



TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON

Central Board of Secondary Education
Assessment of Speaking and Listening
Skills
Guide for Teachers

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Introduction

This document is intended to be a companion guide for teacher's preparing students for the CBSE ASL tests in classes IX and XI. You will find information about the tests inside as well as tips on preparing your students to take these tests.

This Guide should be read together with the ASL Test Specifications.

General Purpose of the Test

The overall purpose of the test is to help improve and standardize students' communicative skills. The assessment of speaking and listening skills in English language in the term-end Summative I and II assessments as well as in all the Formative assessments necessitates a teacher to consciously work on these skills in the regular classroom transaction. This also calls for students to develop these skills during the course of the language learning. Any learning that takes place has to be practised and measured against a set of pre-determined standards specific to a particular class. It is imperative that students learn and practise in class, in whatever they are expected to be tested in.

It is with this view, that a test frame has been constructed for classes IX and XI respectively in both speaking and listening skills which would serve as a guide for the teachers. The teachers of English are expected to first familiarize themselves and then introduce the format of the test and give adequate practice to students to make them confident and sure of taking the speaking and the listening tests without any inhibitions.

The test format that is given below consists of task types for both listening and speaking activities along with the exact time duration for each activity. It is essential and desirable that teachers familiarize themselves thoroughly with the following aspects of the test:

- Focus of the test
- Objective of each task
- Age appropriate CBSE topic areas and domains which may be covered under each task.
- Focus of the questions to be administered during the conduct of the test
- Tips for teaching

Test Format

Class IX	Class IX	Class XI	Class XI
Listening – written paper	Speaking – oral exam	Listening – written paper	Speaking – oral exam
40 minutes	8 minutes	45 minutes	10 minutes
Task 1 Instructions, messages, etc	Task 1 – introductions 1 minute	Task 1 Short extracts	Task 1 – Introductions 1 minute
Task 2 conversation	Task 2 – Topic Presentation 2 minutes	Task 2 conversation	Task 2 Topic Presentation 2 minutes
Task 3 Short extracts	Task 3 – Topic Questions 2 minutes	Task 3 Lecture, presentation	Task 3 – Topic Questions 3 minutes
Task 4 Speech, presentation	Task 4 – Problem Solving 3 minutes	Task 4 Debate, seminar	Task 4 – Problem Solving 4 minutes

Class IX

Listening

Focus

Understanding a range of genres and contexts of spoken English across the familiar, including academic, personal and social.

Listening Class IX		30–40minutes	20 items/20 marks	1,200 words
CBSE curriculum objectives: Understanding a range of genres and contexts of spoken English across the familiar including academic, personal and social				
Topics: People , Adventure, Environment , Mystery, Children, Sports and games, Money, Culture; Music; Art and craft, House and home, Travel and tourism, Humour and wisdom, History and legend, Science and the future, Hobbies and interests, Fashion				
Grammar & language functions: grammar of class IX curriculum				
CBSE skills objectives: Task focus	CEFR B1 Domain: work, school, leisure. Familiar	Text type	Test tasks	Item specifications: topic, text length, item focus, domain
Understanding detailed information for a purpose	Can understand straightforward factual information about common topics; can understand simple technical information	Instructions, messages, announcements Short text Unmarked register	e.g. gap-fill (with defined purpose); sentence completion 4 marks	4 items in single table, form or flowchart Text: 100–120 words Item semi-completed; include distraction Domain: directions, school/courses, travel, social (e.g. cinema), museums, weather
Understanding & interpreting a range of features of context	Can follow the main points of extended discussion	Conversation Informal dialogue Long text	Multi-choice: choose 5 out of 8 options 5 marks	8 items: statements – 5 true + 3 distractors In order of text

Understanding the topic & the main points	Can understand the main points of familiar matters; can understand the main points & information content of news bulletins & TV programmes	Commentaries/news events Short extracts	multiple matching 5 marks	Text: 400 words Testing line of argument; cohesion; main points Domain: friend, child to parent, peer, family, social event
Distinguishing main points from detail	Can identify general messages and specific detail Can follow a lecture or talk on familiar subject matter	Speech, presentation, narrative, etc Formal Long text	Multiple choice 6 marks	5 items out of 7 multiple matching Text: 5 x 60 words Domain: news, TV programmes, chat shows Focus: topic, purpose, role must be consistent Speakers labelled A – E Match labelled i – vii
				6 items, Multiple choice: 3 options 400 words; must include distraction Test opinion. Domain: school functions, guest speaker, school project

Task 1

Objectives

- For the candidate to show an understanding of straight forward factual information about common topics.
- For the candidate to demonstrate an understanding of simple technical information.
- For the candidate to show that they are able to understand detailed information for a purpose

Topic Areas and Domains

- Directions
- School / courses
- Travel
- Social
- Museums
- Weather
- Advertisements

Focus of Questions

Understanding detailed information for a purpose for example: noting information about dates, times and prices when listening to an advertisement for a cinema's weekly listings.

Candidates will be required to show that they can identify the pertinent details in a short listening extract.

Teaching Tips

- Practice authentic note taking when listening to information e.g. cinema listings, travel information, weather reports, radio advertisements.
- Make sure students know what they are listening for – ask them to focus on the information they need.
- Ask students to note important details while listening, such as dates, times, prices, names.
- Ask students to practice giving information to each other about arrangements, etc.

