



Cambridge English: Advanced Speaking (from 2015)

Sample test with examiner's comments

This document will help you familiarise yourself with the Speaking test for *Cambridge English: Advanced*, also known as *Certificate in Advanced English (CAE)*. It accompanies [this video](#), where you can see Raphael, from Switzerland, and Maude, from France, take a Speaking test. Both these candidates cope well overall with the tasks in the test.

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About the Cambridge English: Advanced Speaking test

The Speaking test is 15 minutes long and consists of four parts. The standard test format is two candidates and two examiners. One examiner (the interlocutor) will speak to you and your partner and the other (the assessor) will be listening.

Part 1 (approximately 2 minutes)

The interlocutor asks you and your partner questions about yourselves. You may be asked about things like your home town, your interests, your studies, etc.

Part 2 (approximately 4 minutes)

The interlocutor gives you photographs and asks you to talk about two of them for about 1 minute. The interlocutor then asks your partner a question about your photographs and your partner responds for about 30 seconds.

Then the interlocutor gives your partner three different photographs. Your partner talks about two of these photographs for about 1 minute. This time the interlocutor asks you a question about your partner's photographs and you respond for about 30 seconds.

Part 3 (approximately 4 minutes)

This part is divided into two parts and the interlocutor asks you and your partner to talk together in both. In the first part, you will be asked to discuss a question. For example, you might be asked to discuss things people might consider when making decisions. The interlocutor gives you written prompts to help you but does not join in the conversation. After 2 minutes, the interlocutor will ask you to make a decision which is related to what you have been discussing. You have 1 minute for this.

Part 4 (approximately 5 minutes)

The interlocutor asks some further questions, which lead to a more general discussion of what you have talked about in Part 3. You may comment or expand on your partner's answers if you wish.



How the Cambridge English: Advanced Speaking test is assessed

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

Grammatical Resource

Are you using a good range of grammatical structures? Are you using these structures correctly?

Lexical Resource

Are you using a good range of vocabulary? Are you using vocabulary which is appropriate for the topics you are talking about? Are you using it correctly? Are you showing that you can use suitable vocabulary to talk about topics which are unfamiliar to you, as well as topics which you are more used to talking about?

Discourse Management

Are you using both long and short answers, depending on the task? Is everything you say relevant to the topic of discussion? Are your ideas expressed in clear and well-organised language? Are you using a range of language to link and organise your ideas? Are you able to speak fluently, without too much hesitation?

Pronunciation

You don't need to have an English accent, but it is important to be clear. Are you pronouncing individual sounds correctly? 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? Does your pronunciation help you to communicate what you mean?

Interactive Communication

Are you able to interact with the other candidate easily and effectively? Are you listening to the other candidate and answering in a way that makes sense? Are you able to start a discussion and help manage the discussion so that you and your partner keep it going? Can you think of new ideas to add to the discussion?

The **interlocutor** focuses on your **Global Achievement**. This is about your general performance. How well are you speaking about the topics you are given? Are your answers clear and fluent? Are you using language which is right for the *Cambridge English: Advanced* level?



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 sample test

<u>Part 1</u>	
Raphael	Maude
<p>Raphael gives a little information about the place where he comes from in answer to the first question, which it is fine to do. His answer to the second question is clear and accurate.</p> <p>His response to the question about the internet is extended to a suitable length as he gives good examples to support his ideas.</p>	<p>Maude begins her answer to the first question with 'Well ...', which gives her time to think about how to answer. Her second answer is extended.</p> <p>In response to the question about spending too much time working or studying, she supports her 'yes' with a brief reason; the examiner invites her to extend her answer further, which she then does.</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 extend them if you can. • Don't give answers which you have learned, as they don't sound very natural. 	

<u>Part 2</u>	
Raphael	Maude
<p>Raphael uses a range of simple grammatical structures e.g. 'these three little girls are baking a cake ...' and some complex sentences accurately e.g. 'I don't think it will be a nice cake ...' and 'they could also be preparing for something'.</p> <p>There are occasional errors e.g. '... they enjoy to play together music'.</p> <p>His Lexical Resource is generally appropriate for the task e.g. 'baking a cake', 'similar', 'work in a team', 'interact'.</p>	<p>Maude uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms accurately e.g. 'we can see two students who are doing different things'; 'maybe she will pass the test if she ...'; 'It will be very useful for her to be able to talk to people'.</p> <p>There are occasional errors e.g. 'she gain knowledge and she get prepared' and 'It will helps her develop a kind of ease'.</p> <p>She demonstrates a good range of</p>

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In terms of Discourse Management, he talks about the pictures with very little hesitation, but his talk could be more logically organised and focus on the questions given, especially how the people might be feeling, which he doesn't say much about. He uses some linking words e.g. 'I don't think it will be a nice cake but ...' and 'They're doing it together because they might be sisters because they look so similar'. However, he could use more linking words, and he could compare the pictures more rather than talking about them separately. He also relies on using 'I think' and 'just' too much to express his ideas.

