

SPEAK Test Information Sheet

The SPEAK test is the institutional form of the TSE, Test of Spoken English. The SPEAK consists of retired forms of the TSE. This test was developed by the Educational Testing Services for the purpose of evaluating the spoken English of non-native speakers. It is used in universities and in the medical professions.

Students may pick up testing information and sample test materials, register for the test, and receive scores in the English Language Program Office (205 Fairchild Hall). Anyone taking the test must provide a picture ID for registration and for testing.

The English Language Program offers the SPEAK test each month. For dates, please check the ELP web page at www.k-state.edu/elp

The fee schedule for individuals taking the test is as follows:

Free for

- the first two tests for students admitted to the University (Students need to bring their admission letter when they register for the initial test.)

\$10 for

- individuals not admitted to the University
- students who have failed the test twice
- special individual tests scheduled outside of regular test sessions

Test scores are reported to departments via a secure web page. Students will receive an individual test score report. We ask that students not come to pick up their individual results during the week prior to the beginning of each semester (i.e. in August, June, and January). They may come to our office to request their copies after the first week of class. Students may get additional test reports for \$1.00 per report.

Students who fail to receive a passing score two times must take steps to improve their speaking before taking the test a third time. Students who have failed the test twice will have to pay for any subsequent tests. Students wanting to know their weaknesses may schedule an appointment to go over their test results. For remediation, students may enroll in DAS 179 – Pronunciation and Speaking Skills, work with a tutor, or work with the Speech and Hearing Center in Leasure Hall. Work with a tutor must be documented with the person's name and a description of the time spent and a list of the activities done.

Scoring

The test lasts 20 minutes and emphasizes speech functions and extended samples of speech. The passing score is 50 on a scale of 20-60. Two graders independently score each tape, and their scores are averaged. Examinees' tapes are identified by a number only and not by name.

All graders have graduate degrees in English, English as a second language, or English linguistics. All have gone through the same training program that ETS uses for its graders. ELP graders periodically check their grading against the grading standard on the training tapes. On the occasions when locally graded tapes have been sent to ETS for a second grading, the scores have been the same.

For sample test questions go to: www.k-state.edu/elp/testing/SPEAKtest.htm

Skills for the SPEAK Test

Task -specific Questions

Task	preparation time	Organization	Vocabulary	Grammar	Pronunciation
Directions	30 seconds	spatial order	specific directions to	prepositions imperative transitions	elicited by street, building, room names
Story	60 seconds	chronological order	general	tense prepositions/transitions of time	general
Graphs	none	summarizing/interpreting visual data	specific to graphs / tables	tense transitions dates numbers	elicited by the content in chart
Schedule	60 seconds	announcing information in a schedule emphasizing changes	general	tense dates, numbers transitions	elicited by names, places, and titles

General Questions (non preparation time other than the initial time to review map, story, or schedule)

Skills performed:

- stating / explaining an opinion
- giving / explaining a solution to a problem
- comparing two options
- explaining a field related concept / term
- discussing an issue of general interest
- stating a complaint and requesting a solution
- discussing a future goal / plan
- discussing alternatives / prevention

Resources: Maps from phone books
 Graphs and charts from textbooks and magazines
 Comics from newspapers
 Schedules and course policies from classes

ABOUT THE TSE TEST

On the day of the test, you will be given a test book and asked to listen to and read the general directions before you begin. It is a good idea to become familiar with the directions before the day of the test. The practice questions below are similar but not identical to questions you will find in the actual test. Therefore, responses to these practice questions may not be acceptable on an actual test. During the TSE test your responses will be recorded on tape. It might be helpful to record your practice responses on tape, then listen to hear how your speech actually sounds.

GENERAL DIRECTIONS

In the Test of Spoken English, you will be able to demonstrate how well you speak English. The test will last approximately 20 minutes. You will be asked questions by an interviewer on tape. The questions are printed in the test book and the time you will have to answer each one is printed in parentheses after the question. You are encouraged to answer the questions as completely as possible in the time allowed. While most of the questions on the test may not appear to be directly related to your academic or professional field, each question is designed to tell the raters about your oral language ability. The raters will evaluate how well you communicate in English.

As you speak, your voice will be recorded. Your score for the test will be based on your speech sample. Be sure to speak loudly enough for the machine to record clearly what you say. Do not stop your tape recorder at any time during the test unless you are told to do so by the test supervisor.