Task 2

Objectives

- For the candidate to show that they are able to follow the main points of extended discussion.
- Understanding and interpreting a range of features of context

Topic Areas and Domains

- Work
- School
- Leisure
- Social events
- Family

Focus of Questions

Candidates will be required to show that they are able to follow a conversation and identify the main points or arguments for example by selecting which statements from a list are true according to the speakers.

Teaching Tips

- Practise listening for gist in class. The students need to know that they don't need to understand every word in the extract.
- Students could practise by listening to one another perform short conversations you have found or written. Those not performing have to guess what the main argument is for each speaker.
- Make sure students have time to read the statements first before they listen. Remind them the statement will give them the context of the conversation.
- Practise language functions of opinion e.g. *I think ...*, *I don't agree ...*, etc.

Task 3

Objectives

- For the candidate to show that they are able to understand the main points of speech on familiar matters.
- For the candidate to show that they can understand the main points and information content of news bulletins and TV programmes
- Understanding of the topic and the main points of an extract.

Topic Areas and Domains

- Work
- School
- Family
- Social life
- News bulletins
- TV Programmes
- Chat shows

Focus of Questions

The candidates will be required to show that they are able to identify the topic or purpose of the extract or the role of the speaker for example by selecting the most appropriate description of an extract for each speaker from a list.

Teaching Tips

- Practise listening to authentic news items to identify the topic or focus of each speaker.
- Ask the students to predict what messages each speaker might be trying to get across before they listen.
- Any documentary or news with 'vox pop' can work for these activities. After listening, the students can check their predictions against what they have heard.
- Make sure students have time to read the list of options before they listen.
- Ask students to look at each option and decide what words or structures they might hear associated with that option. Eg an option that says 'The speaker thinks plastic bags should be banned.' may introduce vocabulary like *shopping, throw away,*

Task 4

Objectives

- For the candidate to show that they are able to identify both general messages and specific details.
- For the candidate to show that they can follow a lecture or talk on familiar subject matter.
- To distinguish main points from detail

Topic Areas and Domains

- Work
- School
- Family
- Social life
- School functions
- Guest speakers
- School projects

Focus of Questions

The candidates will be required to show that they can follow a talk on a familiar subject and distinguish the general theme or opinion of the talk from the specific details and supporting facts within the talk. The candidates will have to answer a series of multiple choice questions.

Teaching Tips

- Practise authentic listening by finding talks and lectures in English for the students to listen to.
- After listening, the students can ask one another questions about what they have just heard.
- In small groups the students can discuss and agree on the main theme of the talk then decide what examples the speaker has used to make their point.
- Make sure you give students time to read the questions before they listen.
- Ask students to cover the 3 possible answers in each question and to look carefully at the questions. Can they listen and get the answers without looking at the 3 possible answers?
- Reminds students that the list of questions will guide them through the listening text as they listen.

Speaking

Focus

The focus of the speaking assessment is to test the candidates' abilities to speak fluently and coherently on a topic of their choice; to interact with another candidate and the examiner in asking and responding to questions; and to communicate with another candidate to discuss a problem.

Speaking Class IX 8–10 minutes Format: 1 x examiner; 2 x candidates					
Topics: People, Adventure, Environment, Mystery, Children, Sports and games, Money, Culture; Music; Art and craft, House and home, Travel and tourism, Humour and wisdom, History and legend, Science and the future, Hobbies and interests, Fashion					
task	time	focus	CBSE curriculum objectives	CEFR B1	Task Specifications
Introduction Individual turns	30 secs each 1 minutes total	Personal, social Setting at ease NOT ASSESSED	Express and respond to personal feelings & opinions		Open-ended questions about family, home, social life, etc NB appropriate to level
Topic presentation (with personal slant): Individual turns NB pre-prepared	1 minute per candidate 2 minutes total	Fluency, ordering, cohesion	Present oral reports or summaries; narrate incidents or events	Can reasonably fluently sustain a straightforward description of one of a variety of subjects within his/her field of interest presenting it as a linear sequence of points	Student chooses and prepares topic in class with teacher support. Topic must use language of the curriculum. Students MUST give personal slant or experience of topic.
Topic question: Partner candidate followed by Topic questions: examiner led	20/30 secs per candidate 30/40 secs per candidate 2 minutes total	interaction	Presenter: adopt different strategies to convey ideas according to purpose, topic & audience Questioner: frame questions so as to elicit desired response	Can communicate with some confidence on matters related to his/her interests; can exchange check and confirm information	Generic to be accessible to all regions Generic follow-up questions to elicit language at Class IX level
Problem solving with task card Candidates work together then answer follow-up questions	3 minutes total	Task fulfilment, interaction	Take part in group discussions, summarise ideas, elicit views of others; express and argue a point of view clearly Participate in spontaneous spoken discourse	Can enter unprepared into conversation of familiar topics, express personal opinions	Problem taskcard + follow-up questions appropriate to the level Relate to class IX topic list with personal slant Questions to elicit Class IX level language

Task 1 - Introduction

Objectives

The aim of the introduction task is to set the candidate at ease with some general, open ended questions. It is for the candidate to express and respond with personal feelings and opinions.

THIS PHASE IS NOT ASSESSED.

