



Teaching Tips

From Cambridge Examiners

Reading and Use of English

Writing

Listening

Speaking

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Reading and Use of English

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English

Parts 1 - 4

- 1 The texts in Parts 1, 2 and 3 all have titles. Encourage your students to pay attention to each title as it will indicate the main theme of the text.
- 2 Encourage your students to read through each text (Parts 1, 2 and 3) carefully before beginning to answer the questions so that they have a clear idea of what it is about.
- 3 In Parts 2 and 4, there may be more than one permissible answer for a question. However, students should only give one answer for a question. If they give two answers, and one of them is incorrect, they will not be given a mark. If they want to change an answer, they should rub it out.
- 4 All parts of the paper have detailed instructions and completed examples. These should be studied carefully so that your students know what kind of answers they are expected to give and how they should show them on the answer sheet.
- 5 Your students should be encouraged to read extensively so that they build up a wide vocabulary and become familiar with the many uses of different structures. This should enable them to deal with a range of lexical items and grammatical structures in a variety of text types.
- 6 When studying for the paper, it will be useful for your students to refer to dictionaries and grammar books. However, they should also develop strategies for operating independently or reference books (by, for example, guessing the meaning of unknown words from the context) as they are not permitted to take dictionaries into the exam with them.
- 7 Students should develop an efficient personal system for recording the new vocabulary they should learn. They should record as much detail as possible, including information about complementation and collocations of the words learned.
- 8 Encourage your students to plan their time carefully and not to spend too long on any one part of the test. They should try to make sure that they have a few minutes at the end of the test to check through their answers. They can do the various parts of the test in any order, but it may be better to do them in the order of the question paper so as to avoid the possibility of putting answers in the wrong sections of the answer sheet.
- 9 Remind your students to check the spelling of their answers as incorrect spelling will lose them marks.
- 10 Remind your students that handwriting should be clear so that it can be read easily by the markers.
- 11 Give your students practice in completing the answer sheet. When writing their answers on the answer sheet, they must be careful to make sure that they put the answer by the appropriate question number. This is especially important if they leave some questions unanswered. They must also be sure to write in CAPITAL LETTERS in Parts 2, 3 and 4.

Parts 5 - 8

- 12** Your students should read as widely as possible in both class and at home. This will enable them to become familiar with a wide range of language. In class encourage your students to interact fully with each text by focusing on pre-reading questions. This will help train them in prediction techniques.
- 13** It is helpful to introduce a programme of reading at home. As part of the weekly homework assignments, an idea might be to introduce a reading scheme which involves the students in providing verbal or written reviews on the texts they have read. These could include: unabridged short stories or novels, newspaper and magazine articles, non-fiction, etc. Where possible, your students should be encouraged to follow up on their hobbies and interests by reading magazines or looking on the internet for articles in English about sport, computers, fashion, etc. Research in these areas could also lead to a series of short class talks or articles for a class project. A class or school magazine may also encourage interest in reading.
- 14** It is important to make sure your students are familiar with the format of the Reading component. It will be helpful to spend time going through sample papers. The Reading component has a standard structure and format so that students will know what to expect in each part of the paper.
- 15** Students should be encouraged to read a text without thinking that they need to understand every word. They are not allowed to use a dictionary in the examination and they should be trained to deduce the meaning of unknown words from the context. Students often spend time worrying about the text at word level rather than trying to get a more global view of what it is about. Focus your students' attention on understanding the overall function and message of texts or sections of texts.
- 16** Your students need to read the instructions, title and sub-title of each reading text carefully. This is meant to give them an idea of what to expect from the text; it will tell them where the pieces come from and/or what the text is about. If there is a visual, it is usually included to help with a reference in the text that the students may not be familiar with, for example, a photo of a certain animal or place.
- 17** It is important that your students are familiar with the instructions on the front page of the question paper, and for each part of the test. Your students should also be familiar with the technique of indicating their answer on the separate answer sheet so that they can do this quickly and accurately. Students need to be shown how to do this and have practice doing this in a timed exercise. They must record their answers on the answer sheet.
- 18** When your students are familiar with the different task types, it is a good idea to discuss which part(s) take them longer to complete. Following this discussion you can suggest possible timings for each task. Your students need to be reminded that Parts 5, 6 and 7 are allocated 2 marks per question, while Part 8 is allocated 1 mark per question. Students at this level need to process large quantities of text in a defined time-scale and therefore need practice in planning their time carefully.

The eight parts of the Reading and Use of English paper

Reading and Use of English Part 1: Multiple choice cloze

The main focus is on vocabulary, e.g. idioms, collocations, fixed phrases, complementation, phrasal verbs, semantic precision.

Part 1 consists of a text in which there are 8 gaps (plus one gap as an example). Each gap represents a missing word or phrase. The text is followed by 8 sets of four words or phrases, each set corresponding to a gap. Candidates have to choose which one of the four words or phrases in the set fills the gap correctly.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 1

- 1 When studying vocabulary in preparation for the paper, your students should pay attention to collocation, the shades of meaning differentiating sets of similar words, and complementation (e.g. whether words are followed by a certain preposition, or by a gerund or an infinitive, etc.).
- 2 Advise your students to consider all the options carefully before deciding on an answer. Some of the options may be very tempting, but only one will be semantically and grammatically correct in that particular context.

Reading and Use of English Part 2: Open cloze

The main focus is on awareness and control of grammar with some focus on vocabulary.

