten score points. A maximum of five score points for listening and five for writing can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 3

### Listening

#### Text, note completion

Section 3 comprises a *Text, note completion* item type. It assesses listening skills. It tests ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts.

#### Section 3

**12-16** You will hear a short talk about Berlin. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the talk. You will hear the recording twice.

**Example:** Many people think Berlin is not as ..... glamorous ..... as other European cities.

12. Berlin residents are not regarded as.....

13. Prenzlauerberg is in what used to be called.....

14. Prenzlauerberg has a higher.....than any other area.

15. The street called Husemannstrasse is like a.....

16. This street is not as.....as the other streets around it.

**17-21** You will hear a news broadcast. First, read the notes below then listen and complete the notes with information from the broadcast. You will hear the recording twice.

**Example:** Rhodes Zoo is the..... 5th/fifth largest .....in the world.

17. The zoo's new project will record.....of its history.

18. Year the zoo opened for the first time: .....

19. Zizi the elephant was donated by.....

20. You can now go to.....to see Arthur the gorilla.

21. Rhodes Zoo is now interested in.....rather than keeping large animals.

**(Total 10 marks)**

**That is the end of the listening section of the test. Now go on to the other sections of the test.**

## Task

Test takers listen twice to two recordings, either a monologue or dialogue, and complete a text or notes for each using the information heard. There are ten gaps to complete; five per task.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers giving or exchanging information. The items replicate real life situations which require accurate comprehension and transcription of key information, (e.g., taking messages or notes) Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- transactional conversations</li><li>- public announcements</li><li>- recorded messages</li></ul>

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correctly completed gap has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of ten score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 4

### Reading

#### Gap fill 3-option multiple choice

Section 4 comprises a *Gap fill 3-option multiple choice item* type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts.

**Section 4**

Read each text and put a cross (☒) by the missing word or phrase, as in the example.

**Example:**

We are a long-established family business that provides a reliable upholstery service that repairs antique furniture. If you have ..... please visit us at our shop to get an estimate and see our extensive range of fabrics.

A an enquiry  
 B some work  
 C a suggestion

22.

With over 250 worldwide.....holidays, it's easy to see why *International Adventure* is first choice for anyone wanting a summer break with a difference. Go on – challenge yourself!

A different  
 B global  
 C adventure

23.

Egypt has it all. You will find everything you could possibly..... here, from natural wonders and awe-inspiring pyramids to atmospheric bazaars and a buzzing contemporary culture.

A dislike  
 B know  
 C want

24.

Friday 17th January sees the Liverpool Fashion Show return for its 21st annual showcase of work by independent fashion designers. Guests are ..... to enjoy the catwalk show at Liverpool City Museum, which features collections from British and international designers.

- A invited
- B wanted
- C told

25.

How have things.....in the village since you were a child? We'd like to hear your stories. Send an email to [sally@communityhistory.co.uk](mailto:sally@communityhistory.co.uk) and the most interesting responses will be published in the village newsletter.

- A changed
- B missed
- C mattered

26.

The West Wiggington Past, Present and Future Society aims to create community spirit within the village by making people.....of the history of the local area.

- A realise
- B knowledge
- C aware

**(Total 5 marks)**

## Task

Test takers read five short texts, each containing a gap, and choose which of three answer options is the missing word or phrase. There are five gaps to complete; one per text.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	Authentic text types include: labels, instructions, signs, notices, menus, advertisements and announcements

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correctly completed gap has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of five score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 5

### Reading

#### 3-option multiple choice

Section 5 comprises a *3-option multiple choice* item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text.

#### Section 5

Read the article and answer the questions below. Put a cross (☒) in the box next to the correct answer, as in the example.

##### The Early Career of James Whitton

James Whitton founded the travel agency known as the James Whitton Group, which has offices worldwide. He grew up in Kingston Street in the small village of Keighley, in Yorkshire, the first child of Jack and Anne Whitton.

Aged 10 James got his first job, working as an assistant to a local market gardener and earning just six pence a week. Once he turned 15, he secured an apprenticeship as a carpenter and did this for five years. He had been brought up as a strict Baptist, and aged just 19 he became a preacher, touring Yorkshire and the surrounding area speaking as a public speaker in religious matters. He was particularly committed to promoting a society without alcohol. He continued with carpentry occasionally in order to earn the money to finance his vocation. Much of this work involved organising prayer meetings, distributing leaflets and encouraging people to avoid alcohol.

