



Cambridge English: First Speaking (from 2015)

Sample test with examiner's comments

This document will help you familiarise yourself with the Speaking test for *Cambridge English: First*, also known as *First Certificate in English (FCE)*. It accompanies [this video](#), where you can see Victoria, from Germany, and Edward, from Peru, take a Speaking test. Both these candidates cope well overall with the tasks in the test.

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About the Cambridge English: First Speaking test

The Speaking test is 14 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 (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 (4 minutes)

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

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

Part 3 (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 given five written prompts and asked to discuss a question. For example, you might be asked to discuss things that might attract tourists to a town. The interlocutor does not join in the conversation. After 2 minutes, the interlocutor will give you one more minute to make a decision together which is related to what you have been discussing.

Part 4 (4 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: First Speaking test is assessed

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 vocabulary which is appropriate for a range of 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? Are you using some language to link and organise your ideas? Are you able to speak fluently and with very little repetition?

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 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 keep it going with your partner? 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: First* level?

Your 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>	
Victoria	Edward
<p>In response to the first question, Victoria adds some detail about where she comes from. A little detail like this is fine, but don't try to add any more, as the examiner will stop you, as she does here with Victoria.</p> <p>Her answers to the second and third questions are clear and a good length.</p>	<p>Edward's answer to the first question is a good length, with about the right amount of detail about where he is from.</p> <p>Edward begins his responses to the second and third questions with 'Well ...', which gives him time to think about how to answer; he then gives good responses which are extended.</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>	
Victoria	Edward
<p>Victoria uses some simple grammatical structures accurately, e.g. 'I see a sportsman ... I think he has a cramp', and some more complex structures e.g. 'I think I would prefer to help people who ...'.</p> <p>However, there are several errors in simple structures e.g. 'she has pain'; '... people who make some sports because I'm like sports'.</p> <p>She uses the present simple (e.g. 'she asks for directions') when the present continuous would be more natural. This does not make her difficult to understand, but this is an area she could improve.</p>	<p>Edward uses simple grammatical forms which are sometimes accurate e.g. 'I see a young girl in a garden'; 'maybe she's going to eat them'.</p> <p>However, there are several errors e.g. 'there have a special care about them'; 'they are all enjoyed ...'; 'maybe that girl like to make this plants in maybe his garden'.</p> <p>He has adequate vocabulary for the task e.g. 'spending time', 'picnic', 'plants', but there are some collocation errors e.g. 'free air'.</p> <p>In terms of Discourse Management, he organises his talk and describes the pictures before comparing them: 'In the</p>



She uses an adequate range of vocabulary which is appropriate for the task e.g. 'sportsman', 'cramp', 'pain', 'terrace'.

However, there are several errors such as 'confusing' rather than 'confused', 'persons' rather than 'people' and 'grow up' when talking about plants.

In terms of Discourse Management, she organises her talk clearly, describing each picture and then comparing them, and she links her ideas well: 'In the first picture ... in the second picture ... I think both are ... because ... in the second picture she needs help as well ...'.

Her Pronunciation is clear.

Response to question after Edward's talk: [Victoria's answer](#) is clear and supported with reasons. 'I think I'd prefer to enjoy ... because ...'.

first picture ... in the second ... in both cases ... in the second one ... both ...', but there is some hesitation and he doesn't quite manage to speak for a full minute.

Edward's Pronunciation is generally intelligible, though there is little evidence of weak forms and sentence stress; and he is occasionally difficult to understand.

[Response to question after Victoria's talk](#): Edward gives an example of getting help, which is fine for part of the answer, but doesn't fully answer the question.

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 not to simply describe the pictures.
- Remember that the 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

Victoria	Edward
Victoria uses a range of simple and some complex structures e.g. ' ... because they can go with the whole family or sometimes parents can go on	Edward uses mostly simple grammatical forms e.g. 'what about having more shops?'; ' putting up security cameras also I think they are more for people who



[their own ...](#); [... but I'm not really sure if everybody wants to live in a holiday flat ...](#)'.

There are several errors e.g. '... childrens are for their own ...'; 'when I went to holiday ...'.

Her vocabulary is adequate for the topics e.g. 'shopping area', 'dangerous', but she sometimes uses less suitable words e.g. 'live' and 'interesting' when talking about holiday flats.

In terms of Discourse Management, she speaks with very little hesitation and contributes relevant ideas with support and good linking e.g. [talking about shops](#) and [talking about building flats](#).

Her Pronunciation is clear and intelligible.

In terms of Interactive Communication, she responds to Edward's first question and helps get the interaction started: ['Would we like to talk about building nightclubs? What do you think about it?'](#). She consistently gives her opinion and asks for Edward's e.g. ['I don't really like parks ... What do you think about it?'](#).