Part 2 consists of a text in which there are 8 gaps (plus one gap as an example). Candidates are required to draw on their knowledge of the structure of the language and understanding of the text in order to fill the gaps. In this part, as there are no sets of words from which to choose the answers, candidates have to think of a word which will fill the gap correctly.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 2

- 1** Any preparation task which promotes grammatical accuracy is useful, especially those which focus on verb forms and the use of auxiliary and modal verbs, pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, modifiers and determiners.
- 2** Remind your students that only one word is required for each answer. Answers of more than one word will not earn the mark.
- 3** Some gaps in this part can be filled by referring just to the immediate phrase or sentence, but others will require understanding of the paragraph or whole text.

Reading and Use of English Part 3: Word formation

The main focus is on vocabulary, in particular the use of affixation, internal changes and compounding in word formation.

Part 3 consists of a text containing 8 gaps (plus one gap as an example). At the end of some of the lines, and separated from the text, there is a stem word in capital letters. Candidates need to form an appropriate word from given stem words to fill each gap.

The focus on this task is primarily lexical, though an understanding of structure is also required. It tests the candidates' knowledge of how prefixes, suffixes, internal changes and compounds are used in forming words. Candidates may be required to demonstrate understanding of the text beyond sentence level.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 3

- 1 Preparation tasks which promote familiarity with the principles of word formation (use of prefixes, suffixes, internal changes, compounding) will be helpful.
- 2 Remind your students that they need to understand the context of each gap in the text to decide which class of word (noun, verb, adjective or adverb) is required.
- 3 Sometimes a negative prefix will be required. There is usually at least one word requiring a prefix in each Part 3 task, so advise your students to look out for these.

Reading and Use of English Part 4: Key word transformations

The focus is on grammar, vocabulary and collocation.

Part 4 consists of 6 questions (plus an example). Each question contains three parts: a lead-in sentence, a key word, and a second sentence of which only the beginning and end are given. Candidates have to fill the gap in the second sentence so that the completed sentence is similar in meaning to the lead-in sentence. The gap must be filled with between three and six words, one of which must be the key word. The key word must not be changed in any way.

In this part of the paper the focus is both lexical and grammatical and a range of structures is tested. The ability to express a message in different ways shows flexibility and resource in the use of language.

The mark scheme splits the answers into two parts and candidates gain one mark for each part which is correct.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 4

- 1 Transformation tasks which increase awareness of expressions with parallel or synonymous meanings, and develop flexibility in the use of language, are good preparation for this part.
- 2 Remind your students that the key word **MUST** be used in each answer and that the key word may **NOT** be changed in any way.
- 3 Also remind your students that their answer must **NOT** exceed six words. Contractions count as two words.

Reading and Use of English Part 5: Multiple choice

In this part, there is an emphasis on the understanding of a long text, including detail, opinion, tone, purpose, main idea, implication, attitude, and also text organisation features such as exemplification, comparison and reference.

Part 5 consists of one long text, drawn from a variety of sources which include fiction. The text is followed by six 4-option multiple-choice questions which are presented in the same order as the information in the text so that candidates can follow the development of the text.

This task tests detailed understanding, including opinions and attitudes expressed; the ability to distinguish between, for example, apparently similar viewpoints, outcomes or reasons. Candidates should be able to deduce meaning from context and interpret the text for inference and style. They should also be able to understand text organisation features such as exemplification, comparison and referencing.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 5

- 1 Your students should familiarise themselves with a wide range of sources, registers, topics and lexical fields. Preparation should include practice in reading a text quickly for a first overall impression, followed by close reading of the text in order to prevent any misunderstanding.
- 2 Your students should read the question and underline the part of the text which answers the question. They should then look at the options and decide which one is the closest in answering the question. Students often make the mistake of only briefly referring to the text when answering a question, and just choosing an answer which sounds plausible or reflects their own ideas. It is often useful to ask each student to justify their answer to the rest of the class.
- 3 Ask your students to check the questions which take the form of incomplete sentences very carefully; the whole sentence has to match what is written in the text and not just the phrase in option A, B, C or D.
- 4 Make sure that your students read texts in which opinion, attitudes and feelings are expressed, e.g. interviews with famous people talking about how they began their careers and what made them successful, or short stories about how characters feel about the situation they find themselves in. Activities which focus on recognising and evaluating attitude and opinion and which enhance your students' abilities to infer underlying meaning will also be helpful.
- 5 Your students should be given practice in text organisation features. For example, there may be a question which tests the ability to differentiate between a main idea and an example, or one which asks the students to connect an abstract argument with a concrete illustration. Items may test comparison and contrast, both literal and metaphorical or the understanding of cohesive devices and structures.
- 6 It is important that your students avoid just matching words in the text with words in the question or option.

Reading and Use of English Part 6: Cross textual multiple-matching

In this part, there is an emphasis on identifying opinions and attitudes expressed across texts.

Candidates must read across texts to match a prompt to elements in the texts. The prompts require candidates to read across the four texts to understand the opinions and attitudes expressed in order to identify agreement and disagreement between the writers. The items only provide information on the subject of the opinion, not the opinion itself: this is for the candidate to identify. Candidates may need to identify an opinion expressed in one of the texts and then identify which other text shares or contradicts this opinion or they may need to identify which differs from the other three in terms of an expressed opinion.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 6

- 1 Your students should familiarise themselves with texts which give different views on a related theme – such as different reviews of the same book or four experts giving their opinion on a subject.
- 2 The texts will have an academic flavour without presuming in-depth subject-specific knowledge, so practice in dealing with both the complexity of vocabulary and the structures such as noun phrases commonly found in academic texts will be useful.
- 3 Students should be encouraged to read the texts first of all to determine the general attitude of each writer to the subject under discussion. Underlying the part or parts of a text which give an opinion or attitude and then identifying whether this is negative or positive is helpful.
- 4 Your students should then look at each question and underline the key words. If a question is asking for ‘a similar or different opinion to’ for example, writer C, on a subject, they should underline what aspect of C’s opinion is being tested and then identify and underline that option in C. The task will then involve looking at all the other writers and identifying the similar or different opinion.