The idea to offer excursions to travellers came about one day whilst he was waiting for a stage coach into London. The Counties Railway had just reopened following an extension programme, and Whitton wanted to take a group of 600 anti-alcohol campaigners from Leeds to the neighbouring town of Bradford. The railway company agreed each person would pay one shilling for the journey, including food for the journey as well as the rail ticket. This journey, on 7 July 1842, was the first privately chartered excursion train to be publicly advertised although Whitton always acknowledged that there had been earlier, unadvertised private excursion trains.

Whitton was paid commission by the railway company as the tickets themselves, being legal contracts between the company and its passengers, couldn't have been issued at his price. The success of this venture led Whitton to plan a series of outings for religious organisations, and in 1845 he formalised an ongoing arrangement with the rail company, whose only insistence was that he brought them the passengers. Thus Whitton established a successful business running rail excursions for pleasure, whereby he took a percentage of the cost of the tickets. His business expanded from there.

**Example:** In which village did Whitton live as a child?

- A Kingston
- B Keighley
- C Yorkshire

27. What was the main reason for Whitton's ongoing work as a carpenter?

- A It funded his preaching work.
- B He felt it was his vocation.
- C He couldn't break his contract.

28. What was the main purpose of Whitton's work as a preacher?

A It meant he could continue to work in Yorkshire.

B He really enjoyed organising prayer meetings.

C He wanted people to stop drinking alcohol.

29. Why did Whitton start organising private excursions?

A He had to wait a long time for a stage coach to London.

B He needed to transport a large group of passengers.

C Ordinary rail tickets didn't include food for the journey.

30. His charter train from Leeds to Bradford was the first

A unadvertised private excursion train.

B privately chartered excursion train.

C widely publicised excursion train.

31. The Counties Railway gave Whitton a permanent contract to run excursions on condition that

A he found all the customers for them.

B the excursions had a religious purpose.

C all arrangements were very formal.

**(Total 5 marks)**

**Task**

Test takers read a text and answer five questions (or complete five sentences) from a choice of three answer options. There are five answers to choose and one text.

**Objective, stimulus**

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures and website articles

**Scores**

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of five score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 6

### Reading

#### Open-ended question

Section 6 comprises an *Open-ended question* item type. It assesses reading skills. It tests ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts.

#### Section 6

Read the article below and answer the questions.

##### **Bristol International Airport**

Bristol International Airport currently handles 4.6 million passengers a year, with flights to 90 destinations.

The airport was the brainchild of local businessmen in 1927. Through public subscriptions, they raised £6000 to open a flying club at Filton Aerodrome, Concorde's birthplace.

Inspired by early success, they then bought an area of farmland south of the city.

Prince George opened the airport in 1930. It thrived, handling 4000 passengers in 1939.

However, during the Second World War, the airport was taken over by the Air Ministry for military operations. After the war finished in 1945, many felt it had no future, but ten years later, the airport moved site after it was purchased by the Bristol Corporation for £55,000.

It has been based there ever since. Passenger numbers have continued to rise, with the airport expected to handle 12 million passengers by 2030, and to need a longer runway.

**Example:** How many passengers use Bristol Airport each year?

.....  
4.6 million  
.....

32. Where did the idea for the original airport come from?

.....

33. Who ran the airport throughout the Second World War?

.....

34. What happened to the airport in 1955?

.....

35. What new development is the airport likely to require?

.....

Read the magazine article below and answer the questions.

**The History of Jeans**

The word 'jeans' comes from a type of European cloth, named after sailors from Genoa who wore clothes made from it. At first the fabric was made from mixed materials, though from the 18th century it was made completely from cotton. Usually dyed a dark blue color with the plant-based dye known as indigo, workers found it hardwearing.

Jeans gained popularity in the 1850s, with the American Gold Rush. Miners needed clothes that didn't tear easily. Pockets were a particular problem as they easily tore off the jeans. Jacob Davis had the idea of metal fasteners to hold the pockets and jeans together. Without money to patent his idea, he approached Levi Strauss, who had begun large-scale manufacture of jeans in the USA. Strauss offered a deal and began making copper-riveted 'waist overalls' as jeans were then known.

