

Cambridge English



The **Official** Cambridge Guide to

IELTS

FOR ACADEMIC & GENERAL TRAINING

STUDENT'S BOOK
WITH ANSWERS

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Speaking skills


1 The Speaking Test – Part 1

In this unit you will practise:

- getting ready to speak
- using the correct tense
- talking about familiar topics
- Grammatical Range and Accuracy

1 Getting ready to speak

The test has three different parts (Part 1, Part 2 and Part 3) and the examiner will use a script. This helps to make sure that the Speaking tests all follow the same pattern.

- 1.1**  **Video 1** Watch the video and focus on what the examiner says. Complete part of the examiner's script below.

Can you tell me your 1, please?

Thank you. And what 2 ?

And can you tell me 3 ?

Can I see your 4, please?

Thank you, OK, that's fine.

Now, in this first part, I'd like to ask you 5

Let's talk about 6

- 1.2** What do you need to bring to the Speaking test?

- 1.3** Watch again and this time, focus on Sanem, the candidate. As you watch, answer the questions below.

- 1 Choose the best adjectives to describe Sanem: shy, anxious, friendly, tense, calm, abrupt, confident.
- 2 Which **TWO** descriptions below (A–E) apply to Sanem?
 - A She often looks down and avoids looking at the examiner.
 - B She makes good eye contact with the examiner.
 - C Her body language shows she is listening carefully.
 - D Her body language shows how nervous she is.
 - E The way she is sitting makes her seem a little rude.

 **Test Tip** Make good eye contact with the examiner from the moment you enter the room, and answer in a polite and friendly way. Your body language is an important part of communicating.

The Speaking test is a formal situation, so it is important to use appropriate body language.

1.4 Put a tick (✓) or a cross (X) to show which of these would be appropriate in the Speaking test.

- A chewing gum because it helps you to stay calm
- B drinking from a bottle of water
- C checking your mobile phone
- D using your mobile phone to time your interview
- E wearing jeans and a T-shirt
- F asking the examiner your score at the end of the test
- G shrugging your shoulders to show you don't know or understand
- H asking to leave the room for a moment during the test

1.5 If you can, video yourself being interviewed and think about your own body language. Are there any things you can improve?

2 Part 1 – talking about familiar topics


Part 1 will last for approximately five minutes. The examiner will ask you about familiar topics such as your family, or likes and dislikes.

2.1 Look at the questions below on the topic of home, and think about how you would answer them.

Let's talk about where you live.

- What do you like most about your home town/city? [Why?]
- Is your home town/city a popular place for tourists to visit? [Why/Why not?]
- Do you think your home town/city has changed much in recent years? [Why/Why not?]

2.2 At the end of each question, there are follow-up questions in brackets. Why do you think the examiner sometimes uses them?

2.3  **Video 2** Watch a candidate called Emanuele answering the questions. As you listen, decide which statement below applies to Emanuele's answers.

- A His answers are a little too short – the examiner needs to ask follow-up questions.
- B He is clearly giving a prepared speech.
- C He answers naturally and fully.



Test Tip Make sure you arrive early for your test, so that you are not hurrying and have time to relax. If possible, visit the test centre before the day of your test, so that you are familiar with where you need to go.



Test Tip The Speaking test should be a natural conversation. If you try to give a prepared speech, the examiner will interrupt you and ask you a different question.


2.4 Practise by answering the questions below. Record yourself if possible. Don't use any notes or learn a prepared answer.

- What food is typical of your home country? [Why do you think that is?]
- Are there any special festivals or celebrations in your town/city? [Can you tell me about that?]
- What advice would you give to a visitor to your town/city? [Why?]

2.5 Listen back to your answers. Did you answer the questions fully? Would an examiner need to have used the questions in brackets?

3 Using the right tense – Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Your examiner will use four different criteria to assess your speaking level. One of these is Grammatical Range and Accuracy. To achieve a high score in this criterion, you need to use a range of tenses and structures accurately. In Part 1 of the Speaking test, you will be asked questions about two or three familiar topics. The questions will feature a variety of tenses.