TSE PRACTICE QUESTIONS*

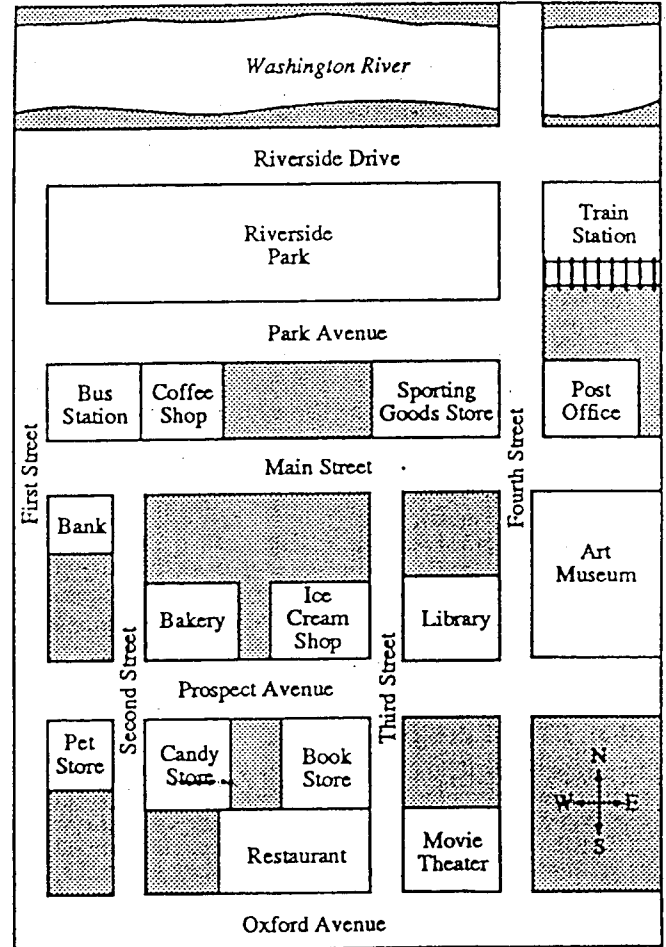
First, the interviewer will ask you some questions about yourself. These questions are for practice and will not be scored, but it is important that you answer them.

Sample questions:

- What is the ID number on the cover of your test book? (10 seconds)
- How long have you been studying English? (10 seconds)
- Why are you taking the Test of Spoken English? (10 seconds)

Then the test will begin. Be sure to speak clearly and say as much as you can in responding to each question.

Imagine that we are colleagues. The map below is of a neighboring town that you have suggested I visit. You will have 30 seconds to study the map. Then I'll ask you some questions about it.



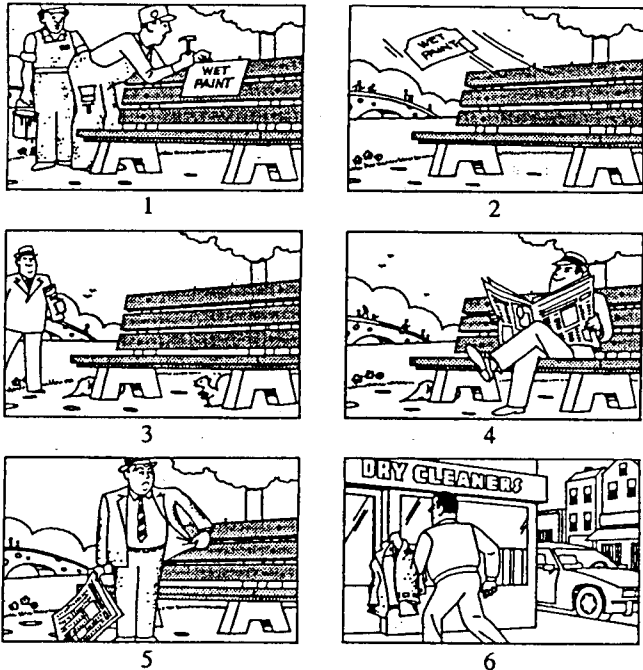
YOUR TSE SCORE

Your score record will consist of one score of communicative language ability, which is reported on a scale of 20-60. Raters evaluate each question and assign score levels using descriptors of communicative effectiveness related to language task/function, coherence and use of cohesive devices, appropriateness of response to audience/situation, and linguistic accuracy. The assigned score levels for each question are averaged. Because of this averaging, the scores are reported in increments of five (i.e., 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60). Score level performance is described below.