**Example:** Who gave the fabric that was used to make jeans its name?

Sailors from Genoa

36. What natural substance was used to color the cloth?

37. What aspect of jeans design presented a challenge to manufacturers?

38. What was Jacob Davis's invention?

39. What prevented Jacob Davis from working on his business idea alone?

(Total 8 marks)

**Task**

Test takers read two texts and answer eight questions about them using single words or short answers. There are eight questions to answer; four per text.

**Objective, stimulus**

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures and website articles

**Scores**

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correct answer has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of eight score points can be achieved in this section of the test.

## Section 7

### Reading

#### Text, note completion

Section 7 comprises a *Text, note completion* item type. It tests ability to extract specific information from an extended written text.

#### Section 7

Read the web article about overland truck holidays in Africa and complete the notes. Write no more than three words from the article in each gap.

##### **Travelling on an Overland Truck across Africa**

The key thing to remember when travelling overland in Africa is to expect the unexpected! If you're someone who requires a fixed itinerary with no surprises, then this won't be the kind of trip for you. We sometimes have to change our travel plans due to unforeseen circumstances. But, this is what makes every trip different and exciting. As part of this adventure we expect you to play an active role in the daily running of your trip, to get stuck in and work as a team, helping out with tasks like cooking meals over open fires, pitching tents and cleaning and tidying the truck.

On driving days, we travel 100-600km, depending on the terrain. We aim for one long driving day followed by several short ones. We have some non-driving days, when you can relax and enjoy sights like Lake Malawi or Victoria Falls. Most nights are spent at campsites, where you can shower, have a cold drink etc, but we sometimes camp in the bush, experiencing the 'real' Africa. We provide generous sized tents (shared with one other) and thick camping mats, which by all accounts are very comfortable (all you need is a sleeping bag and a mosquito net).

Your day begins at 7am with a simple 'help yourself' breakfast. For other meals, you'll be expected to muck in and do your bit. When 'on the road' or at campsites, you will use a rota system and cook in groups with 2-3 others using gas or open fires. Expect to cook once every 7-10 days, depending on the size of the group. Occasionally there will be some stores of food on the truck for you to use, but it's your job to decide what to cook and shop for most of your ingredients in local markets and shops. We do NOT cater for fussy eaters, or carry special food items. So be warned!

If you're not cooking, the early part of the evening will be spent putting up your tent with your 'tent buddy'. Most crucially, you'll collect firewood before lighting the fire and making hot drinks. Water is collected from local wells where available. Then you can chill out and enjoy the evening. We have lights in the truck so you can read or write a journal if you wish. It would be a shame if you didn't keep a record of the holiday of a lifetime!

**Example:** When travelling in Africa you should be prepared for the..... unexpected.....:

40. Occasionally.....mean that the planned itinerary has to be altered.

41. The..... determines the distance that is covered each day.

42. People say that the sleeping mats are .....

43. You are likely to cook with.....people.

44. The majority of the food for meals comes from.....:

45. For non-cooks an important evening task is to find.....:

46. The holiday company encourages you to.....of your holiday.

**(Total 7 marks)**

## Task

Test takers read a text and use information from it to fill seven gaps in a second incomplete text or notes. There are seven gaps to complete, one source text and a second incomplete text or notes.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, website articles or textbooks

## Scores

This item type is marked as either correct or incorrect. Each correctly completed gap has a weighting of one score point. A maximum of seven score points can be achieved in this section of the test.



## Task

Test takers write an email, formal or informal letter, based on information given in Section 7. There is one text to write (90–120 words). There is a 'tolerated' word limit of 72–132 words for Section 8. If the response is below or over this, test takers will automatically score 0 for the section.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient. The task gives the test taker the opportunity to convey emotion or highlight the personal significance of events and experiences.

## Scores

This item type has a weighting of ten score points.

Written responses (sections 8 and 9) are scored according to **how well** test takers perform against the following criteria:

<b>Range</b>	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics using some complex sentence forms
<b>Accuracy</b>	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding
<b>Coherence and Cohesion</b>	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpiness' in a long contribution
<b>Orthographic control</b>	Can produce clearly intelligible continuous writing which follows standard layout and paragraphing conventions Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate, but may show signs of mother tongue influence

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

<b>Written interaction</b>	Can express news and views effectively in writing, and relate to those of others
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## Task

Test takers write a piece of free writing from a choice of two given topics. The form of the response may be:

- factual: leaflet, blog entry, article
- critical: review, report, essay
- analytical: essay

There is one text to write (150–200 words). There is a ‘tolerated’ word limit of 90-220 words for Section 9.