Topic Areas

- Home
- Social life
- Personal information, e.g. age, interests

Focus of Questions

The introduction task is there to set the candidates at ease and to allow them to relax into the speaking assessment with some general questions about for example their hobbies, friends and so on.

Teaching Tips

- Practise greetings and polite 'small talk' with turn taking. Practise responding to questions about family (e.g. *Where do you live?*) or hobbies (e.g. *What do you do in your spare time?*).
- In large classes, you can try dividing the class into smaller groups who must meet and greet one another once you have modelled the language to the whole class.
- Questions cue cards are also a good way to randomise the activity and prevent repetitious questions and responses. The students can select from a pack of cards containing various questions such as '*How old are you?*'; '*What's your favourite food?*', '*How far did you travel to school?*' and continue interviewing one another and practising their responses.

Task 2 – Topic Presentation

1 minute per candidate

Objectives

The aim of the Topic Presentation task is for the candidate to show that they are able to present an oral report or summary on a subject of their choice with a personal aspect or experience.

This reflects not only the CBSE curriculum objectives but also a real life skill whereby students and employees have to prepare and then present material to an audience.

It is very important the students DO NOT RECITE learnt material. Marks will be awarded for real engagement with their topic and being able to talk about some personal experience of it.

CBSE Curriculum Topic Areas

- People
- Adventure
- Environment
- Mystery
- Children
- Sports and games
- Money
- Culture & Music
- Art and craft
- House and home
- Travel and tourism
- Humour and wisdom
- History and legend
- Science and the future
- Hobbies and interests
- Fashion

Focus of Task

The focus of the Topic Presentation task is for the candidate to sustain a straightforward description of a subject that is within their field of interest. Ideally the presentation should be fluently and cohesively ordered and presented as a linear series of points. The candidate should speak for one

Teaching Tips

- The subject should be chosen in class in advance and the presentation prepared with teacher support. **It is important they give a personal slant on their chosen topic and relate it to their own lives.**
- The topic must use the language of the curriculum. Candidates should be encouraged to incorporate language items of the appropriate level into their contributions.
- When preparing the topic, encourage candidates to think carefully about the amount of material necessary to sustain a discussion for one minute only.
- Candidates should not prepare a written script of their presentation nor should they memorise a presentation to recite in the exam room. Ideally, the candidates should practise narrating or presenting in a spontaneous fashion, perhaps using short notes in class. This is a real life skill!

Task 3 – Topic Questions

Objectives

The aim of the Topic Questions task is for the candidates to show that they are able to adopt different strategies to convey ideas according to purpose, topic and audience and also to frame questions so as to elicit a desired response. Questions reflect what members of an audience might ask in response to a real life presentation.

It is also an opportunity for the examiner to check they truly understand their presentation and have not just memorised it.

Focus of Task

The focus of the Topic Questions task is for the candidate to communicate confidently on matters related to his or her interest and for their partner to exchange and check information. The task is focussed on interaction between the two candidates with each other and with the examiner. The other candidate will ask a question and the candidate has 20-30 seconds to respond. Then the examiner will ask the candidate questions about their topic for 30 to 40 seconds. After this the Task 2 procedure is repeated for the second candidate.

Teaching Tips

- When students have prepared their topics, they can ask one another questions to practise both asking and responding to questions.
- Students can get as much practice as possible by presenting their topic to lots of other students. Each student in the class should be able to ask questions on any topic. Rotating pairs is a good way to ensure that each student is having lots of practice in both presenting and asking questions.
- Set time limits to help them prepare for the real examination. For example, if the whole class is paired up, or in groups of four, ring a bell after one minute to mark the end of a student's presentation, then again after a further minute to mark the end of questions and the start of the next student's presentation.

Task 4 – Problem Solving

Objectives

The aim of the Problem Solving task is for the candidates to show that they are able to take part in group discussion, summarise ideas, elicit views and opinions of others, express and argue a point of view and participate in spontaneous spoken discourse.

Focus of Task

The focus of the Problem Solving task is for the candidate to show that they can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics and express personal opinions. The two candidates discuss together a problem selected randomly by the examiner. The problem task, written on a card, will be within one of the CBSE curriculum topic areas. They do not need to find a solution.

Teaching Tips

- Debates are a good way for students to practise discussion, turn taking and expressing a point of view. For large classes a rolling debate can work well – divide the class into 2 and give them the topic for the debate (for example, ‘The school wants to make the school day 90 mins longer.’). Make one group for the idea, the other against. The students can prepare their points for the debate working together or alone, perhaps limiting them to three points of argument.
- The students then line up facing one another. Each pair debates their point for a set amount of time, say 2 minutes for the ‘For’ and 2 for the ‘Against’ with a further minute for discussion and agreement or disagreement. After 5 minutes, one line moves down so that each student has a new partner and the debate can happen again until several rotations have taken place.
- In feedback, the students can reflect on whether their opinion was changed by what they heard and discuss solutions. In very large classes, there can be several smaller groups of for and against working together at the same time.
- The students can also practise problem solving. Give students scenarios to work on together with the aim of presenting a proposed solution to the class.

Class XI

Listening

Focus

Understanding a range of genres and contexts of spoken English across the familiar and unfamiliar, concrete and abstract topics in the academic, personal and social domains.