3.1  **Video 3** Watch a candidate called Saida answering questions about writing and music. As you listen, complete the examiner's questions below. You may need to watch more than once.

- 1 What different types _____ ?
- 2 Do you prefer _____ ?
- 3 Do you write _____ ?
- 4 Do you like to _____ ?
- 5 Let's talk about _____ ?

3.2 What tense should you use to answer each question? Listen again to see if Saida showed a range of tenses.

3.3 Look at these extracts from Saida's answers. Three of them contain a grammatical error. Find the mistakes and correct them.

- 1 I prefer to email.
- 2 If you send a letter by yourself, it means you are very appreciate this person.
- 3 It depends on the situation. For example, for my studies, I prefer to type on a computer, but for my essays, I prefer to write by hand.
- 4 I think less, because technology nowadays are really go fast.
- 5 Not actually.
- 6 I listen to music because it gives me energy.

 **Test Tip** It's important to listen carefully to the examiner's questions so that you can answer in the correct tense. When answering yes / no questions, it is important to answer the question and then give reasons for your answer. Don't simply answer Yes or No.

Here are some other familiar topics that you may be asked about.

- computers
- hobbies
- reading
- studying
- food
- music

3.4 Try to say one sentence about your past, present and future experiences of each of the topics above. Pay attention to tenses.



Study Tip Spoken language is different to written language, and you may make more grammatical mistakes when you are speaking because there is less thinking time. Try recording yourself as you give the answers to the questions in these units. Then, write out your answers to see the type of mistakes you are making.

3.5 Think about how you would answer these questions.

- 1 Do you like to read the newspaper? [Why/Why not?]
- 2 Did you enjoy studying when you first started school? [Why/Why not?]
- 3 Would you like to do any further study? [Why/Why not?]
- 4 Do you often go out at the weekends?
- 5 Have you always liked the same kind of music? [Why/Why not?]

3.6 Which of the answers in the box can be used with questions 1–5?

Not really.	Yes, I do.	No, I didn't.	No, I haven't.
Yes, I have.	Yes, there is.	No, there aren't.	
Yes, I would.	No, I wouldn't.	Yes, I did.	No, I don't.

The answers in the box are a good start, but you need to give more detail and explain your answer.

3.7 **Video 4** Watch Emanuele giving full answers to the following questions about music. As you listen, make a note of the information that he gives, and the different tenses that he uses. Correct any mistakes you hear.

- 1 Let's talk about music. How often do you listen to music?
- 2 Why?
- 3 So, do you prefer to buy CDs or download music from the internet?
- 4 Have you always liked the same kind of music?
- 5 And is there a musical instrument that you would like to learn to play?

3.8 Answer each of the questions in 3.5 and 3.7 for yourself using an appropriate answer from the box. Give specific details.

Speaking skills

2 Part 2 – Giving a talk

In this unit you will practise:

- understanding the task
- improving your Fluency and Coherence
- keeping going
- organising your notes and your talk

1 Understanding the task

In Part 2 of the Speaking test, you will be asked to talk about a specific topic. The examiner will give you a booklet showing your question, and the ideas you need to talk about. You will have time to make notes first.

1.1 Watch the video and answer the following questions.

- 1 How long should you speak for?
- 2 How long will you have to make notes?
- 3 Will you need to bring paper and a pen?
- 4 Can you write on the booklet?
- 5 How will you know when to stop talking?

There are four instructions on your booklet telling you what to talk about. It is important to address each one. You will usually be asked to choose a person, place, time or thing and explain why you chose them. Also, you may be asked to describe one or two specific examples and talk about your own feelings or reactions.

1.2 Look at the task that Emanuele was given.

Describe a time when you helped someone.

You should say:

- who you helped and why
- how you helped this person
- what the result was



and explain how you felt about helping this person.

Before your talk, you will be given extra paper to make notes on. You need to make sure your notes cover **each** of the points listed. Writing down the key words in the task will help you to organise your thoughts and ideas.