If the response is below or over this, test takers will automatically score 0 for the section.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination	A choice of two topics providing the test taker with the opportunity to give their point of view, explain advantages and disadvantages or develop an argument

## Scores

This item type has a weighting of ten score points.

Written responses (sections 8 and 9) are scored according to **how well** the test taker performs against the following criteria:

<b>Range</b>	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics using some complex sentence forms
<b>Accuracy</b>	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control. Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding
<b>Coherence and Cohesion</b>	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear coherent discourse, though there may be some ‘jumpiness’ in a long contribution
<b>Orthographic control</b>	Can produce clearly intelligible continuous writing which follows standard layout and paragraphing conventions Spelling and punctuation are reasonably accurate, but may show signs of mother tongue influence

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

<b>Written production</b>	Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesizing and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources
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## Summary: written test item type information

Sections	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 1: Listening	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main detail in short spoken utterances by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- identifying the speaker's role</li> <li>- identifying the speakers' relationship</li> <li>- identifying the topic</li> <li>- identifying the situation</li> <li>- recognizing the function</li> <li>- understanding idiomatic expression</li> <li>- understanding expression of feeling</li> <li>- understanding expression of attitude</li> </ul>	Listen once to ten short recordings, either monologues or dialogues, and answer a single 3-option multiple choice question or complete a sentence for each. Ten items	Short authentic recordings, one or two speakers Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transactional conversations</li> <li>- social conversations</li> <li>- public announcements</li> </ul> Including the following language functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- request for goods or services</li> <li>- request for action</li> <li>- request for information</li> <li>- factual information</li> <li>- expression of feelings</li> <li>- offer</li> <li>- invitation</li> <li>- apology</li> <li>- criticism/expression of dissatisfaction</li> <li>- suggestion</li> <li>- persuasion</li> </ul>
Section 2: Listening and writing	Dictation	To assess ability to understand an extended utterance by transcribing a spoken text	Listen to one person speaking and write exactly what is heard with correct spellings. The extract is played twice, the second time with pauses, giving time to write down word-for-word what is heard. One dictation	Instructions, news bulletins, announcements, broadcast features, and factual information. The extracts are authentic, descriptive and contain relatively formal language
Section 3: Listening	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from extended spoken texts	Listen twice to two recordings, either a monologue or dialogue, and complete a text or notes for each using the information heard. Ten gaps	Authentic recordings of one or two speakers giving or exchanging information. The items replicate real life situations which require accurate comprehension and transcription of key information, (e.g., taking messages or notes) Including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- transactional conversations</li> <li>- public announcements</li> <li>- recorded messages</li> </ul>
Section 4: Reading	Gap fill 3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the purpose, structure and main idea of short written texts	Read five short texts, each containing a gap, and choose which of three answer options is the missing word or phrase. Five gaps	Authentic text types include: labels, instructions, signs, notices, menus, advertisements and announcements
Section 5: Reading	3-option multiple choice	To assess ability to understand the main ideas in an extended written text	Read a text and answer five questions or complete five sentences from a choice of three answer options. Five questions or gaps	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures and website articles

<b>Section 6: Reading</b>	Open-ended question	To assess ability to understand the main points of short and extended written texts	Read two texts and answer eight questions about them using single words or short answers. Eight questions	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, leaflets, brochures and website articles
<b>Section 7: Reading</b>	Text, note completion	To assess ability to extract specific information from an extended written text	Read a text and use information from it to fill seven gaps in a second incomplete text or notes. Seven gaps	Authentic text types include: newspaper articles, magazine articles, website articles or textbooks
<b>Section 8: Writing</b>	Write correspondence	To assess ability to write a piece of correspondence	Write an email, formal or informal letter, based on information given in Section 7. One text (90–120 words)	Instructions which include the purpose of the text, the intended content of the message and the recipient. The task gives the test taker the opportunity to convey emotion or highlight the personal significance of events and experiences
<b>Section 9: Writing</b>	Write text	To assess ability to write a short text from own experience, knowledge or imagination	Write a piece of free writing from a choice of two given topics. The form of the response may be: - factual: leaflet, blog entry, article, news advert, instructions, fact sheet, interview - critical: review, report, essay, speech, comment - analytical: essay, analysis of issue or argument, explanation One text (150–200 words)	A choice of two topics providing the test taker with the opportunity to give their point of view, explain advantages and disadvantages or develop an argument