Listening Class XI		40–45minutes	20 items/20 marks	1,700 words
CBSE curriculum objectives: Understanding a range of genres and contexts of spoken English across the familiar & unfamiliar, concrete and abstract topics in the academic, personal and social domains				
Topics: Media and networking, Health and fitness, Natural Resources, Business world, Ethics and values, The elderly, Urbanization, Adolescence, Inventors and inventions, Sports and sportsmanship, Careers, Art and aesthetics				
Grammar & language functions: as per classes IX & X but deeper understanding of different tense forms used or different kinds of narration in different genres				
CBSE skills objectives	CEFR B2	Text type	Test tasks	Item specifications
Task focus	Domain: academic, vocational, personal, social. Familiar & unfamiliar + abstract			topic, text length, item focus, domain
To understand oral presentations across a range of topics	Can identify speaker viewpoints & attitudes as well as information; Can understand TV news, documentaries & live interviews	Extracts of opinion on a single topic Short texts; monologues Informal/semi-formal	Multiple matching 5 marks	5 items out of 7 multiple matching focus on opinions or purpose of speaker e.g. vox pop on news, tv/radio discussion, etc (non taboo) Text: 80 words x 5 = 400 words
To draw inferences	Can understand propositions & linguistic complexity in concrete & abstract topics Can identify mood, tone, etc.	Conversation on serious topic Informal dialogue Long text	Multiple choice 6 marks	6 items: Multiple choice—three options Focus on inferences, attitudes, beliefs

<p>To perceive the overall meaning and organisation of a text</p>	<p>Can follow the essentials of lectures, talks & reports which are propositionally & linguistically complex</p>	<p>Lecture, presentation or talk Formal Long text; monologue</p>	<p>multi-choice: choose 4 out of 7 options 4 marks</p>	<p>Text: 500 words Domain: school topics (serious), home, relationships, career counsellor 7 items: statements—4 true + 3 distractors 4 correct out of 7 multi-item Focus on ordering /cohesion Text: 300 words Domain: on a school subject area, world issues, culture & values</p>
<p>Identify the main points & supporting details</p>	<p>Can follow extended speech and complex lines of argument</p>	<p>Debate or seminar Formal/semi-formal Long text; dialogue</p>	<p>Sentence completion 5 marks</p>	<p>5 gapped sentences focusing on key points in text or supporting detail Text: 500 words Domain: school/class debate or seminar on subject: issues e.g. environment, arts education vs science, vegetarianism, uniforms, mobile phones, etc.</p>

Task 1

Objectives

- For the candidate to show that they are able to identify speaker viewpoints and attitudes as well as high level information.
- For the candidate to show that they can understand TV news, documentaries and live interviews.
- Understanding oral presentations across a range of topics.

Topic Areas and Domains

- School
- Careers
- Work
- Environment
- Science

Focus of Questions

The candidates will be required to show that they can understand and identify the opinions and purpose of speakers across a range of extracts for example by selecting the most appropriate opinion from a list for each speaker.

Teaching Tips

- Practice listening to authentic news or documentary extracts to identify the purpose or opinion of speakers.
- Ask the students to predict what each speaker might say before they listen. Tell the class what the topic of the extracts will be and ask them to predict the likely opinions of different speakers.
- Any documentary or news with 'vox pop' can work for these activities. After listening, the students can check their predictions against what they have heard.
- Make sure students have time to read the options before they listen.

Task 2

Objectives

- For the candidate to demonstrate that they are able to understand propositions and linguistic complexity in concrete and abstract topics.
- For the candidate to show that they can identify the mood and tone of a conversation or dialogue.
- For the candidate to be able to draw inferences.

Topic Areas and Domains

- School topics
- Home
- Relationships
- Careers

Focus of Questions

The candidates will be required to show that they are able to identify and understand linguistic devices within a longer conversation or dialogue, by answering a series of multiple choice questions. As well as main points, the candidates may need to infer meaning by listening for meaning and context in the surrounding dialogue.

Teaching Tips

- Practise listening for inference, for example students can listen to extracts of conversations and try to guess the relationship between the speakers.
- Students can practise listening for what is implied but not said, such as how does the speaker feel, what is their mood, do they like the person they are speaking to?
- Make the students aware of how mood and tone is conveyed, through intonation, stress, tone of voice. The teacher can model this by saying the same things in different ways to demonstrate.
- To practise awareness of linguistic devices, try listening to authentic English being spoken such as radio broadcasts, or film dialogue. Ask students to note expressions and language they do not understand and try to guess what they mean by looking for other clues such as the language around it or the tone of the speaker.

Task 3

Objectives

- For the candidate to show that they are able to understand the essential details and message of lectures, talks and reports which are linguistically complex.
- To perceive the overall meaning and organisation of a text.

Topic Areas and Domains

- Talks on a school subject
- World issues
- Culture and values

Focus of Questions

The candidates will be required to demonstrate that they can understand and identify the overall meaning of a spoken extract. They will also be required to show that they can understand how the speaker has organised and ordered their ideas which build to the overall meaning. The candidates might, for example, be asked to identify the order in which various ideas appear in an extract.

