



Cambridge English: Preliminary for Schools Speaking

Sample test with examiner's comments

This document explains the *Cambridge English: Preliminary (PET) for Schools* Speaking test. It accompanies [this video](#), where you can see Victoria, from France, and Chiara, from Italy, take a Speaking test. These candidates both do quite well in the test, and Chiara is generally stronger.

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About the Cambridge English: Preliminary for Schools Speaking test

The Speaking test lasts about 10 to 12 minutes. You take the test with another student. There are two examiners in the room. One examiner talks to you and the other examiner listens to you. Both the examiners give you marks.

Part 1

The examiners introduce themselves and then one examiner asks you and your partner to say your names and spell them. The examiner then asks you questions about yourself, your daily life, interests, etc.

Part 2

The examiner asks you to talk about something together and gives you a drawing to help you.

Part 3

You each have a chance to talk by yourselves. The examiner gives you a colour photograph to look at and asks you to talk about it. When you have finished talking, the examiner gives your partner a different photograph to look at and to talk about.

Part 4

The examiner asks you and your partner to say more about the subject of the photographs in Part 3. You may be asked to give your opinion or to talk about something that has happened to you.



How the examiners assess your speaking

There are two examiners in the room. The **interlocutor** speaks to you, and the **assessor** just listens.

As you do the test, the **assessor** focuses on these areas of your English:

Grammar and Vocabulary

Are you using a range of grammatical structures and vocabulary? Are you using these structures and vocabulary correctly? Are you using a range of vocabulary which is appropriate for familiar topics?

Discourse Management

Are you using both long and short answers, depending on the task? Is everything you say relevant to the task? Are your ideas expressed clearly and easy to understand? Are you using some language to link and organise your ideas?

Pronunciation

You don't need to have an English accent, but it is important to be clear. Are you pronouncing individual sounds clearly? Are you placing stress on the right parts of words and on the right words in sentences? Does your voice go up and down at the right times?

Interactive Communication

Are you able to interact well with the other candidate? Are you listening to the other candidate and answering in a way that makes sense? Are you able to add ideas to the discussion and help keep it going with your partner?

The **interlocutor** focuses on your **Global Achievement**. This is about your general performance. How well can you communicate about the topics you are given? Are you using language which is right for the *Cambridge English: Preliminary* level? Don't worry if you sometimes make mistakes or hesitate when you are speaking, as long as your ideas are clear.

When your test is complete, the examiners give you marks for each of these things: Grammar and Vocabulary, Discourse Management, Pronunciation, Interactive Communication and Global Achievement. The marks are for what you do over the whole Speaking test, not for each part of the test. The examiners give you marks for your own performance – they don't compare you with the other candidate.



Comments on the test video

Part 1	
Victoria	Chiara
<p>Victoria answers all the questions in this part, mostly with short answers. It would have been good to make some of her answers a bit longer.</p> <p>Occasionally there are grammatical errors, for example 'Yes, I love ... she has study English 20 years in England before'.</p> <p>Her pronunciation is generally clear.</p> <p>Victoria often uses 'Er' to start a sentence; it's OK to do this sometimes while you think what to say, but try not to use it too often.</p>	<p>Chiara gives clear and accurate answers in this part, mixing shorter and longer answers well, for example 'Yes, we have three hours a week ... a lot'.</p> <p>Her answer to the question about her favourite subject begins 'Er ...', which gives her time to think. She then gives an answer which she develops well. Using 'Er' or 'Well' can sometimes be helpful to give you time to think of your answer, as long as you don't do it too much.</p> <p>Chiara's grammar and vocabulary are accurate and her pronunciation is usually clear.</p>
<p>Part 1 tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practise giving information about yourself. • You can give short answers, but it is good to give some longer answers too. • Don't memorise answers for the test, as they don't sound very natural. 	

Part 2	
Victoria	Chiara
<p>Victoria begins this part by talking about one of the pictures and giving a reason why it might be a good choice. After that she makes suggestions, but she often doesn't extend her ideas, and Chiara does this for her. Although she often agrees with Chiara and sometimes repeats, for example 'yeah sign', 'we can sign and write some things', she does not add many ideas to the discussion and her contributions become shorter and less frequent.</p> <p>Even if your partner talks a lot, you should make sure you contribute enough and show the examiner your ability. Victoria does not always do this.</p>	<p>Chiara agrees with Victoria's first point and then adds another, also giving a reason. She invites Victoria's opinions and develops the discussion by using a variety of questions, for example 'What do you think about the DVD of tennis? ... I don't know what you think about the racket ...'. She also agrees with her partner: 'yeah exactly ... it would be perfect ...'</p> <p>It is important to give your partner time to answer your questions and develop their answers. Chiara does not always do this.</p> <p>Chiara suggests that the photo would be 'the best one to give her', but it is too soon in the discussion to make a decision. She then tries to continue the discussion.</p>

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<p>There are a few examples of good discourse management, for example when she answers a question appropriately, saying 'I don't know if it's a good gift, because she ...'.</p> <p>Her grammar is sometimes accurate, for example 'I think the photo is a good present', but there are also basic errors, for example '... every people ... a lot of bag'.</p> <p>Victoria's pronunciation is generally easy to understand.</p>	<p>Chiara's language is at times well organised, for example '... so she can put all the things she needs for tennis ... maybe she can use it while she ...'.</p> <p>Her grammar is generally accurate, with occasional errors, for example 'the ball are', and she uses appropriate vocabulary with occasional errors such as 'training tennis'.</p> <p>Chiara's pronunciation is always clear.</p>
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<p>Part 2 tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss each picture together before you try to make a decision. • Don't make a decision too quickly (as Victoria and Chiara did), as it will be difficult to talk about the task in an organised way. • Listen to your partner and respond to what they say before adding your own ideas. • You can ask your partner questions to develop the discussion.

