

Student Assessment

Guidance to Students Prior to Taking the Online Speaking Test

ACCESS 2.0 for ELLs Speaking Test

The Speaking test is a measure of a student's ability to produce verbal academic English by responding to recorded test questions. On the online Speaking test, the virtual Test Administrator guides the student through sets of questions designed to elicit language at progressively higher levels of proficiency.

Students record their responses by speaking into a microphone. The responses are recorded and automatically submitted for scoring by trained scorers at the Data Recognition Corporation (DRC), the WIDA testing contractor.

Each task on the Speaking test is preceded by a Model Student task and response. Students begin by listening to a recording of a "model" (sample) student responding to a task at a targeted proficiency level; then, the student responds to a similar question at the same proficiency level, using the model student's response as an example.

Speaking tasks are developed at three proficiency levels: one, three, and five.

- Students produce single words, chunks of language, or short phrases in response to a proficiency level one (P1) task;
- Students produce sentences that are generally comprehensible and incorporate general and some specific academic language at proficiency level three (P3).
- Students produce task-specific vocabulary in cohesive, extended sentences at proficiency level five (P5).

The length of response time a student may take to answer a question depends on the task, grade, and proficiency level. During scoring, students are not penalized for running out of time and/or not completing a sentence or thought. Student responses do not need to be accurate to score well; some tasks on the speaking test may elicit only relatively short responses. Brief responses can score well if they are clearly delivered and include appropriate word choices.

Preparing Students with the Test Demo and Sample Items

- Preparing students on how to take the computer-delivered test in advance will facilitate a smooth test administration.
- Many schools schedule a test demo session for students and then immediately have students practice what they've viewed by completing the test practice items.
- Students should be allowed to repeat the test demo as often as desired and needed. There are no restrictions on accessing this tool.
- Sample items are available on the WIDA website on the Student Preparation page and on the WIDA AMS log in screen at wida-ams.us.
- Experience with and awareness of the computerized assessment format is essential to support the student's understanding of the test process.

- It is especially important to show students the test practice for the Speaking test, as it involves features that some students may not be familiar with. The more opportunities students have to interact with the test practice, the more comfortable they will be with navigating through the test.
- Online Speaking Guidance documents are available for educators to reference when working with students, and can be found on the Student Preparation page of the WIDA website.

Preparing to Administer the Speaking Test

- Be sure to set up a testing environment with enough space between students to minimize distractions and allow privacy when students are speaking.
- WIDA recommends testing no more than 3-5 students per test administrator.
- For students in all tiers, the Speaking test may be administered individually, or in smaller groups of students than mentioned above if needed.
- Newcomers and/or students at lower proficiency levels may need to be assessed individually, so Test Administrators can provide additional support during the test.
- For new (or shy) students, the test administrator should sit next to the student in an individual testing session and ask them to "talk to you" while speaking into the microphone.
- Point out to the student that he/she will follow "Nina's" model responses on the test. Have the student practice responding using progressively longer and more complex sentences.
- Role-play with students wearing headsets with microphones so they will become familiar with using this technology.
- Practice pausing before hitting the "record" button. Tell student(s) to think about their response during the pause and before they record. Encourage them to start recording when they are confident that they have a response ready.
- Reinforce the idea that students should use the entire time interval allowed to respond, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of vocabulary and their ability to connect ideas.
- It is okay for students to leave a gap during their response as they think of additional things to say, but once they hit STOP, they are finished and cannot go back.
- For ELSWD determine what accessibility and/or accommodations would be needed. For example, a paper administration with extended speaking test responses time as shown on page 18 of the **Accessibility and Accommodations Supplement** available in the WIDA Secure Portal.
- Provide reminders to students like those listed below shortly before testing.

Reminders for Students

1. Stop, breathe, and think about what you will say before you hit the record button.
2. Speak clearly. Do not whisper.
3. Fill all the available time when you respond.
4. Use "and, because, then, and also" to extend what you are saying.
5. You should speak about as long as Nina speaks.
6. Use the pictures to help you think of things to say.
7. Ask the student: "Have you thought of everything you can say about this"
8. Do not hit 'stop' until you are sure you have finished.

Refer to the **Test Administrator Script Online/Paper** for additional available administrative considerations during the Speaking test. The Script contains prompting educators can use with students as they are taking the assessment.

What is considered as an attempted response?

- The student clicked on the “Record” button for at least one scored item. Practice tasks are not scored items and therefore do not count towards an “attempt.”
- Ambient sound and breathing are not enough to be considered “attempted”. A student must have clicked the record button on a response screen other than during the practice.

Additional Resources from WIDA

[ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 - Online Speaking Guidance Grades 1 - 3](#)

[ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 - Online Speaking Guidance Grades 4 – 5](#)

[ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 - Online Speaking Guidance Grades 6 – 12](#)

Sample items provide students with opportunities to produce spoken language as they would on the Speaking test. Sample items are available at [ACCESS for ELLs Online Sample Items User Guide](#) p.13.

If you are interested in the criteria that are used to score your students' Speaking test responses, you can review the [Speaking scoring rubric](#) and the [Interpretive Guide for ACCESS Score Reports](#).

WIDA Screener - **Considerations for Scoring Oral Language** can be found in the WIDA Secure Portal Library.

Refer to the **Accessibility and Accommodations Overview 2017** in the WIDA Secure Portal Library for an overview presentation of accessibility and accommodations.