Teaching Tips

- A good way for students to practise their appreciation of the order and organisation of spoken extracts is to have them listen to extracts which are broken down in smaller parts and replayed in the wrong order. The students have to reorder the extract so that the flow of ideas is logical. This works well with short speeches which follow an obvious thread, such as statements to the press or campaign speeches.
- Students can also do this in groups, with each member of the group taking a part of a speech and reading it aloud. Together they can decide on the correct order and then read in sequence.
- Practice of authentic listening is also valuable, listening to lectures on subjects they are likely to study in school can enhance student's awareness of how these kind of extracts will be organised.
- Make sure students have time to read the options before they listen. The option may appear in a different order from the audio text.

Task 4

Objectives

- For the candidate to show that they are able to follow extended speech and complex lines of argument in longer spoken extracts.
- To identify main points and supporting details.

Topic Areas

Issues which might be debated in schools, e.g.:

- Environment
- Arts education versus Science education
- Vegetarianism
- School uniform

Focus of Questions

The candidates will be required to demonstrate that they are able to identify the main points of and the supporting details of a complex line of argument. The candidates will have to complete sentences that summarise points from the talk with details from the text.

Teaching Tips

- Practise authentic listening by finding talks and lectures in English for the students to listen to, especially on more complex or contentious issues.
- After listening, the students can ask one another questions about what they have just heard.
- In small groups the students can discuss and agree on the main theme of the talk then decide what examples the speaker has used to make their point and identify key words.
- Give the students copies of audioscripts from the sample material and ask them to circle 10 - 12 key words in each text. These are words that are likely to be tested.
- Make sure students have time to read the gapped sentences before listening.

Speaking

Focus

The focus of the speaking assessment is to test the candidates' abilities to: speak fluently and cohesively on a topic of their choice; to interact with another candidate and the examiner in asking and responding to questions; and to communicate with another candidate to solve a problem.

Speaking Class XI 10–12minutes Format: 1 x examiner; 2 x candidates						
Topics: Media and networking, Health and fitness, Natural Resources, Business world, Ethics and values, The elderly, Urbanization, Adolescence, Inventors and inventions, Sports and sportsmanship, Careers, Art and aesthetics						
task	time	focus	CBSE curriculum objectives	CEFR B2	Task Specifications	
Introduction Individual turns	30 sec each 1 minute total	Personal, social Setting at ease NOT ASSESSED	Express and respond to personal feelings & opinions	Open-ended questions about family, home, social life, etc. NB appropriate to level	Open-ended questions about family, home, social life, etc NB appropriate to level	
Topic presentation (with personal slant); Individual turns NB pre-prepared	1 minute per candidate 2 minutes total	Fluency, ordering, cohesion	Present oral reports or summaries; narrate incidents or events;	Can give clear detailed descriptions and presentations with appropriate highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail; can give clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to his/her field of interest.	Student chooses and prepares topic in class with teacher support. Topic must use language of the curriculum. Students MUST give personal slant or experience of topic.	
Topic question: Partner candidate followed by Topic questions: examiner led	20/30 secs per candidate 1 minute per candidate	interaction	Presenter: adopt different strategies to convey ideas according to purpose, topic & audience Questioner: frame questions so as to elicit desired response	Can account for and sustain views clearly by providing relevant explanation and arguments; can invite others to give their views on how to proceed	Generic to be accessible to all regions Generic follow-up questions to elicit language at Class XI level	

	3 minutes total				
Problem solving with task card Candidates work together then follow-up questions	4 minutes total	Task fulfilment, interaction Spontaneous speech, opinion	Take part in group discussions, summarise ideas, elicit views of others; express and argue a point of view clearly Participate in spontaneous spoken discourse	Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity. Can account for and sustain opinions in discussion by providing relevant arguments and comments; Can initiate, maintain and end discourse appropriately with effective turntaking; Can engage in extended conversation on general topics in a clearly participatory fashion	Problem task card + follow-up questions appropriate to the level Related to Class XI topic list in wider world. Questions to elicit Class XI level language.

Assessment criteria & scoring

Language: accuracy lexis & structure; range lexis & structure	5 marks
Fluency: cohesion, coherence, hesitation dealing with difficulties	5 marks
Interactive competence: relevance, appropriacy, task management	5 marks
Pronunciation: including intonation & stress, speed of delivery	5 marks

Total	20 marks

Task 1 - Introduction

Objectives

The aim of the introduction task is to set the candidate at ease with some general, open ended questions. It is for the candidate to express and respond with personal feelings and opinions.

THIS PHASE IS NOT ASSESSED.

Topic Areas

- Home
- Social life
- Personal information, e.g. age, interests

Focus of Questions

The introduction task is there to set the candidates at ease and to allow them to relax into the speaking assessment with some general questions about for example their hobbies, friends and so on.

Teaching Tips

Practice greetings and polite 'small talk' with turn taking. Practice responding to questions about family (e.g. *Where do you live?*) or hobbies (e.g. *What do you do in your spare time?*).

In large classes, you can try dividing the class into smaller groups who must meet and greet one another once you have modelled the language to the whole class.

Questions cue cards are also a good way to randomise the activity and prevent repetitious questions and responses. The students can select from a pack of cards containing various questions such as '*How old are you?*'; '*What's your favourite food?*', '*How far did you travel to school?*' and continue interviewing one another and practising their responses.

Task 2 – Topic Presentation

Objectives

The aim of the Topic Presentation task is for the candidate to show that they are able to present an oral report or summary on a subject of their choice or to narrate an incident or event in their lives.

