

The image features two black silhouettes of human heads in profile, facing each other. A black speech bubble is positioned between them, containing white text. The background is a light blue gradient.

Understanding the
Speaking &
Listening Test



What are the guidelines for retesting?

**Students are retested
after about 80 hours of
instruction. Typically, that's
once per year**





What subjects are tested?

That depends on your student.



**For Basic Literacy students:
Reading and/or Math**



**For a select few
ESOL students:
Reading & Writing**



**But for MOST
ESOL students:
Speaking & Listening**





**What areas assessed in the
Speaking & Listening test?**

**Listening comprehension,
Language complexity, and
Communication**





**How is Listening
Comprehension judged?**

**How well did the examinee
understand the setup and
question?**



**Answers are scored
from 0 to 2**





What response results in a 0?

**Response indicates
complete misunderstanding of setup and
question (even with one repetition), or
No response, response incomprehensible,
or response inappropriate**





What response results in a 1?

**Setup and question
need to be repeated before examinee
responds appropriately, or
Response indicates partial understanding of
setup and question**





What response results in a 2?

**Response indicates
appropriate understanding of the setup
and question without repetition (though
examinee may have checked
comprehension)**





What about Language
Complexity? How is that
assessed?

Here we're looking at how
did the examinee organize and
elaborate the response.



Scored from 0 to 4.



**A score of 0 in Listening
Comprehension gets a score of
0 in Complexity as well.**





What response results in a 1?

Words, phrase(s), or simple sentence(s) (i.e., S-V-O) used to provide basic information with no elaboration; limited vocabulary





What response results in a 2?

Uses long strings of phrases or well-formed sentence(s) with emerging complexity (e.g., use of “because,” “if,” “but”) to provide some additional detail that is minimal but beyond basic





What response results in a 3?

Uses strings of several sentences to provide additive detail, often through phrases and clauses (e.g., prepositional phrases, adverbial clauses, subordination); elaboration clearly beyond minimum.





What response results in a 4?

Sustains a variety of structures; develops an idea in detail (using reasons, examples, explanations, descriptions, etc.); vocabulary more precise; response cohesive and often organized.





**And Communication? How is
that assessed?**

Here we're looking at how clearly did the examinee communicate meaning.



Scored from 0 to 3.



**A score of 0 in
Listening Comprehension
results in a score of 0 in
Communication as well.**





What response results in a 1?

**Response is comprehensible
but generally difficult to understand
(Much effort is required by the listener
to fill in to understand meaning.
Confusions may exist.)**





What response results in a 2?

**Response is comprehensible but
sporadically difficult to understand.
(From time to time the listener needs to
fill in to understand meaning.)**





What response results in a 3?

**Response is comprehensible
and easy to understand. (Despite
inaccuracies, the listener does not need
to fill in to understand meaning)**





All of this seems very subjective. How do you make sure you treat each student fairly?

It is subjective, but we follow rubrics that map out what we are supposed to look for.



Also all assessors must be certified to NRS standards and must be recertified every two years.






**But you guys talk to
people with accents who
speak with all levels of
ability all the time.**



**Wouldn't it be easier for
you to understand than for
the average person?**

Yes, but we're trained to look at it from the average person's point of view.





**What kinds of questions
do you ask? Is it the same for
every student?**

**The questions are general
knowledge questions and
designed so anyone can answer
them.**



Many questions deal with the student's family, home culture, and daily life.



**Some questions deal with tasks
like shopping or work around
the house.**





**Is it the same for every
student?**

**The test is adaptive.
The first 6 questions are the
same for everyone.**



**Then the test branches off
into different difficulty levels
based on the student's
responses to those.**



We have some sample questions in the link that I'll put in the chat.





**So when you've finished,
this spits out the level you
tell us?**

Well, not exactly.



**The score report gives
us a Scale Score, a Student
Performance Level, and
an NRS level.**





**That's confusing. Which
of those is the level
you tell us?**

None of them.



The level we give
you aligns with the English
Language Proficiency Standards
and the textbook series.





**That makes this process a lot
clear. Thanks!**

I'm glad. Are there any other questions?