1.3 Fill in the notes below using key words from 1.2.

Notes: a time when I helped someone

- Who I helped
- How
- How I felt
- 1 _____
- 2 _____

- 1.4**  **Video 6** Check your answers to 1.3, set a timer and watch Emanuele giving his talk. As you listen, make notes on what he says about each of the points in the task.
- 1.5** How long did Emanuele speak for? Look at the notes you made from Emanuele's talk. What would you add to make his talk longer?
- 1.6**  **Video 7** Some candidates run out of ideas after only one minute. Watch Saida's response. How does the examiner help?



If you run out of ideas after only one minute, you can

- look quickly at your notes.
- look at the question again (did you miss any details out?).
- refer back to an earlier point in your talk and add more.
- keep talking while you think.

- 1.7** The words in the box are useful to help you keep talking. Complete phrases 1–6 with a suitable word from the box. You may use any of the phrases more than once.

add	mentioned	said	described	as
else	forgot			

- 1 _____ I said earlier ...
- 2 At the beginning I _____ ...
- 3 I don't think I've _____ ...
- 4 Now, what _____ can I say?
- 5 I'd just like to _____ something about ...
- 6 One thing I _____ to mention ...

- 1.8**  **Video 8** Watch Sanem completing the task in 1.2. Does she cover all of the points in the task?
- 1.9**  **Video 9** Watch Sanem and Emanuele, talking at the end of Part 2. Write down the question the examiner asks.
- 1 Sanem's rounding-off question: _____ ?
 - 2 Emanuele's rounding-off question: _____ ?
- 1.10** It is important to answer all of the questions fully. Watch again and make a note of how the candidates extend their answer.




Test Tip As you talk, you should only look at your notes briefly. **Don't** read directly from your notes. Notice how each of the candidates in the videos keeps eye contact with the examiner.



Test Tip If you run out of ideas after one minute, give yourself a fresh start by looking at your notes or looking at the task in the booklet again.

2 Improving Fluency and Coherence

Two of the criteria your examiner will use to assess your speaking are **Coherence** and **Fluency**. Coherence means how easy it is for the listener to follow and understand your ideas. Just as in writing, your notes can help you to organise and link your ideas in a logical way.

2.1  Watch Melanie giving her talk. As you listen, look back at the task in 1.2.

- 1 How does Melanie begin her talk?
- 2 Fill in the blanks in Melanie's first sentences.

You _____ a time when I _____.
To that aim, _____ Aniseto.

- 3 How does she use the information in the question to help organise her ideas?

One way of linking your ideas is by using words and phrases like *after that, because of this, but, also*, etc. We also connect ideas using pronouns.

2.2 Below there are some examples of good coherence from Melanie's talk. The words and phrases she uses to connect her ideas are in bold. Complete extracts 1–8 with endings A–H.

- | |
|---|
| A I decided to take English lessons.
B I helped him.
C I could help him a little.
D he couldn't speak English at all.
E it wasn't just for him, it was also for me.
F it wasn't a good thing.
G he was very friendly.
H I've chosen to talk about Aniseto. |
|---|


- 1 You asked me to describe a time when I helped someone.
To that aim ...
- 2 I went to visit my uncle just as a tourist *but then ...*
- 3 I met a Venezuelan boy *and ...*
- 4 I'm not very good at English *but ...*
- 5 *So, that's it, that's how ...*
- 6 I wanted to do that *because ...*
- 7 I could practise my English *too, so ...*
- 8 Some people say that *now* he has a French accent. *so maybe ...*

2.3 Watch again to check your answers.

2.4 It is important to use a variety of language. Do you think Melanie uses a variety of connecting words and phrases or does she repeat the same ones?

2.5 Melanie also connects her ideas using pronouns. Look again at the sentence endings A–H and highlight all of the pronouns.

Fluency refers to the speed of your delivery and how hesitant you are. Candidates who are hesitant often say *er ...* a lot.

2.6  **Video 11** Watch Saida's talk and think about coherence and fluency.

- 1 What words and phrases does Saida use to link her ideas?
- 2 What other connecting words could Saida have used?
- 3 Does she use pronouns?
- 4 Does Saida talk fluently, or is she quite hesitant?