Reading and Use of English Part 7 Gapped text

In this part, there is an emphasis on understanding how texts are structured and the ability to follow text development.

Part 7 consists of one long gapped text from which six paragraphs of equal length have been removed and placed in jumbled order after the text, together with a seventh paragraph which does not fit in any of the gaps. The text is usually from non-fiction sources (including journalism). This part tests comprehension of text structure, cohesion, coherence, and global meaning.

Candidates are required to decide from where in the text each paragraph has been removed. Each paragraph may be used only once, and there is one paragraph that candidates do not need to use.

Candidates need to read the gapped text first in order to gain an overall idea of the structure and the meaning of the text, and to notice carefully the information and ideas before and after each gap as well as throughout the whole of the gapped text. They should then decide which paragraphs fit the gaps, remembering that each letter may only be used once and that there is one paragraph which they will not need to use.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 7

- 1 Your students should be encouraged to read the text as a whole, and not to focus on each gap separately. They need to understand that getting an idea of the structure and understanding that development of the theme of the text are both important prerequisites to doing the task. Students frequently make the wrong choices by selecting an option which fits the text before the gap, and neglecting to check that the text after the gap follows on smoothly.
- 2 Sometimes your students will need to choose carefully between two paragraphs as possible answers and will need practice in making decisions about which is the most logical paragraph to fill the particular gap. Give your students plenty of practice in recognising a wide range of linguistic devices which mark the logical and cohesive development of a text, e.g. words and phrases indicating time, cause and effect, contrasting arguments, paraphrasing of vocabulary, use of pronouns, repetition and the use of verb tenses.
- 3 You should alert your students to the dangers of approaching the gapped-text task as an exercise requiring them merely to identify extracts from the text and sections in the text containing the same words, including names and dates. The task is designed to test understanding of the development of ideas, opinion and events rather than the recognition of individual words.

Reading and Use of English Part 8: Multiple matching

In this part, there is an emphasis on locating specific information, detail, opinion and attitude in a text or a group of short texts.

Part 8 consists of one or two sets of questions followed by a single page of text: the text may be continuous, or divided into sections, or consist of a group of short texts. In total, there are ten questions and four to six options.

Candidates are required to match the questions with the relevant information from the text. To do this, they need to understand detail, attitude or opinion in the question, and locate a section of text where that idea is expressed, discounting ideas in other sections which may appear similar, but which do not reflect the whole of the question accurately. Some of the options may be correct for more than one question and there may be more than one correct answer to some questions. If so, the instructions to candidates will say this.

In addition to the use of letters, e.g. A - F, the range of possible answers may be presented in the form of a list of, for example, names or people or places, titles of books or films or types of occupation.

Teaching tips for Reading and Use of English Part 8

- 1 Your students will need practice in skimming and scanning texts in order to prepare for the multiple-matching task. They should practise scanning texts for the particular information required and not feel that they must read every word in the text. It is also important that they have enough practice in timing their reading.
- 2 Remind your students that the questions for the multiple-matching task are printed before the text so that the candidates know what to look for in the text.
- 3 Draw your students' attention to the particular wording of questions, since these are intended to lead the reader to specific information, and to disregard irrelevant information. It can be helpful for students to underline key words in the questions as this helps when trying to find the information in the text which provides the answers.
- 4 Sometimes a question may consist of two parts, for example: a writer's surprise at being confronted by a difficult situation. Students may find evidence of a difficult situation in a section of the text but fail to realise that it may be the wrong section as no surprise is expressed in that part. It is important that your students understand that they need to find a paraphrase of the whole question, not just one part.
- 5 Discourage your students from selecting an answer solely on the basis of matching a word in the question with a word in the text, since careful reading of a particular part of the text is required to ensure an accurate match in terms of meaning.
- 6 Give your students plenty of opportunity to read articles and reviews where different people discuss work, books, hobbies, etc. Ask your students to prepare their own questions, perhaps as a homework exercise to be used later in class. This will help them gain a better understanding of how the test is constructed and will also give them some insight into what clues they need to look for when doing this part.

Writing

Teaching tips for Writing

- 1 Candidates write most effectively when they choose tasks and topics suited to their interests and experience. When preparing your students for the examination, it is important to make sure they are familiar with the paper and the range of task types and topics. Your students will benefit from guidance on the particular features of each task type, and on appropriate style and tone for different purposes and target readers.
- 2 Train your students to read the questions carefully, to underline the most important parts, and then to plan an answer which addresses all the points required by the task. This will help them produce well-structured and appropriately balanced answers which deal adequately with each point they need to address.
- 3 Remind your students that they should not reproduce a piece of writing that they have done in class on the same topic. It is essential that students fully address the specific task in the exam, and a pre-learned answer is very unlikely to meet the exact requirements.
- 4 Your students will need to practise developing points as fully as possible in order to demonstrate a range of structures and vocabulary, and in order to communicate more complex ideas where appropriate to the task.
- 5 Linking ideas effectively is also something your students will need guidance with. The flow of ideas in their writing should be logical and easy for the reader to follow. At the level of this Writing paper, this can include, but should not be limited to, overt linking words and phrases. Using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns is also important.
- 6 Your students should be encouraged to use a range of complex language where appropriate. If they make mistakes when using complex language, the examiner will give credit for the attempt, provided that the mistakes do not impede communication.
- 7 The time allowed for the Writing paper is designed to be sufficient for candidates to make brief plans and then write two responses. It is not designed to include time for other activities such as making fair copies or counting words. Each question on the Writing paper carries equal marks so your students should practise planning the time they spend on each question carefully.
- 8 Candidates should write legibly so that their answers can be marked, but the quality of their handwriting is not assessed in the test. It is not important in the exam whether candidates' writing is joined up or not, or whether they write in upper or lower case characters.
- 9 Remind your students that in the exam they must write their answers on the lined pages in the separate Answer Sheets for Writing. There is no need to make a "fair copy" of a response, and copying what has already been written is a waste of time in the exam. If a candidate needs to make an alteration to what they have written, they should cross out the relevant words. The Writing Examiners will then ignore those words. Crossing out and making legible alterations will not have a negative effect on a candidate's mark.