This reflects not only the CBSE curriculum objectives but also a real life skill whereby students and employees have to prepare and then present material to an audience.

It is very important the students DO NOT RECITE learnt material. Marks will be awarded for real engagement with their topic and being able to talk about some personal experience of it.

CBSE Curriculum Topic Areas

- Media and networking
- Health and fitness
- Natural Resources
- Business world
- Ethics and values
- The elderly
- Urbanization
- Adolescence
- Inventors and inventions
- Sports and sportsmanship
- Careers
- Art and aesthetics

Focus of Task

The focus of the Topic Presentation task is for the candidate to sustain a straightforward description of a subject that is within their field of interest. Ideally the presentation should be fluently and cohesively ordered with highlighting of significant points and relevant supporting detail. The candidate should speak for one minute about a topic they have selected and prepared in class. This is repeated again for the second candidate in each examination.

Teaching Tips

The subject should be chosen in class in advance and the presentation prepared with teacher support. **It is important they give a personal slant on their chosen topic and relate it to their own lives.**

The topic must use the language of the curriculum. Candidates should be encouraged to incorporate language items of the appropriate level into their contributions.

When preparing the topic, encourage candidates to think carefully about the amount of material necessary to sustain a discussion for one minute only.

Candidates should not prepare a written script of their presentation nor should they memorise a presentation to recite in the exam room. Ideally, the candidates should practise narrating or presenting in a spontaneous fashion, perhaps using short notes in class.

Task 3 – Topic Questions

Objectives

The aim of the Topic Questions task is for the candidates to show that they are able to adopt different strategies to convey ideas according to purpose, topic and audience and also to frame questions so as to elicit a desired response.

It is also an opportunity for the examiner to check they truly understand their presentation and have not just memorised it.

Focus of Task

The focus of the Topic Questions task is for the candidate to communicate confidently on matters related to his or her interest and for their partner to exchange and check information. The task is focussed on interaction between the two candidates with each other and with the examiner. The other candidate will ask a question and the candidate has 20-30 seconds to respond. Then the examiner will ask the candidate questions about their topic for 1 minute. After this the Task 2 procedure is repeated for the second candidate.

Teaching Tips

- When students have prepared their topics, they can ask one another questions to practise both asking and responding to questions.
- Students can get as much practise as possible by presenting their topic to lots of other students. Each student in the class should be able to ask questions on any topic as pairs will be selected randomly before the examination. Rotating pairs is a good way to ensure that each student is having lots of practise in both presenting and asking questions.
- Set time limits to help them prepare for the real examination. For example, if the whole class is paired up, or in groups of four, ring a bell after one minute to mark the end of a student's presentation, then again after a further minute to mark the end of questions and the start of the next student's presentation.

Task 4 – Problem Solving

Objectives

The aim of the Problem Solving task is for the candidates to show that they are able to take part in group discussion, summarise ideas, elicit views and opinions of others, express and argue a point of view and participate in spontaneous spoken discourse.

Focus of Task

The focus of the Problem Solving task is for the candidate to show that they can enter unprepared into conversation on familiar topics and express personal opinions. The two candidates discuss together a problem selected randomly by the examiner. The problem, written on a card, will be within one of the CBSE curriculum topic areas but at this level may broaden out to the wider world. They do not need to find a solution.

Teaching Tips

- Debates are a good way for students to practise discussion, turn taking and expressing a point of view. For large classes a rolling debate can work well – divide the class into 2 and give them the topic for the debate (for example, ‘School uniform should be abolished’). Make one group for the idea, the other against. The students can prepare their points for the debate working together or alone, perhaps limiting them to three points of argument.
- The students then line up facing one another. Each pair debates their point for a set amount of time, say 2 minutes for the ‘For’ and 2 for the ‘Against’ with a further minute for discussion and agreement or disagreement. After 5 minutes, one line moves down so that each student has a new partner and the debate can happen again until several rotations have taken place.
- In feedback, the students can reflect on whether their opinion was changed by what they heard and discuss solutions. In very large classes, there can be several smaller groups of for and against working together at the same time.
- The students can also practise problem solving. Give students scenarios to work on together with the aim of presenting a proposed solution to the class.

Follow-up questions

Objectives

The aim of this is for the candidates to show that they are able to interact with fluency and spontaneity and take an active part in discussions.

Focus of Task

The focus is for the candidate to show that they can enter unprepared into conversation and speak fluently and spontaneously and give opinions on familiar and unfamiliar matters. The examiner will ask the candidates questions in order to elicit Class IX language.

Teaching Tips

- The students need to practise their general discussion skills. Cue cards with conversation starter questions on them are a good way to get every student involved in a discussion. The students can mingle as a whole class or in smaller groups asking one another questions and practising their responses.
- To involve the students further, they can be responsible for creating the materials for the activity by each writing some questions. They could for example write one question about something familiar (what is your favourite school subject and why?) and one about something unfamiliar (what do think it is like to live in another country?). Encourage them to produce open ended questions.
- When mingling the students should aim to respond fluently and in sentences, not simply with yes or no answers.
- Familiarise yourself with the language functions for Class XI. When monitoring the students, try to encourage them to use more complicated forms in their questions and answers for example questions using conditional forms (If you weren't at school today, what would you be doing?) or future forms (Where will you be in ten years time?).