Figure 6. Level 3 (Upper Intermediate) written test item type information

# Spoken test

This part of the guide presents a detailed description of the item type within each section of the spoken test. This includes what it tests, what test takers have to do, timing, the item type objective, stimulus information and details on scoring.

## Section 10

### Speaking

#### Sustained monologue

Section 10 comprises a *Sustained monologue* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest.

PTE General Speaking Test: Level 3

**SECTION 10: PERSONAL INFORMATION (1.5 MINUTES)**

*Now I'd like you to speak on your own for about one minute.*

**Main prompt 1:**

- *Tell me about your favourite band or musician.*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *What country are they from?*
- *What kind of music do they play?*
- *What makes them special?*
- *Tell me about a concert of theirs that you attended.*

**Main prompt 2:**

- *Tell me about your hobbies/pastimes.*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *What's your favourite hobby/pastime?*
- *What made you take up this pastime?*
- *What does it involve?*
- *How often do you do it?*

**Main prompt 3:**

- *What do you like and dislike about your school?*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *Why do you like/dislike your school?*
- *What are your favourite subjects? Why?*
- *Who is your favourite teacher? Why?*
- *What would you change about your school?*

**Main prompt 4:**

- *Tell me about your experiences of learning English.*

**Follow-up prompts:**

- *Why did you start to learn English?*
- *What do you find easiest and most difficult about learning English?*
- *In what ways is English different from your own language?*
- *How do you think English might be useful to you in the future?*

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions.

## Task

Test takers speak without interruption in response to a main prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 1 minute). Follow-up questions are asked to encourage the test taker to continue talking. Prompts focus on present circumstances, past experience, tastes, preferences and future plans. This section of the test is **1.5 minutes**.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest	Questions may require the test taker to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- choose between two alternatives</li> <li>- explain in detail reasons for an opinion or preference</li> <li>- speculate or respond to a hypothetical question</li> </ul>

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections against the following criteria:

<b>Fluency</b>	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions There are few noticeable long pauses
<b>Interaction</b>	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, although may not always do this elegantly Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension and inviting others in
<b>Range</b>	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms
<b>Accuracy</b>	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes
<b>Phonological control</b>	Has acquired clear, natural pronunciation and intonation

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

<b>Sustained monologue</b>	Can give clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest OR Can develop a clear argument, expanding and supporting his/her points of view at some length with subsidiary points and relevant examples Can construct a chain of reasoned arguments Can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options
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## Section 11

### Speaking

#### Discussion

Section 11 comprises a *Discussion* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue.

**SECTION 11: DISCUSSION (2 MINUTES)**

*Now, we are going to discuss something together. The question is: "Communicating by text and email is not as effective as writing letters". What do you think?*

(Use the following arguments as appropriate to take an opposing view to that of the test taker)

**For writing letters rather than emails/texts**

- The language we use in texts and emails encourages bad grammar.
- It is easier to explain yourself clearly in a letter.
- Texts and emails can easily be misunderstood.
- Writing a letter is much more personal.

**Against writing letters rather than emails/texts**

- It's natural that as technology progresses, methods of communication will change.
- Young people are used to these methods, it's only older people who find it a problem.
- People have a choice as to how they word their texts and emails.
- Nowadays people don't have time to write letters.

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions.

#### Task

Test takers give and support opinions on a topic in response to prompts put by the interlocutor. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

#### Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to discuss a concrete or abstract issue	A discussion topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue or one related to an area of general interest. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections against the following criteria:

<b>Fluency</b>	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions There are few noticeable long pauses
<b>Interaction</b>	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, although may not always do this elegantly Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension and inviting others in
<b>Range</b>	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms
<b>Accuracy</b>	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes
<b>Phonological control</b>	Has acquired clear, natural pronunciation and intonation

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

<b>Turn taking</b>	Can initiate, maintain and end discourse appropriately with effective turn taking Can use stock phrases (e.g., "That's a difficult question to answer.") to gain time and keep the turn whilst formulating what to say
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## Section 12

### Speaking

#### Describe picture

Section 12 comprises a *Describe picture* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to speak continuously about two related pictures and interpret some aspect of them.