- 10 Counting words wastes time in an examination and leads to clumsy alterations to what a candidate has already written. Students need practice in writing tasks within the word limit so that they know when they have written an appropriate amount.
- 11 Spelling errors and faulty punctuation are not specifically penalised, but students should be aware that mistakes in these areas can impede communication and/or have a negative effect on the target reader. Remind them of the importance of checking their work for such errors.
- 12 US American and other varieties of English usage and spelling are acceptable.
- 13 Make sure your students have practice in answering questions without the use of dictionaries. Dictionaries are not allowed in the examination.

The two parts of the Writing paper

Candidates are asked to write 220 – 260 words for Part 1 and 220 – 260 words for Part 2.

Writing approximately the right number of words is an integral part of task achievement. If significantly fewer words are written, this is likely to mean that the task has not been successfully completed. If significantly more words are written, there is likely to be irrelevance, repetition of ideas, or poor organisation.

Writing Part 1: Essay

An essay in the Writing paper is usually written for an academic tutor and may be written as a follow-up to a class activity, such as attending a seminar or watching a documentary. The main purpose of the task is to underline relevant salient issues on the stated topic, and to support an argument with subsidiary points and reasons. An essay should be well organised, with an introduction, clear development and an appropriate conclusion. It should hold the target reader's attention and communicate complex ideas using an appropriate range of vocabulary and structures.

Task format

There will be no choice of tasks in this Part.

The task will outline a topic which is to be written about as a follow-up to an academic activity, such as attending a panel discussion or watching a documentary. A set of notes on the topic will be provided, consisting of three bullet points plus three short opinions related to the bullet points.

Task type and focus

Candidates are required to write an essay based on two of the bullet points. They will be asked to explain which of the two points is more important in a given respect, and to give reasons for their opinion.

The main purpose of the essay task is to allow candidates to underline relevant salient issues on a topic, and to support an argument with subsidiary points and reasons. An essay should be well organised, with an introduction, clear development, and an appropriate conclusion.

The essay task is constructed to enable candidates to demonstrate their ability to write at this level. Candidates should be careful to read every part of the task and not to omit any required development of the topic.

Teaching tips for Writing Part 1

1. Train your students to read the whole of the task before they move on to planning their answer. They will need practice in reading the input, looking carefully at all the instructions, and then going on to decide how to organise and develop the information.
2. Candidates should select two of the bullet points and base their essay on those two points. They should not attempt to discuss more than two of the bullet points, as this would lead to the essay being less developed than required.
3. Candidates may, if they wish, use the opinions in the task input to help develop their essay, but they should do so in their own words as far as possible. No credit is given for language which has been obviously lifted from the question. Your students should therefore be given practice in using their own words when using information from the input.

Writing Part 2: Letter, proposal, report or review

A letter is written in response to the situation given in the task. Letters in the Writing paper will require a response which is consistently appropriate for the specified target reader. Candidates can expect to be asked to write letters to, e., the editor of a newspaper or magazine, to the director of a company, to a school or college principal, or to a peer. Letters will not be limited to a narrative element, but will also require candidates to carry out other functions, e.g. to reassure somebody, to correct a misunderstanding, or to justify a course of action.

A proposal may be written for a peer group (such as colleagues or club members), or for a supervisor (such as a boss or a college principal). Candidates will be expected to make one or more suggestions, supported by factual information and evaluation, in order to persuade the reader of a course of action. Students should work on functional language for evaluating and for making suggestions, and will need to be able to use a range of persuasive language.

A report may be written for a superior (e.g. a boss or college principal) or a peer group (e.g. club members or colleagues). The content of a report is to some extent factual and draws on the prompt material, but there will be scope for candidates to make use of their own ideas and experience. Candidates will be asked to do more than describe a situation; they may be asked to evaluate to what extent a particular aim has been achieved, or to suggest an alternative course of action.

A review may be about a book, magazine, film, play or concert; it may also be about a product or a service. A review in the Writing paper does not merely ask for a general description of the thing reviewed, but requires an evaluation of its suitability for a particular purpose or audience. The target reader is specified in the task, and candidates should be encouraged to use this information when choosing appropriate ideas and language to include in their response.

Task format

Part 2 consists of three tasks from which candidates must choose one. Each task in Part 2 specifies a context, a purpose for writing and a target reader. Attention to every element in the question is essential for an effective response, and candidates should be careful to choose language which is appropriate to the chosen task.

Task type and focus

Part 2 tasks may include any of the following: a letter, a proposal, a report or a review. The different task types are intended to provide frameworks in which candidates can put together and develop their ideas on a topic, with a specific purpose for writing and target reader in mind.

Candidates will be expected to show awareness of the style and tone required by a task, and must be prepared to demonstrate appropriate use of two or more of the following functions as specified in the task: describing, evaluating, hypothesising, persuading, expressing opinion, comparing, giving advice, justifying and judging priorities.