Scale	Description
60	Communication almost always effective
55	
50	Communication generally effective
45	
40	Communication somewhat effective
35	
30	Communication generally not effective
25	
20	No effective communication

1. Choose one place on the map that you think I should visit and give me some reasons why you recommend this place. (30 seconds)
2. I'd like to see a movie. Please give me directions from the bus station to the movie theater. (30 seconds)
3. One of your favorite movies is playing at the theater. Please tell me about the movie and why you like it. (60 seconds)

Now please look at the six pictures below. I'd like you to tell me the story that the pictures show, starting with picture number 1 and going through picture number 6. Please take one minute to look at the pictures and think about the story. Do not begin the story until I tell you to do so.



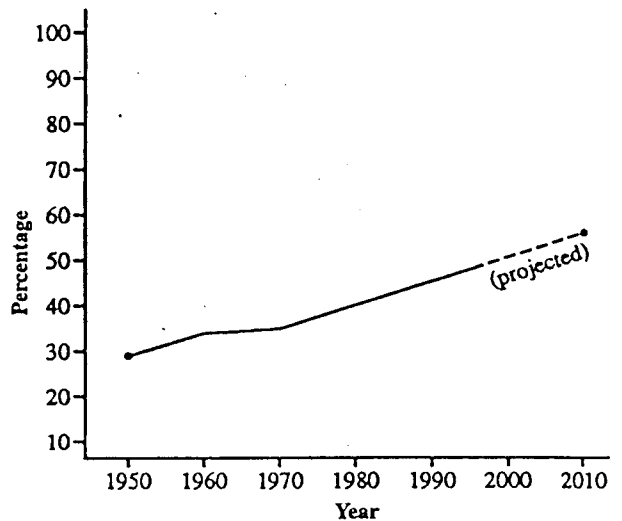
4. Tell me the story that the pictures show. (60 seconds)
5. What could the painters have done to prevent this? (30 seconds)
6. Imagine that this happens to you. After you have taken the suit to the dry cleaners, you find out that you need to wear the suit the next morning. The dry cleaning service usually takes two days. Call the dry cleaners and try to persuade them to have the suit ready later today. (45 seconds)
7. The man in the pictures is reading a newspaper. Both newspapers and television news programs can be good sources of information about current events. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of each of these sources? (60 seconds)

Now I'd like to hear your ideas about a variety of topics. Be sure to say as much as you can in responding to each question. After I ask each question, you may take a few seconds to prepare your answer, and then begin speaking when you're ready.

8. Many people enjoy visiting zoos and seeing the animals. Other people believe that animals should not be taken from their natural surroundings and put into zoos. I'd like to know what you think about this issue. (60 seconds)
9. I'm not familiar with your field of study. Select a term used frequently in your field and define it for me. (60 seconds)

10. The graph below presents the actual and projected percentage of the world population living in cities from 1950 to 2010. Describe to me the information given in the graph. (60 seconds)

PERCENTAGE OF WORLD POPULATION LIVING IN CITIES 1950-2010



11. Now discuss what this information might mean for the future. (45 seconds)

12. Now please look at the information below about a trip to Washington, D.C., that has been organized for the members of the Forest City Historical Society. Imagine that you are the president of this organization. At the last meeting you gave out a schedule for the trip, but there have been some changes. You must remind the members about the details of the trip and tell them about the changes indicated on the schedule. In your presentation do not just read the information printed, but present it as if you were talking to a group of people. You will have one minute to plan your presentation and will be told when to begin speaking.

**FOREST CITY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.**

Date: Saturday, April 12

Transportation: Chartered Bus

Depart: 8:00 ~~8:30~~ a.m. — Community Center parking lot

Itinerary: 10:30 a.m. — Guided Tour of White House

12:30 p.m. — Lunch* - Rock Creek Park

3:00 p.m. — National Museum of History and Technology (lecture - 4:00 p.m.)

6:30 p.m. — Dinner - ~~Embassy~~ ^{Capital Inn} Restaurant Georgetown

Return: 10:00 p.m. (approximately)

Cost: ~~\$20.00~~ (excluding admissions and dinner)
\$25.00

* Bring your own

(90 seconds)