Performance Descriptors

	5	4	3	2	1
INTERACTIVE COMPETENCE					
Task Management	Contributions are highly effective and fulfil the task. Can fulfil the communicative functions of the level with spontaneity. Is prompt to initiate discussions on the themes/ functions at the given level appropriately.	Contributions are effective and fulfill the task. Can fulfil the communicative functions of the level. Is easily able to initiate discussions on the themes/ functions at the given level appropriately. Contributes effectively to keep the interaction going and takes turn appropriately. Speaks with a fair sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. May be less confident in formal situations.	Contributions are adequate and fulfil the task. Can fulfil functions of the level but may not do so consistently. Is able to initiate discussions on the themes/ functions at the given level. Makes an effort to keep the interaction going; takes turns. Speaks with an awareness of purpose and audience may not adapt register effectively. Contributions are appropriate to the context/ situation.	Contributions are limited and there is some attempt at the task which is not fulfilled and/or may be repetitive. Struggles to initiate discussions on the themes/functions at the given level. Makes little effort to keep the interaction going. Has unclear sense of purpose and may be unable to adapt register. Contributions may be unconnected to the context/ situation.	There is almost no contribution and/or related to the task or recites from memory when performing the task. Does not initiate discussions. Makes no effort to keep the interaction going. Has hardly any sense of purpose and cannot adapt to register.
Initiation	Contributes spontaneously to keep the interaction going; takes turns appropriately. Speaks with a clear sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. Contributions are always appropriate to the context/ situation.	Contributes effectively to keep the interaction going and takes turn appropriately. Speaks with a fair sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. May be less confident in formal situations.	Contributes to the interaction; takes turns. Speaks with an awareness of purpose and audience may not adapt register effectively. Contributions are appropriate to the context/ situation.	Struggles to initiate discussions on the themes/functions at the given level. Makes little effort to keep the interaction going. Has unclear sense of purpose and may be unable to adapt register. Contributions may be unconnected to the context/ situation.	Does not initiate discussions. Makes no effort to keep the interaction going. Has hardly any sense of purpose and cannot adapt to register.
Turn-taking	Contributes spontaneously to keep the interaction going; takes turns appropriately. Speaks with a clear sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. Contributions are always appropriate to the context/ situation.	Contributes effectively to keep the interaction going and takes turn appropriately. Speaks with a fair sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. May be less confident in formal situations.	Contributes to the interaction; takes turns. Speaks with an awareness of purpose and audience may not adapt register effectively. Contributions are appropriate to the context/ situation.	Struggles to initiate discussions on the themes/functions at the given level. Makes little effort to keep the interaction going. Has unclear sense of purpose and may be unable to adapt register. Contributions may be unconnected to the context/ situation.	Does not initiate discussions. Makes no effort to keep the interaction going. Has hardly any sense of purpose and cannot adapt to register.
Appropriacy	Contributes spontaneously to keep the interaction going; takes turns appropriately. Speaks with a clear sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. Contributions are always appropriate to the context/ situation.	Contributes effectively to keep the interaction going and takes turn appropriately. Speaks with a fair sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. May be less confident in formal situations.	Contributes to the interaction; takes turns. Speaks with an awareness of purpose and audience may not adapt register effectively. Contributions are appropriate to the context/ situation.	Struggles to initiate discussions on the themes/functions at the given level. Makes little effort to keep the interaction going. Has unclear sense of purpose and may be unable to adapt register. Contributions may be unconnected to the context/ situation.	Does not initiate discussions. Makes no effort to keep the interaction going. Has hardly any sense of purpose and cannot adapt to register.
Relevance	Contributes spontaneously to keep the interaction going; takes turns appropriately. Speaks with a clear sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. Contributions are always appropriate to the context/ situation.	Contributes effectively to keep the interaction going and takes turn appropriately. Speaks with a fair sense of purpose and audience in both formal and informal situations. May be less confident in formal situations.	Contributes to the interaction; takes turns. Speaks with an awareness of purpose and audience may not adapt register effectively. Contributions are appropriate to the context/ situation.	Struggles to initiate discussions on the themes/functions at the given level. Makes little effort to keep the interaction going. Has unclear sense of purpose and may be unable to adapt register. Contributions may be unconnected to the context/ situation.	Does not initiate discussions. Makes no effort to keep the interaction going. Has hardly any sense of purpose and cannot adapt to register.
FLUENCY					
Cohesion	Presents information in a logical sequence of linked utterances with a clear connection between ideas, arguments and statements. Uses a range of cohesive devices. Speak fluently with minimal hesitation. Intelligent speed of delivery.	Presents information in a logical sequence of linked utterances with a connection between ideas, arguments and statements. Uses with ease some cohesive devices. Speaks fluently with some hesitation. Intelligent speed of delivery.	Presents information generally in a logical order but overall progression may not always be clear. Uses a range of cohesive devices but some over/under use. Coherence may be affected by hesitancy or rephrasing. Intelligent speed of delivery	Presents information but without clear progression. Uses limited cohesive devices repetitively. Severe hesitation may impede communication. Speed of delivery impedes understanding	Presents information with no progression and/or little control of organisational features. May use only isolated words and phrases.