Teaching tips for Writing Part 2

- 1** It is important that your students familiarise themselves with the different task types that appear on the paper, and are confident that they know the differences between them. Since not all task types appear on every paper, it is important for them to have experience of writing all the different types.
- 2** It is worth giving your students some practice in selecting which task to do in Part 2. They should be encouraged to look at the task types and topic areas and to consider which register, functions, grammatical structures and vocabulary are required by each task. They can then select the task which they feel they can complete most successfully.
- 3** Your students need to think carefully about who the target reader is for each task and try to write in an appropriate way. Is the target reader somebody they know, or a stranger, or someone in a position of authority? Do they need to present difficult information, or are they trying to persuade somebody to do something? It is important to have a balance between the functions required by the task and the relationship with the target reader. A pre-learned response on a similar topic is unlikely to meet the requirements of the specific task in the exam.

Listening

Teaching tips for Listening

- 1** The instructions for each task are given on the question paper and are also heard on the recording. This includes information about the speakers, the topic and the context of the text. Before each text is heard, candidates will have time to read through and think about the questions. The length of this preparation time is indicated on the tape. Candidates should use this time to familiarise themselves with the task and begin to make predictions about what they are likely to hear.
- 2** A variety of voices, styles of delivery and accents will be heard in each Listening paper to reflect the various contexts presented in the recordings.
- 3** Classroom discussion activities in the target language provide an invaluable source of listening practice. Students' ability to understand what they hear can improve dramatically if they are regularly exposed to audio material: the more English they hear, delivered at natural speed in a variety of voices and contexts, the more confident they will become in extracting key information and gist meaning, even when they are not able to decode every single word or phrase. These skills are essential to learners at this level.
- 4** A daily learning programme which includes a 'hearing English' component from audio recordings will help prepare your students for the Listening test. Your students should be exposed to varieties of English, to speakers of different ages and backgrounds and to the language of different contexts, e.g. formal announcements, lectures, less formal talks, informal discussions, interviews, etc.
- 5** Your students should be encouraged to deal with texts in different ways depending on the nature of the listening task. For example, they might listen to a text once for gist, producing a summary of the main idea or attitudes expressed. They could then be asked to listen to the same text again, this time retrieving specific information.
- 6** Make your students aware of how much they themselves bring to a listening task from their own experience and world knowledge. The instruction provides information about the speaker, topic and context. Encourage your students to use this information to help them tune into the text quickly when they hear it. Remind your students that they should use the pause before each recording to read through the task carefully, so they are prepared for what they hear. Encourage them to use the task on the question paper to guide them through the listening text and keep their place as they answer the questions.
- 7** Remind your students that in long texts, the questions come in the same order as the information in the recording, and therefore reflect the structure of the text. Help them to identify discourse markers, interviewers' questions and other textual features that structure a text and are often reflected in the layout and wording of the task on the page.
- 8** Remind your students that in sentence-completion tasks they should write their answers clearly in CAPITAL LETTERS.
- 9** Encourage your students to answer all the questions, even if they are not sure, as there are no marks deducted for wrong answers and it may be that they have understood more than they think.

The four parts of the Listening paper

Listening Part 1: Multiple choice

This part tests the candidates' ability to listen to short dialogues and show understanding of gist, detail, function, agreement and course of action, as well as the speakers' purpose, feelings, attitudes and opinions.

Part 1 consists of three unrelated short texts. These texts are approximately 1 minute in length and involve more two speakers. Texts are taken from a wide range of real-life contexts and, therefore, contain a correspondingly wide range of topics, voices and styles of delivery.

There are two 3-option multiple-choice questions on each text.

Teaching tips for Listening Part 1

- 1** Remind your students that they need to listen to the whole extract carefully once through before choosing their answers; that they should not assume too soon that they have heard the correct answer. Remind them that because the two questions each have a different focus, information relevant to the answers could come from different parts of the recording, so they may not be able to answer the questions 'in sequence' as they would in a longer text.
- 2** Similarly, your students should be wary of choosing an answer simply because it contains words and phrases heard on the recording. Rather, they should read through the questions before they listen and think about what they are being asked to listen for. This could be the speaker's purpose, attitudes and opinions, the gist of an argument, or perhaps whether or not the speakers agree about a certain point under discussion.
- 3** Very few questions will test the literal meaning of the text alone; most will require candidates to think about what is said and relate it to the ideas presented in the options. Therefore, encourage your students to mark one answer to each question at the end of the first listening, even if they're not sure it is correct. The second listening can then be used to confirm this answer or not.

Listening Part 2: Sentence completion

This part tests the candidate's ability to follow the main points of a text and retrieve specific information and stated opinion.

Part 2 features an informational monologue of approximately 3 minutes in length. Texts typically take the form of talks, lectures or broadcasts, aimed at a non-specialist audience, and are delivered in a neutral or semi-formal style.

A series of eight independent sentences reports the main ideas from the text and candidates show their understanding of what they have heard by completing gaps in these sentences. There is one gap per sentence, which is completed by a single word or short phrase from the listening text. The task focuses on the retrieval of specific information, and stated opinions from the text and questions follow the order of information presented in the text.

Correct spelling is expected at this level. Both US and British English spellings are accepted.

