



Listening and Speaking tests – Education

ALTA's Listening and Speaking Test is a 23-question test. It lasts between 15 and 25 minutes.

The assessment is conversational in approach and consists of a series of questions that are designed to elicit the full range of the target language and identify *what* the candidate can do with the language (through performance of various tasks such as giving a description, talking about a hypothetical event, providing an opinion, etc.), as well as *how well* the candidate uses and controls the language. A sample of the test questions is below.

The candidate simply answers each question. There is no right or wrong answer to a question – the evaluator is not checking for knowledge of the topic but rather that it is understood and the level of control over the language that the candidate uses. If requested, the evaluator will repeat the question or rephrase the question, but after a total of 2 repetitions, points will be deducted. The evaluator will also encourage the candidate to give long enough answers so that a representative sample of the candidate's speech is given. However, the evaluator otherwise has no control over the questions/requests for responses being asked.

When the test is complete, the candidate simply hangs up and is scored according to the subcategories of comprehension, communication, grammar and vocabulary, and an overall score is assigned.

Sample Questions:

Objective 1: Warm-up discussion

Tell me about yourself.

Objective 2: Routine actions

What do you usually do in the evening?

Objective 3: Describing

Tell me about one of your friends.

Objective 4: Stating a preference

What is your favorite day of the week and why?

Objective 5: Explaining a basic opinion

Do you like using e-mail? Why or why not?

Objective 6: Role Courtesy



What do you say to introduce yourself to someone new?

Objective 7: Simple requests

What do you say to ask for a glass of water in a restaurant?

Objective 8: Giving directions

Explain how to make pasta.

Objective 9: Narrating in the past

Tell me three things that happened on your last vacation.

Objective 10: Describing near future activities

Tell me about three things you will do next weekend.

Objective 11: Describing far future plans

Tell me about three things you will do in the next five years.

Objective 12: Asking questions

You need to find a particular book at the library. Tell me three questions you would ask the librarian.

Objective 13: Describing a hypothetical situation

If you could visit any city in the world, where would you go and why?

Objective 14: Advanced past tense

In the last five years, how has technology changed?

Objective 15: Describing abstract future

How do you think automobiles will change in the next 10 years? Why?

Objective 16: Persuasion

Tell me about one of your favorite movies and convince me to see it.

Objective 17: Language specific

What is a hobby or activity that you would like to take up in the future and why?.

Objective 18: Answering an impersonal question

Identify a problem you've observed in your community and discuss whether people have made an effort to solve that problem.



Objective 19: Explaining an abstract concept

I am from a rural area and have never been on a train or subway. Describe what it is like to use public transportation.

Objective 20: Discussing a course of action

Tell me what one should do in the following situation: a person buys expensive tickets to an event. One week later, the event is canceled. How should that person proceed?

Objective 21: Explaining situations to different social levels

You are a high school chemistry teacher. I am a new student in your class. Explain basic safety procedures to me.

Objective 22: Defending one's opinion

Some people believe that humans have the right to change the global environment as they see fit. Others believe that humans should make as little impact as possible. What is your opinion and why?

Objective 23: Dealing with a difficult situation

You have ordered an item via a website. When the package arrived, however, the item you received was not the one you ordered. Briefly explain the problem to a customer service representative and ask to have the proper item shipped to you.