His Pronunciation is generally intelligible, though there are occasional errors with some sounds e.g. 'think' pronounced with /f/. Also, [his intonation always rises at the end of his sentences](#), which makes it harder for the listener to follow the structure of what he is saying.

[Response to question after Maude's talk:](#) Raphael's answer is expressed clearly using a complex structure and supported with reasons: '... because it helps for the teamwork and I think that's the most important thing ... because when they ... they have to be prepared to ...'.

Lexical Resource appropriate for the task e.g. 'relationship', 'share ideas', 'ease', 'entertainment field'.

In terms of Discourse Management, she gives herself time to think at the beginning by saying 'So, let me see ...'. It is better to do this than say nothing while thinking of how to start. There is a little hesitation when she is searching for language, but she discusses her pictures for a full minute with very little repetition and links her ideas quite well e.g. 'while talking to other people, so if she wants to be ...'.

Maude's Pronunciation is intelligible with good sentence stress e.g. 'When you're cooking you learn things' and generally accurate word stress e.g. 'knowledge', 'entertainment'; the exception to this is '[develop](#)'.

[Response to question after Raphael's talk:](#) Maude's answer is expressed very clearly and accurately and is also the right length response: '... every kind of situation depends on the kind of relationship you have with the person; when you're at school ...; when you're cooking the same, you share ... so it really depends on the situation'.

Part 2 tips

- Practise comparing two pictures to get a feel for how much you can say in 1 minute and how you can organise what you say.
- Remember that the second question is printed above the pictures.
- Approach the task in an organised way.
- If you don't know or can't remember a word, try to use other words for what you want to say.



Part 3

Raphael	Maude
<p>In terms of Grammar, Raphael uses a range of simple structures accurately and some complex structures with some success e.g. ‘You have to think about if you’re ready already to build a family and if you have enough money ...’.</p> <p>There are occasional errors e.g. ‘you have also to choose ...’; ‘I think it’s better to first getting married ...’.</p> <p>He uses adequate Lexical Resource for the topics e.g. ‘subject’, ‘connected to’, ‘starting a family’.</p> <p>In terms of Discourse Management, he speaks with very little hesitation and contributes relevant ideas e.g. when speaking about choosing the right university and building a family, but he could develop his ideas more. He organises some of his language well e.g. ‘... because when two people find each other and they think about getting married, they should really think about it because it’s an important decision ...’.</p> <p>His Pronunciation is as in Part 2.</p> <p>In terms of Interactive Communication, Raphael responds appropriately and links his ideas to Maude’s e.g. he adds to what she has said about choosing a university; he does the same, very briefly, when talking about starting a family. However, there are several times</p>	<p>Maude uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms accurately e.g. ‘And when you start a family, you need to talk maybe about children’; ‘if you want to move to Australia, you need to ...’.</p> <p>There are occasional errors e.g. ‘whole their lives’.</p> <p>She uses a good range of Lexis appropriate for the topic e.g. ‘criteria’, ‘settle’, ‘take into consideration’, ‘restrictions’.</p> <p>In terms of Discourse Management, Maude contributes with good ideas and organises them clearly with good linking e.g. ‘First students have to think about what they like when they choose a university and students and parents have to think about money because in some countries ...’.</p> <p>Her Pronunciation is generally clear, with an occasional exception e.g. the words just before ‘criteria’ (‘financial’?) are unclear.</p> <p>In terms of Interactive Communication, Maude begins the discussion and is mostly responsible for moving the discussion forward in the first part e.g. ‘And what about starting a family ...’ and ‘... moving to another country ...’.</p>

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in the discussion when he simply nods, but doesn't take the opportunity to contribute, instead letting Maude develop the discussion e.g. when talking about jobs and about language.

He contributes more to the discussion in [the decision part of the task](#) than in the first part, beginning this with 'I think the most important is getting married ...' and 'I think this is also connected to starting a family...'

He also thinks of something to add when they both seem to have said everything they could: 'And also when you're getting married, I think it's better to ...'

She responds appropriately, linking her ideas to what Raphael has said.

Although she consistently contributes to the discussion, at times she could have tried to involve Raphael more actively in the interaction in order to develop it more effectively, rather than mostly doing this herself. She could have contributed to the interaction more in the decision part of the task in order to keep this going for the whole minute.