**SECTION 12: PICTURE (1.5 MINUTES)**

*Now, here are two pictures showing people studying. Please tell me what you can see in the pictures.*  
(Hand the pictures to the test taker)



(Allow the test taker to speak for about one minute, then ask this secondary prompt)  
*Which situation do you think is better for learning, and why?*  
(Retrieve the pictures)

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions, and example pictures given to test takers.

#### Task

Test takers speak without interruption about two pictures in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 1 minute). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the pictures. The visuals are designed to elicit language of comparison and contrast as well as expression of ideas, opinions and feelings. This section of the test is **1.5 minutes**.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
To assess ability to speak continuously about two related pictures and interpret some aspect of them	Two related pictures and two questions. The first prompt is always "Tell me what you can see in the pictures." The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the pictures or to express a personal reaction to them The pictures may include some unusual element that invites comment or explanation. They may illustrate two alternative options and may allude to a topical issue

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections against the following criteria:

<b>Fluency</b>	Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions There are few noticeable long pauses
<b>Interaction</b>	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, although may not always do this elegantly Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension and inviting others
<b>Range</b>	Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms
<b>Accuracy</b>	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes
<b>Phonological control</b>	Has acquired clear, natural pronunciation and intonation

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

<b>Thematic development</b>	Can develop a clear description or narrative, expanding and supporting the main points with relevant supporting detail and examples
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## Section 13

### Speaking

#### Role play

Section 13 comprises a *Role play* item type. It assesses speaking skills. It tests ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately.

**SECTION 13: ROLE PLAY (2 MINUTES)**

*Now we are going to take part in a role play. Here is a card with the situation on it.*

(Hand the card to the test taker. Allow up to 15 seconds to study the card)

**Test taker's card**

You want to go on a school trip to New York in the summer, but your teacher thinks you should study because you didn't pass your last maths exam. The examiner is your teacher.

Your goal: Persuade your teacher to allow you to go on the school trip.

**Interlocutor's script**

*I am your teacher. You want to go on a school trip to New York, but I think you should study, because you didn't pass your last maths exam.*

*Ready? I'll start.*

**Suggested prompts:**

- *What can I do for you?*
- *You failed your last maths exam, and you really need to study in the holidays.*
- *You didn't pay attention in class last term at all.*
- *But how will you improve your grades if you go to New York?*
- *Alright. I'll discuss this with your parents and they can make the final decision.*

(Retrieve the card)

*Thank you. That is the end of the test.*

Image displaying interlocutor script and instructions, and example role card given to test takers.

#### Task

Test takers take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. The situation may involve some difference of status or social distance between participants (necessitating adjustment of register). It may require test takers to state a problem which then needs to be solved jointly, explain or justify a course of action or speculate about the possible consequences of future action. This section of the test is **2 minutes**.

## Objective, stimulus

Objective	Stimulus
<p>To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately</p> <p>Including the following language functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- greeting and leave-taking (and self introduction)</li> <li>- asking for things</li> <li>- asking for information</li> <li>- responding to requests</li> <li>- offering</li> <li>- accepting</li> <li>- responding to offers</li> <li>- thanking</li> <li>- giving information</li> <li>- apologizing</li> <li>- asking for directions</li> <li>- giving or following instructions</li> <li>- inviting</li> <li>- accepting/declining invitations</li> <li>- suggesting or advising</li> <li>- responding to suggestions or advice</li> <li>- congratulating</li> <li>- expressing sympathy</li> <li>- complaining</li> <li>- negotiating</li> <li>- justifying a course of action</li> </ul>	<p>The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an explanation of the situation</li> <li>- a specification of the roles to be taken by the test taker and the interlocutor</li> <li>- a specification of the test taker's goal (e.g., to reach an agreement, complete a transaction, etc.)</li> <li>- if necessary and appropriate, instructions as to the tone or mood that the test taker should adopt</li> <li>- visual support where appropriate</li> </ul>

## Scores

The score points for speaking are aggregated and contribute up to 25 marks towards the total score over the written and spoken tests of 100 marks.