Teaching tips for Listening Part 2

- 1 Remind your students that the task instruction and the set of sentences or notes on the page provide a lot of information about what they are going to hear. Encourage them to use the preparation time wisely. One way of doing this is to give them pre-listening tasks in the classroom that will help them to think about likely vocabulary and other language features associated with the topic and context. For example, they can look at the information in the instruction and try to visualise the speaker and the situation; to imagine the kind of information that might be given, and the type of language that might be used.
- 2 Encourage your students to read through the set of sentences and think about the type of information that is missing. Remind them that most questions will focus on concrete pieces of information (e.g. nouns, proper names, etc) and will generally be single words or very short noun groups (e.g. adjective plus noun), and that usually no more than three words are required.
- 3 Tell your students not to try and write long answers and not to repeat information which is already on the page. Some students try to paraphrase the information they hear rather than using the actual words on the recording. This is not a good idea. The ability to produce paraphrase is not a skill that is tested in this task; the answers are the actual words heard on the recording.
- 4 In sentence completion tasks, the word(s) students write must complete the sentence logically and grammatically. By using the actual words on the recording, students can complete the sentences without worrying too much about the grammar. They should, however, check that they have heard the correct form of the word. For example, if students do not hear clearly whether a word is singular or plural, they should check the rest of the sentence to see which is required.

Listening Part 3: Multiple choice

This part tests the candidates' ability to listen to longer interviews and discussions and primarily show understanding of the speakers' attitudes and opinions. Agreement, gist, feeling, purpose, function and detail may also be tested.

Part 3 features interviews and discussions, involving two or more speakers. The text is approximately 3-4 minutes in length and typically takes the form of a broadcast interview or discussion aimed at a non-specialist audience.

A series of six 4-option multiple-choice questions focuses on the attitude and opinions of speakers, both explicitly stated and implied. The questions may also focus on either detailed or gist understanding, and test feeling, purpose, function and agreement. Questions follow the order of information presented in the text.

Teaching tips for Listening Part 3

- 1** This is the longest part of the Listening test, and your students should be given plenty of exposure to longer interviews and discussions. Students need to follow the line of development in these texts and recognise when the conversation has moved on from one particular aspect of the issue being discussed to another. For example, on a first listening in class, your students can listen simply for the number of issues discussed, what they are, and where the natural breaks in the interaction come, as well as each speaker's general attitude towards those issues.
- 2** In multiple-choice tasks, encourage your students to concentrate on the question stems, rather than the options in their preparation, so that they can listen for the answer in the text and then match this to the closest option.
- 3** The multiple-choice questions will use language that paraphrases and reports ideas from the text. As the texts often focus on the attitudes and opinions of speakers, which are discussed at length, your students need to have a good command of the meaning and use of the type of language used to report these ideas succinctly in the questions. They will, for example, need to understand such words as reporting verbs (e.g. regrets, admits, resents, etc.), adjectives and adverbs describing attitudes and feelings (e.g. disappointed, frustrated, unexpected, etc.), words used to report opinions (e.g. insists, suggests, denies, etc.), and degrees of certainty (e.g. doubtful, convinced, etc.).

Listening Part 4: Multiple matching

This part tests the candidates' ability to identify the gist of a number of short texts on a theme by identifying main points, gist, attitude and opinion.

Part 4 consists of a series of five short monologues on a theme. The text is 3 - 4 minutes in length with each monologue lasting approximately 30 seconds. The monologues represent spontaneous speech, delivered in an informal spoken style by speakers with a range of backgrounds and voices. There are two parallel multiple-matching tasks, each with a different focus. In each case, the correct option has to be chosen from a list of eight.

The series of monologues is heard twice, but candidates may approach the tasks in either order. Each task focuses on a different aspect of gist understanding, for example: interpreting context, identifying main points, attitudes, feelings and opinions, or speaker purpose.

Teaching tips for Listening Part 4

- 1 Remind your students that they will hear five different speakers, but that the texts will have a thematic link. In this part of the test, the whole series of texts is heard once and then the whole series is repeated.
- 2 Encourage your students to think about the theme of the texts and to think about the kinds of attitudes and ideas that they expect to hear in connection with the topic in question.
- 3 Remind your students that they will be listening for gist meaning rather than detail in these texts, so although they may not understand every word, they should be able to pick out the speaker's main point, feeling, attitude or opinion.
- 4 In order to help your students to develop this skill of gist listening, it may not always be helpful to go through the text with them afterwards, as close analysis of the language of the texts will not help them to develop the most appropriate listening strategies. As in Part 3, a sound knowledge of the type of words used to report attitudes and feelings in the questions will help your students in this part.
- 5 Remind your students that they must answer both tasks and that they will only hear the series of monologues twice. They can choose how they approach the tasks, however, perhaps attempting one task on each listening, or perhaps approaching both tasks simultaneously, answering the most accessible questions on the first listening and the more challenging questions when the recording is repeated.
- 6 Research has shown that different candidates approach this task in different ways, with equal success, so avoid imposing one particular strategy on them. Classroom activities could focus, for example, on helping your students to identify the best method of approaching this task for themselves.

Speaking

Teaching tips for Speaking

- 1 It is essential that your students are given plenty of practice in class in participating in group and pair activities. This will help them interact effectively with their partners by initiating discussion and responding appropriately to their partner's and the interlocutor's comments and questions. Pair and group activities should, therefore, be a regular part of the classroom learning.
- 2 Your students should be made aware that they need to listen carefully to the interlocutor's questions and instructions and refer to the written prompts on the visuals page to remind them of what they have to do in the task.
- 3 Your students should be encouraged to react to visual they are given to support the tasks, and relate the visuals to the tasks rather than simply describe them.
- 4 Your students should be familiar with the test format and be fully aware of what is expected of them in each part. They should also be equipped with the right kind of language for each part of the test, for example giving personal information, exchanging information and opinions, giving reasons, speculating, agreeing and disagreeing politely, justifying opinions and negotiating. This will ensure that they are in a good position to show the examiners what they are capable of.
- 5 Encourage your students to speak clearly so that they can be heard by both the interlocutor and the assessor.
- 6 It is essential that students do not pause for too long before they begin speaking. A short pause to gather their thoughts is acceptable, but anything longer than this will give them less time to produce a sample of language. Being able to paraphrase if they do not know or cannot remember a word, and extending their responses rather than giving a one-word answer, will help your students participate more effectively in the Speaking test.
- 7 Give your students a 'mock' Speaking test so that they experience taking part in an interaction of this length and understand how they have to move between different types of interaction and task focus.
- 8 To ensure that all candidates are treated in the same way, the interlocutor keeps to a scripted frame (as shown in the sample papers). However, you can remind your students that they can ask the examiner to repeat the instructions or a question.