Coherence	Presents information in a logical sequence of linked utterances with a clear connection between ideas, arguments and statements. Uses a range of cohesive devices. Speak fluently with minimal hesitation. Intelligent speed of delivery.	Presents information in a logical sequence of linked utterances with a connection between ideas, arguments and statements. Uses with ease some cohesive devices. Speaks fluently with some hesitation. Intelligent speed of delivery.	Presents information generally in a logical order but overall progression may not always be clear. Uses a range of cohesive devices but some over/under use. Coherence may be affected by hesitancy or rephrasing. Intelligent speed of delivery	Presents information but without clear progression. Uses limited cohesive devices repetitively. Severe hesitation may impede communication. Speed of delivery impedes understanding	Presents information with no progression and/or little control of organisational features. May use only isolated words and phrases.
Speed of Delivery	Presents information in a logical sequence of linked utterances with a clear connection between ideas, arguments and statements. Uses a range of cohesive devices. Speak fluently with minimal hesitation. Intelligent speed of delivery.	Presents information in a logical sequence of linked utterances with a connection between ideas, arguments and statements. Uses with ease some cohesive devices. Speaks fluently with some hesitation. Intelligent speed of delivery.	Presents information generally in a logical order but overall progression may not always be clear. Uses a range of cohesive devices but some over/under use. Coherence may be affected by hesitancy or rephrasing. Intelligent speed of delivery	Presents information but without clear progression. Uses limited cohesive devices repetitively. Severe hesitation may impede communication. Speed of delivery impedes understanding	Presents information with no progression and/or little control of organisational features. May use only isolated words and phrases.
PRONUNCIATION					
Pronunciation	Has clear, natural pronunciation that can be easily understood by the listener. Correctly places stress and varies intonation in order to express finer shades of meaning appropriate to the context.	Has pronunciation that can be easily understood by the listener. Often varies stress and intonation in keeping with the task, content & meaning.	Is intelligible though there are examples of some mispronunciation. Tries to vary stress and intonation according to task, content and meaning.	Is not always intelligible and the listener may have to ask for repetition from time to time. Flat intonation and/or inappropriate stress for the task, content or meaning.	Is not intelligible. Evidence of speech patterns related to recitation.
Stress	Has clear, natural pronunciation that can be easily understood by the listener. Correctly places stress and varies intonation in order to express finer shades of meaning appropriate to the context.	Has pronunciation that can be easily understood by the listener. Often varies stress and intonation in keeping with the task, content & meaning.	Is intelligible though there are examples of some mispronunciation. Tries to vary stress and intonation according to task, content and meaning.	Is not always intelligible and the listener may have to ask for repetition from time to time. Flat intonation and/or inappropriate stress for the task, content or meaning.	Is not intelligible. Evidence of speech patterns related to recitation.
Intonation	Has clear, natural pronunciation that can be easily understood by the listener. Correctly places stress and varies intonation in order to express finer shades of meaning appropriate to the context.	Has pronunciation that can be easily understood by the listener. Often varies stress and intonation in keeping with the task, content & meaning.	Is intelligible though there are examples of some mispronunciation. Tries to vary stress and intonation according to task, content and meaning.	Is not always intelligible and the listener may have to ask for repetition from time to time. Flat intonation and/or inappropriate stress for the task, content or meaning.	Is not intelligible. Evidence of speech patterns related to recitation.
LANGUAGE					
Range	Uses an expressive and appropriate range of structures, words and phrases on topics appropriate to the level and to deliver an effective message. Uses vocabulary and grammatical patterns with accuracy, including some complex forms. Makes only negligible errors.	Uses an appropriate range of grammar and words and phrases on topics appropriate to the level. These may be repetitive. Uses vocabulary and grammatical patterns with accuracy, including a few complex forms and makes hardly any noticeable errors.	Can use the language of the level but is repetitive. May search for words with the risk of the message becoming weaker. There may be some vocabulary or grammatical mistakes which affect meaning but there is an attempt to correct most of these mistakes.	There may be some effort in finding suitable words, which may hamper the message. Uses basic, simple words and phrases for the level. There are vocabulary and/or grammatical mistakes which affect meaning but there is hardly any attempt to correct these mistakes.	Uses simple, isolated words for the level. There is little effort to find words. Communicates with fragments of words and structures but does not manage to bridge the gaps or correct his/her mistakes.
Accuracy	Uses an expressive and appropriate range of structures, words and phrases on topics appropriate to the level and to deliver an effective message. Uses vocabulary and grammatical patterns with accuracy, including some complex forms. Makes only negligible errors.	Uses an appropriate range of grammar and words and phrases on topics appropriate to the level. These may be repetitive. Uses vocabulary and grammatical patterns with accuracy, including a few complex forms and makes hardly any noticeable errors.	Can use the language of the level but is repetitive. May search for words with the risk of the message becoming weaker. There may be some vocabulary or grammatical mistakes which affect meaning but there is an attempt to correct most of these mistakes.	There may be some effort in finding suitable words, which may hamper the message. Uses basic, simple words and phrases for the level. There are vocabulary and/or grammatical mistakes which affect meaning but there is hardly any attempt to correct these mistakes.	Uses simple, isolated words for the level. There is little effort to find words. Communicates with fragments of words and structures but does not manage to bridge the gaps or correct his/her mistakes.
<i>If a student is unable to respond in English in the two assessed phases, he or she should be marked NM (no marks)</i>					