Part 3	
Victoria	Chiara
<p>Victoria makes a good start and begins a well-organised description of her pictures: 'In the photograph we've got two girls; one is singing ... another is playing guitar'. However, she quickly starts to repeat the same things and then stops after about 50 seconds. To continue for the full minute, she could have described everything else she can see as well as the main image in the picture.</p> <p>She makes some grammatical errors, for example 'they having fun ... one of the girl ... there is many colours'.</p> <p>Victoria's pronunciation is generally clear, except for a few words.</p>	<p>Chiara describes her pictures well and finds a lot to say. The examiner stops her after 1 minute (she still has more to say), but it is not a problem if this happens.</p> <p>Her description uses linking words and so it is easy to follow: 'I think they like because they are smiling ... they have a guitar so maybe ... because this seems like ...'.</p> <p>There is a lot of accurate grammar, for example 'they are dancing in the middle of the street ...'. There are also a few errors, for example 'two couple ... looking them ... behind them are playing'.</p> <p>Chiara uses a good range of vocabulary, for example 'clapping', with occasional errors, for example 'making photo ... professionist ...'.</p> <p>Chiara's pronunciation is clear.</p>



Part 3 tips

- Practise describing pictures for 1 minute so that you know how much you can say.
- Think about how you can organise what you say in 1 minute.
- Remember to describe everything in the picture, not just the people.

Part 4

Victoria

Victoria starts well after both the [first](#) and [second](#) questions in this part and makes some contributions, but they are often short. Sometimes she just agrees briefly with Chiara, without developing her ideas, for example 'yeah I like pop music ... always always ... yeah not like pop music'.

[She sometimes repeats Chiara's ideas](#), for example 'Yeah we have a lot of fun, it's very nice'. It's OK to do this sometimes, but you should also add something new, or ask your partner a question to help the interaction.

It is difficult for the examiner to know if Victoria can produce longer contributions, or how well she can organise and link her ideas.

Victoria uses some simple grammar accurately, for example '[I don't like classic music, you know](#) ...' but there are also some grammatical errors, for example 'there is no really singer ...'.

Victoria's pronunciation is clear.

Chiara

[Chiara responds to Victoria's ideas, adds her own and asks questions](#), for example 'Me too; when I'm with my friends I always, like, dance and sing out loud. It seems like we're crazy, but we really like it. Do you like pop music?'. This is a good example of effective interaction in this part.

Chiara's contributions in this part are relevant. [She links her ideas clearly and makes longer contributions](#), for example 'Me too; like, sometimes you can hear it when you are relax or, like, stay in the bed, but every day or every time you want to listen to music it's too boring'.

Chiara's grammar is generally accurate, for example 'I've never heard jazz... oh so you don't sing when there's jazz music?'. There are also some errors, for example 'I don't like it too'.

She uses a good range of vocabulary, for example 'electronic music ... invent ... screaming' with only a few errors.

Chiara's pronunciation is mostly clear; there are a few words which are not clear: 'peaceful', 'word'.

Part 4 tips

- Make sure you listen to your partner, respond to what they say and add your own ideas.
- Try to give longer contributions and invite your partner to respond.
- Remember you can use examples and/or reasons to extend what you say.



Overall	
Victoria	Chiara
<p>Grammar and Vocabulary Victoria produces some accurate grammar and vocabulary, but there are also some errors.</p> <p>Discourse Management Victoria's contributions are generally relevant and clear, but to get a higher mark for this she would need to say more and show she can organise her ideas logically.</p> <p>Pronunciation Her language is generally easy to understand.</p> <p>Interactive Communication She communicates well with her partner at the start of each part, but this does not continue. To improve her mark here she would need to contribute much more to the interaction by finishing her sentences, developing her ideas and inviting her partner to respond.</p> <p>Global Achievement Victoria seems to be able to communicate about the topics, but she would be given a higher mark if she contributed more.</p>	<p>Grammar and Vocabulary Chiara's language is often accurate and she uses a good range of vocabulary for the tasks.</p> <p>Discourse Management Her language is mostly clear and easy to follow, and she links her ideas well. Occasionally there is a little repetition, but her contributions are extended and relevant.</p> <p>Pronunciation Her pronunciation is almost always clear.</p> <p>Interactive Communication Chiara communicates well; she interacts with her partner well, responding and initiating without needing any support.</p> <p>Global Achievement Chiara manages to communicate well throughout the test. Her language is almost always clear.</p>