N.B. in some centres candidates from the same school are paired together. However, where candidates from a number of different schools are entered at the same centre, some candidates may find that they are paired with a candidate from another school. Students may, if they wish, check with the centre through which they are entering for the local procedure.

The four parts of the Speaking paper

The speaking test contains four parts and lasts 15 minutes.

Format

The paired format for the Speaking test (two examiners and two candidates) offers candidates the opportunity to demonstrate, in a controlled but friendly environment, their ability to use their spoken language skills effectively. The test takes 15 minutes. One examiner, the interlocutor, conducts the test and gives a global assessment of each candidate's performance. The other, the assessor, does not take any part in the interaction but focuses solely on listening to, and making an assessment of, each candidate's oral proficiency.

At the end of the Speaking test, candidates are thanked for attending, but are given no indication of the level of their achievement.

The standard format is two examiners and two candidates. In cases where there is an odd number of candidates at a centre, the last Speaking test of the session will be taken by three candidates together instead of two. When three candidates are tested together, the test format, test material and procedure will remain unchanged, but the timing will be longer: 23 minutes instead of 15.

The Speaking test consists of four parts, each of which is assessed. Each part of the test focuses on a different type of interaction: between the interlocutor and each candidate, between the two candidates, and among all three. The patterns of discourse vary within each part of the test.

Speaking Part 1: Interview

This part tests the candidates' ability to use general social and interactional language.

Part 1 gives candidates the opportunity to show their ability to use general social and interactional language and talk about themselves and their interests, experiences, plans for the future, etc. The interlocutor asks candidates for some information about themselves, and then widens the scope of the questions by asking about, e.g. candidates' leisure activities, studies, travel and holiday experiences, and daily life. Candidates are expected to respond to the interlocutor's questions, and to listen to what their partner has to say.

The candidates are not actively invited to talk to each other in this part of the test. This short social exchange is a natural way to begin an interaction, and it gives candidates time to settle before dealing with the more specific tasks in Parts 2, 3 and 4.

Teaching tips for Speaking Part 1

- 1 In this part of the test, examiners will ask candidates one or two questions about themselves, for example where they live, to help them relax. They will then ask some further questions about, for example, their leisure time, their studies, their future plans, travel and holiday experiences, their daily routine. Encourage your students to respond promptly with answers which are as complete (not just one word) and spontaneous as possible. Rehearsed speeches should be avoided as these are easily spotted and they might be inappropriate for the questions asked.
- 2 Encourage your students to look for opportunities to socialise with English speakers. In class, they could role-play social occasions in which they meet new people, e.g. parties, long train journeys, joining a new class, starting a new job. Your students should be made aware that they should react naturally and give full answers but not answers which are too long and dominate the interaction.
- 3 Train your students to 'think on their feet' and answer a question quickly even if they have never thought about a particular subject before. Give them written examples of unsuitable candidate responses and ask them to improve on them. For example:
 - a. **Interlocutor:** *What do you hope to be doing in five years' time?*
 - b. **Candidate:** *Er ... I don't know.* X
 - c. **Candidate:** ...[speaks] ✓
- 4 Give your students role-cards with the name of a celebrity and tell them they must pretend to be the person written on the card. Their task is to interview each other in pairs or small groups and find out as much as possible about each other in a given time. This will help them to sustain an interaction in a less familiar situation.
- 5 Advise your students to try and use a variety of tenses, structures and a vocabulary in this part of the test. This will create a good impression and give them confidence to tackle the other parts of the test.

Speaking Part 2: Long turn

This part tests the candidates' ability to produce an extended piece of discourse.

In Part 2, candidates are given the opportunity to speak for 1 minute without interruption. Each candidate is given a different set of pictures and asked to comment on and react to them. A prompt is given to the candidates in the form of a direct question; this is written above the pictures. Candidates are asked to compare, express opinions and speculate about two from a set of three pictures.

Candidates have the opportunity to show their ability to organise their thoughts and ideas, and express themselves coherently in appropriate language. The listening candidate is also asked to comment briefly (for about 30 seconds) after their partner's long turn. They should not, however, speak during their partner's long turn.

Candidates will always be asked to speculate about something which relates to the focus of the visual. They will never be asked to merely describe the visuals.