3 Organising your notes and your talk

Making notes can help you to plan your ideas and to give you a fresh start during your talk. Your notes will help you to

- start you thinking about the topic.
- organise your ideas (improve your coherence).
- keep going during your talk (improve your fluency).

3.1 Read this Part 2 task and look at two different candidates' notes.

Describe a person who has been an important influence in your life.
You should say
who this person is and how long you have known him or her
why you chose this person
how this person has influenced your life
and explain how you feel about him or her.


Candidate 1

Who and how long? *older brother / 36 years old / a lawyer / lives in America / not see often / known him all my life*

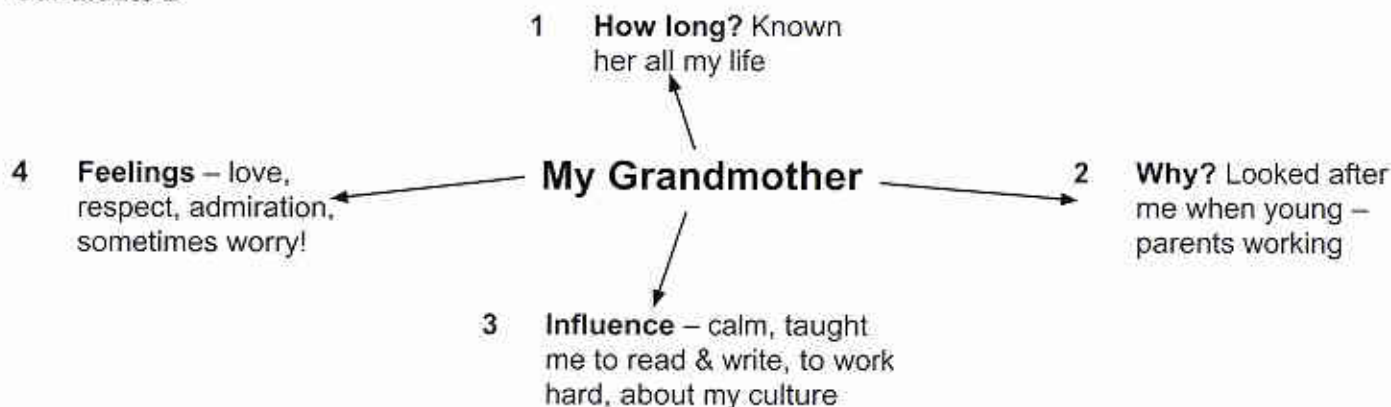
Why I chose him *when young had problems at school / learning difficulties / his dream – to be a lawyer / failed many times / finally succeeded*

How he has influenced my life *taught me to keep going / have a clear goal / don't give up / last year: I failed important test / disappointed but didn't give up / trying again soon*

My feelings *grateful / admiration / proud*

 **Test Tip** When you are making your notes, try not to write too much. It is important to use this time to think and note down ideas or words, but you also need to be able to quickly look at your notes during your talk and easily find your next idea. Try to find a way that helps you do this (e.g. organise your ideas clockwise on your page, rather than in a random order).

Candidate 2



3.2 Think about your own notes.

- 1 When you make notes, do you write them
 - A in a list?
 - B scattered randomly on the page?
 - C in a mind map or diagram?
- 2 Do you write
 - A single words?
 - B long phrases?
 - C whole sentences?
- 3 Try to decide which style of notes would be most helpful for you during the exam.

3.3 Use the two sets of notes in 3.1 to give a talk about the different people. Use all of the details, and time yourself. Concentrate on connecting your ideas and use the ideas below to help you.

- I've decided to talk about ...
- I've known him/her ...
- I chose him/her because ...
- I think s/he has influenced my life by ...
- When I think of him/her, I feel ...

3.4 Choose the style of notes you feel most comfortable with and write detailed notes about a person who has influenced you. Then, give a talk about him or her. Make sure you time yourself. Record or video yourself if possible.

3.5 Were your notes helpful? Did you write too much or not enough?

3.6 Answer the rounding-off question below. Try to expand on your answers in the same way as Sanem and Emanuele did.

- Who do you think has the most influence in your life: your family or your friends? Why?