The test taker is scored on **how well** they perform over the four speaking sections against the following criteria:

<b>Fluency</b>	<p>Can produce stretches of language with a fairly even tempo, although can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions</p> <p>There are few noticeable long pauses</p>
<b>Interaction</b>	<p>Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, although may not always do this elegantly</p> <p>Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension and inviting others in</p>
<b>Range</b>	<p>Has sufficient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions, express viewpoints on most general topics,</p> <p>without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms</p>
<b>Accuracy</b>	<p>Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical and lexical control</p> <p>Does not make errors which cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes</p>
<b>Phonological control</b>	<p>Has acquired clear, natural pronunciation and intonation</p>

In addition, performance in this section is scored according to **what** the test taker can do against the following criteria:

<b>Sociolinguistic appropriateness</b>	Can express him/herself confidently, clearly and politely in a formal or informal register, appropriate to the situation and person(s) concerned Can express him/herself appropriately in situations and avoid errors of formulation
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## Summary: spoken test item type information

Sections	Item types	Objectives	Tasks	Stimulus
Section 10: Speaking	Sustained monologue	To assess ability to speak continuously about matters of personal information and interest	(1.5 minutes) Speak without interruption in response to a main prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 1 minute). Follow-up questions are asked to encourage the test taker to continue talking. Prompts focus on present circumstances, past experience, tastes, preferences and future plans	Questions may require the test taker to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- choose between two alternatives</li> <li>- explain in detail reasons for an opinion or preference</li> <li>- speculate or respond to a hypothetical question</li> </ul>
Section 11: Speaking	Discussion	To assess ability discuss a concrete or abstract issue	(2 minutes) Give and support opinions on a topic in response to prompts put by the interlocutor	A discussion topic about which it is feasible to have equally valid opposing opinions, feelings or ideas. The topic may be a concrete or abstract issue or one related to an area of general interest. The test taker will be invited to speculate or respond to a hypothesis
Section 12: Speaking	Describe picture	To assess ability to speak continuously about two related pictures and interpret some aspect of them	(1.5 minutes) Speak without interruption about two pictures in response to a prompt posed by the interlocutor (up to 1 minute). This is followed by a second instruction to interpret some aspect of the pictures. The visuals are designed to elicit language of comparison and contrast as well as expression of ideas, opinions and feelings	Two related pictures and two questions. The first prompt is always "Tell me what you can see in the pictures." The second prompt is an instruction to the test taker to interpret some aspect of the pictures or to express a personal reaction to them. The pictures may include some unusual element that invites comment or explanation. They may illustrate two alternative options and may allude to a topical issue
Section 13: Speaking	Role play	To assess ability to perform and respond to language functions appropriately  Including the following language functions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- greeting and leave-taking (and self introduction)</li> <li>- asking for things</li> <li>- asking for information</li> <li>- responding to requests</li> <li>- offering</li> <li>- accepting</li> <li>- responding to offers</li> <li>- thanking</li> <li>- giving information</li> <li>- apologising</li> <li>- asking for directions</li> <li>- giving or following instructions</li> <li>- inviting</li> <li>- accepting/declining invitations</li> <li>- suggesting or advising</li> <li>- responding to suggestions or advice</li> <li>- congratulating</li> <li>- expressing sympathy</li> <li>- complaining</li> <li>- negotiating</li> <li>- justifying a course of action</li> </ul>	(2 minutes) Take part in a role play with the interlocutor using a role card with information and instructions. The situation may involve some difference of status or social distance between participants (necessitating adjustment of register). It may require test takers to state a problem which then needs to be solved jointly, explain or justify a course of action or speculate about the possible consequences of future action	The interlocutor gives the test taker up to 15 seconds to read a role card with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- an explanation of the situation</li> <li>- a specification of the roles to be taken by the test taker and the interlocutor</li> <li>- a specification of the test taker's goal (e.g., to reach an agreement, complete a transaction, etc.)</li> <li>- if necessary and appropriate, instructions as to the tone or mood that the test taker should adopt</li> <li>- visual support where appropriate</li> </ul>

Figure 7. Level 3 (Upper Intermediate) spoken test item type information

# Contact us

**You can contact us in the following ways:**

- Visit [www.pearsonpte.com](http://www.pearsonpte.com)
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