Teaching tips for Speaking Part 2

- 1 Give your students plenty of practice in talking for a minute on a set subject or 'holding the floor'. Get your students to time each other and see how long speaking for a minute takes. Students sometimes finish their long turn too early as they have little idea what speaking for a minute entails.
- 2 Ask your students to collect pictures from newspapers and magazines and use these in class to practise comparing them, ask your students to group pictures into sets and imagine what they might be asked to talk about in a Part 2 task in the exam.
- 3 Help your students to gain confidence and project their voices by asking them to stand at the back of the classroom and give a short 1-minute presentation on a topic of their choice. The other students must listen carefully then ask a question based on the presentation.
- 4 Students need to be clear about what is considered an adequate response, e.g. their response needs to go beyond the level of pure description and contain a speculative element. For example,
 - a. *'This picture shows two people who are on an expedition. They have to work together to achieve their goal.'*
 - b. is not as impressive as:
 - c. *'These people look like they're on an expedition to the North Pole or they might be climbing a mountain together. This could be a personal challenge, a kind of dream for them, or they might be doing it because they have work to do during the trip – like doing some research into animal life or the natural world, so they could be friends or they could be colleagues. Either way, their relationship must be very strong. Their lives could depend on how well they co-operate with each other if there is an emergency.'*
- 5 Tell your students not to adopt 'closure' techniques such as *'that's all!'*; they should keep talking until the interlocutor says, 'Thank you'. In this way, they will maximise the time available for their 1-minute long turn.
- 6 Make sure that your students have plenty of practice in organising their ideas coherently. Teaching them useful phrases for linking ideas and comparing pictures will help them. They can build up their own lists of suitable phrases throughout the course, thus ensuring that they have a range of language and structures to draw on when necessary.

Speaking Part 3: Collaborative task

This part tests the candidates' ability to engage in a discussion and to work toward a negotiated decision.

In Part 3, candidates are given oral instructions and provided with written prompts to form the basis for two tasks which they carry out together. They are expected to discuss some or all of the prompts in relation to a question, expressing and justifying opinions, evaluating and speculating. They are then asked another question which will engage them in negotiating towards a decision related to the written prompts that they have previously discussed.

The instructions for the first task will begin with the words *'Here are some... and a question about them'*. The sheet with the written prompts and a central question will then be placed in front of the candidates. The candidates are given about 15 seconds to read the question and the prompts. This is made clear to the candidates with the instruction: *'You now have some time to look at the task.'* The task gives candidates the opportunity to show their range of language and their ability to invite the opinions and ideas of their partner. Candidates are expected to share the interaction in this way and to initiate and respond appropriately.

After the candidates have discussed the question with relation to the prompts they will be given another task in which they are asked to make a decision. The instruction for this will be: *'Now you have a minute to decide...'* The decision will be related to the prompts they have just been discussing. They are assessed on their ability to use the language of negotiation and collaboration while doing this. However they are not penalised if they fail to reach a negotiated decision. There is no right or wrong answer to the task.

Teaching tips for Speaking Part 3

- 1 Encourage your students to make use of conversation fillers to give themselves time to think, e.g. 'Well, now, let me see.' Tell them, however, not to over-use these as this will limit their range of language. Your students should also make use of strategies which invite their partner to contribute to the discussion but do not give the impression that they are relying on their partner to do all the work.
- 2 Act out a scenario with one of your students in which you either constantly interrupt what they are saying or say almost nothing at all. Tell the student that they should deal politely with your interruptions or try to encourage you to say something. The other students can then repeat the exercise in pairs or groups. This will provide invaluable training in managing and developing an interaction.
- 3 Ask your students to keep a notebook in which they list a variety of functional language, e.g. ways of interrupting politely, or ways of asking their partner for their opinion. Encourage them to use as many different ways of doing things as possible to avoid repetition.
- 4 Advise your students not to try to rush through all the prompts in their discussion. It is better to deal with several of them in depth than to try to deal with all of them superficially.
- 5 Your students should be encouraged to react to as great a variety of visual stimuli as possible and express ideas and opinions of their own. Simply agreeing or disagreeing with their partner, or echoing what their partner has said, while being a natural thing to do, will not enable them to show what they themselves can do.

Speaking Part 4: Discussion

This part tests the candidates' ability to engage in a discussion based on the topics or issues raised in the collaborative task in Part 3.

In Part 4, the interlocutor directs the interaction by asking questions which encourage the candidates to broaden and discuss further the topics introduced in Part 3. The questions often focus on more abstract issues as the discussion develops.

This part of the test gives candidates an opportunity to show their ability to exchange information, express and justify their opinion, and agree or disagree with one another. It also provides candidates with an opportunity to show that they are capable of discussing topics and certain issues in more depth than in the earlier parts of the test.

Teaching tips for Speaking Part 4

- 1 After doing a Part 3 task, ask your students to try to predict what kind of questions they think they might be asked in Part 4. They could do this in groups and then compare their ideas with those of another group. This will help them prepare for what they might be asked to talk about in Part 4.
- 2 Tell your students they are not being assessed on their ideas, but they should be aware that examiners can only assess them on the language they produce.
- 3 Encourage your students to listen to each other's responses to questions in Part 4 and join in to develop a discussion if it is appropriate. They must be aware, however, of not interrupting their partner before he/she has given a full answer and also not to dominate the discussion.
- 4 Divide your students into pairs or groups of three and give them a controversial statement to discuss, e.g. 'Cars should be banned'. This will encourage them to express opinions about topics they may never have thought of.
- 5 Photocopy an article from an English-language newspaper or magazine and get your students to discuss the article in small groups. When they have finished, they can compare their ideas with those of another group.
- 6 Set up a regular debating session in class and give your students 1 minute to stand up and argue for or against a particular topic, e.g. 'Global warming will mean the end of the world as we know it'. At the end of the debate, take a vote on who has put forward the most convincing arguments.
- 7 Train your students to react immediately to the questions they are asked, or give themselves a little time to think aloud by saying things like, 'Well that's something I've never really thought about but, on reflection, I'd say...'.
'
- 8 It is important to give your students practice sessions which are the same length as the whole test. Tell your students that the impression they make at the end of the test is equally as important as the one they make at the beginning.