General comments on Part 3

Raphael and Maude do have a relevant discussion on the topic; however, Raphael could be more involved and contribute more to the interaction and Maude could involve him more. Ideally the responsibility for maintaining and developing the interaction should be shared, and this involves working together to achieve this.

Part 3 tips

- Discuss each of the prompts together in detail. It doesn't matter if you don't talk about them all.
- Remember that the second part of the task is a discussion about a possible decision; it is not essential to reach a decision and you may even disagree.
- Listen to your partner and respond to what they say before adding your own ideas.
- Remember to invite your partner to respond and/or contribute.

Part 4

Raphael

Raphael uses a good deal of accurate Grammar e.g. 'I think it's always important to consider other opinions, because they have a different view on the topic ... and so ... to ask as many people as possible'.

Maude

Maude's use of simple and complex Grammar is often accurate e.g. 'when you have very pushy parents you don't really get to make your own decisions'.

She uses appropriate Lexical Resource



There are occasional errors e.g. 'good in making decisions'; 'I think it's important that they are taught in school'; '... they also know what it mean'.

He uses an appropriate range of Lexical Resource e.g. 'scared about', 'early age', 'responsibility'.

In terms of Discourse Management, he organises and expresses his ideas clearly e.g. 'I think you can also start at an early age with giving them a little task to do'.

His Pronunciation is mostly as in the rest of the test; however there are some good examples of appropriate sentence stress e.g. '[I think it's also important that we don't plan everything](#)'.

In terms of Interactive Communication, Raphael responds to the interlocutor's questions well; [he also tries to add to Maude's response about why people find it harder to make decisions](#), though he has trouble finding the language to complete his idea.

e.g. 'used to', 'play an important role', 'develop this kind of skill'.

There are occasional errors e.g. '... when the advice that all the people give them are not very strong'.

In terms of Discourse Management, Maude gives some longer contributions which are expressed clearly e.g. [talking about planning](#). At times, she hesitates while thinking of language, but usually manages to express what she wants to say.

Maude's Pronunciation is similar to earlier parts of the test. There are some good examples of appropriate sentence stress e.g. 'Again it depends on the individuals' and accurate word stress and intonation e.g. 'Well, in some ways, yes'.

In terms of Interactive Communication Maude responds well; [she is first to answer the question addressed to both](#) and she tries to help Raphael when he has trouble finding the right words.

Part 4 tips

- Make sure you extend your answers with, e.g. reasons, examples.
- Remember you can respond to what your partner says in their answers.
- Sometimes the examiner will ask you to discuss a question together. This may lead to a discussion between you which may last more than one turn each, which is fine.



Overall	
Raphael	Maude
<p>Grammar Raphael uses both simple and complex grammatical structures, but there are several errors in both. He could improve this by focusing on errors, particularly in simple forms.</p> <p>Lexical Resource He demonstrates a good range of Lexis in order to deal with the tasks and topics.</p> <p>Discourse Management His ideas are generally logical and clear. He also uses some language to link his ideas, usually with very little hesitation. However, sometimes he needs to develop his ideas more fully.</p> <p>Pronunciation His pronunciation is mostly clear, but some sounds e.g. 'th' could be improved and his intonation could be more varied, rather than consistently rising.</p> <p>Interactive Communication Raphael communicates well during most of the test, but less well in the first part of Part 3, which requires effective interaction to develop the discussion. With more active contribution, he could improve his performance in this criterion.</p> <p>Global Achievement Raphael is able to handle communication on a range of familiar and unfamiliar topics with very little hesitation. He makes</p>	<p>Grammar Maude generally demonstrates control of simple and complex grammatical forms; there are some errors, especially with complex forms, but she is always able to express what she wants to say.</p> <p>Lexical Resource She is able to use a good range of Lexis appropriate for the topics.</p> <p>Discourse Management Her contributions are relevant and clear, despite a little hesitation when searching for language. She could improve her fluency by practising speaking for longer periods e.g. a minute.</p> <p>Pronunciation Maude is almost always intelligible and demonstrates some good aspects of Pronunciation.</p> <p>Interactive Communication She communicates well with her partner, adding ideas and responding appropriately with comments. She also generally develops the interaction effectively. She supports Raphael when he is not sure about how to express his ideas.</p> <p>Global Achievement Maude handles communication on a range of familiar and unfamiliar topics; she hesitates at times while searching for</p>



an effort to respond to and build on his partner's ideas, but he could produce more extended discourse at times during the test. Although there are some errors in his language, they do not prevent him expressing his ideas and mostly he is accurate enough to be clear.

language, but always manages to express her ideas clearly. She can organise and produce longer pieces of language, and she responds to and builds on her partner's ideas.



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