She doesn't move the discussion forward, though this may be because Edward does it quite quickly after each of his responses. She does develop the discussion, with her ideas, whereas in the 1-minute decision-making part, she doesn't really develop the discussion

[live there](#)'; but he could show more evidence of range of grammatical structures. There are also some errors e.g. 'so maybe can we providing ...'; 'I like park'; 'a good weather'.

He uses an adequate range of vocabulary e.g. 'providing parks', 'putting up'; with some errors e.g. 'free air', 'weather/climate'.

In terms of Discourse Management, Edward makes some relevant contributions, and sometimes extends his ideas e.g. ['because most people like to spend time with the family doing a picnic ... so maybe more tourists can go to the parks'](#).

His Pronunciation is generally clear, with occasional exceptions.

In terms of Interactive Communication, he interacts with his partner, responding to her ideas, but sometimes he could explain his answers more fully with reasons. He consistently moves the discussion forward and asks for Victoria's opinion e.g. 'What about having more supermarkets?' and 'What do you think about building holiday flats?'.

[He tries to add something at the end to keep the discussion going to the end of the minute](#), but what he says is not very clear.



enough, [choosing instead to accept Edward's choice of the parks](#).

General comments on Part 3

Victoria and Edward do have a relevant discussion on the topic and they interact quite well, inviting, showing interest in and responding to each other's opinions. However, the interaction would be more effective if they linked their contributions more closely to what their partner said. In addition, Edward could develop his ideas more fully and Victoria could take more responsibility for developing the discussion.

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.
- You can ask your partner questions too if they are having difficulty adding to the discussion.
- Remember to invite your partner to respond and/or contribute.

Part 4

Victoria

Victoria uses a range of accurate Grammar e.g. ['... it might be possible to make it less expensive to go on a good holiday, so it depends what I want to do'](#). There are occasional errors e.g. '... you have not any things about your work ...'.

She uses a good range of vocabulary e.g. 'well-organised', 'see more of the whole world', 'far away', 'go surfing', with some errors e.g. 'make holidays'.

In terms of Discourse Management, she organises and expresses her ideas clearly and her responses are well developed e.g. ['I don't know exactly, because ... but ... so ... and ... so ...'](#).

Edward

Edward uses mainly simple Grammar forms which are sometimes accurate e.g. ['... it's great to go to new places and visit new cities and learn more about the culture also'](#); ['In Peru there are a lot of places you can visit ...'](#).

There are several errors e.g. 'It depends of the person'; 'Peru have a lot of beaches'.

His vocabulary is adequate e.g. 'culture', 'jungle', 'coast', but there are occasional errors e.g. 'go out of your home'.

In terms of Discourse Management, his responses are relevant e.g. '... because



<p>Her Pronunciation is clear and intelligible.</p> <p>In terms of Interactive Communication, she responds well to the questions and develops her answers. She links her ideas about having enough time for holidays to Edward's response, beginning 'I totally agree with you ...'.</p>	<p>a businessman is always busy' but he sometimes hesitates and it is not always easy to follow the logic of what he is saying.</p> <p>Edward's Pronunciation is generally intelligible, although some words are less clear e.g. 'culture', 'jungle'.</p> <p>In terms of Interactive Communication, Edward responds to the questions adequately, but often doesn't develop his answers very much. He does link one of his answers to Victoria's: 'Yes I agree with you, I have the same idea'.</p>
<p>Part 4 tips</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and this may lead to a discussion between you. This may last more than one turn each, which is fine. 	

Overall	
Victoria	Edward
<p>Grammar and Vocabulary Victoria uses both simple and complex grammatical forms, but also makes a number of errors which she could easily work on to improve her accuracy. At times, she demonstrates a good range of vocabulary.</p> <p>Discourse Management Her ideas are generally relevant and expressed logically and clearly, especially later in the test.</p> <p>Pronunciation Her pronunciation is clear and intelligible</p>	<p>Grammar and Vocabulary Edward shows control of some simple grammatical forms, but there are also several errors in both simple and complex structures. Occasionally this means that what he is saying is not clear. His vocabulary often lacks range to deal with familiar topics, so he cannot always say what he would like to.</p> <p>Discourse Management His contributions are relevant, despite a little hesitation. However, at times, his contributions are not very clear or well organised. He could improve this by</p>



throughout.

Interactive Communication

Victoria communicates well, developing the interaction, particularly in Part 4.

Global Achievement

Victoria is able to handle communication on a range of familiar topics with very little hesitation. She responds to her partner's ideas and generally produces extended contributions. Although there are some errors in her language, she can usually express what she wants to say.

practising speaking about topics for a minute or so.

Pronunciation

Edward is usually intelligible, though with some unclear sounds and limited features of sentence stress.

Interactive Communication

He communicates well with his partner, adding ideas and responding appropriately with comments. At times he also tries to develop the interaction.

Global Achievement

Edward is able to handle communication on familiar topics, but at times has difficulty finding the language he needs to express himself. He can sometimes produce some extended language and he responds to his partner's ideas.



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