

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT SAMPLE TASKS
FRENCH SPEAKING

PRELIMINARY

Asset Languages

Preliminary French Speaking

External Assessment sample

This sample material has been provided to help you get a feel for the style of tasks and the level of Asset Languages External Assessment.

Please see our website www.assetlanguages.org.uk for the most up-to-date information and new materials as they become available in other languages and stages.

Asset Languages

Preliminary stage speaking tests

This booklet is for teachers who will act as examiners for Preliminary stage speaking tests. The following pages provide guidelines on assessing candidates and conducting the tests.

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Guidelines for assessment

Understanding the standard of Preliminary

Before conducting a speaking test, ensure that you are familiar with the standard of the Preliminary stage as described by the Languages Ladder statements.

Languages Ladder Statements – Speaking

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Grade 4 | I can take part in a simple conversation and I can express my opinions. |
| Grade 5 | I can give a short prepared talk, on a topic of my choice, including expressing my opinions. |
| Grade 6 | I can give a short prepared talk, on a topic of my choice, expressing opinions and answering simple questions about it. |

On *completing* this stage, you should be able to use and adapt learned language relating to a range of predictable everyday matters. Your pronunciation should be clear and you should be able to maintain a simple conversation using strategies such as asking for clarification or repetition. You should be able to recognise the difference between past, present and future events and be familiar with simple forms of the verb tenses.

During the speaking test, you will determine whether candidates have demonstrated these grades by assessing their performance in terms of the language they use and communication they achieve.

Language

This refers to the candidate's knowledge of and ability to use vocabulary and structures to convey meaning. Preliminary candidates are expected to have a range of language resources relating to predictable everyday matters, including the use of simple forms of tenses, for example the 'near' future and the ability to express opinions. Your assessment will evaluate a candidate's success in using these resources with sufficient range, accuracy and appropriacy.

Communication

This refers to a candidate's ability to take part in the tasks appropriately and with a reasonable degree of fluency. Hesitations while the candidate searches for language are expected but should not overly interfere with communication. The candidate is also expected to use strategies to maintain or repair communication if necessary, for example, asking for things to be repeated, indicating that things have not been understood and self-correcting. There should be a good attempt to use the target language pronunciation and a minimum of effort needed by the listener for understanding.

Structure of Preliminary speaking tests

The following table shows the activities that make up a speaking test.

	Content	Format	Assessment	Test time	Weighting
Part 1, task 1 Personal information	Personal questions on a topic	Candidate and teacher only	Conducted, assessed and recorded by a teacher Moderated by OCR	1 to 1½ minutes	60%
Part 1, task 2 Interaction	Picture-based task: description and questions	Candidate and teacher only	Conducted, assessed and recorded by a teacher Moderated by OCR	2½ to 3 minutes	
Part 2 Presentation	Candidate talks on a prepared topic and answers questions	Candidate and teacher only or candidate to a group	Conducted and assessed by a teacher	2 minutes	40%

Applying the assessment criteria

During a speaking test, assess candidates by applying the criteria shown in the table on page 5. You award each candidate one language mark and one communication mark for each of part 1 and part 2, giving four marks in total.



Ensure that you give marks for part 1 and part 2.

To award a language or communication mark:

- 1 Choose which band (0, 1, 2 or 3) best describes a candidate's performance.

Normally you will assign a candidate to band 1, 2 or 3. If it is considered that the response is only equal to that of a Breakthrough learner then it is appropriate to award 0 as this is interpreted as the learner being at Breakthrough level.

- 2 Each band is then subdivided into three levels, e.g. .1, .2 and .3.

This allows you to discriminate within each band to say that the level has been fully achieved (.3), partially achieved (.2) or minimally achieved (.1).

So, for example, you would award a language mark of 3.2 to a candidate whose performance you think is best described as 'partially achieving the language criteria for band 3'.

The 'Completing a mark sheet' section on page 6 explains how to record a candidate's marks on a mark sheet.

Preliminary assessment criteria

This mark scheme is to be interpreted at Preliminary standard.

Language	
A range of structures is used successfully. There may be a few grammatical errors. A range of vocabulary is used.	Band 3 3.3, 3.2, 3.1
There is an attempt to use a range of structures. There are some grammatical errors. There is an attempt to use a range of vocabulary.	Band 2 2.3, 2.2, 2.1
A range of simple structures is used. Grammatical errors are evident. A limited range of vocabulary is used.	Band 1 1.3, 1.2, 1.1
Response below Preliminary (grade 4) level.	Band 0
Communication	
The main points of the task are communicated. Responses are sometimes extended. Hesitations do not make communication difficult. Simple strategies to repair or clarify communication can be used when needed. There is a good attempt to use the target language pronunciation. Understanding requires little effort from the listener.	Band 3 3.3, 3.2, 3.1
Some of the main points of the task are communicated. Responses are not usually extended. Hesitation can sometimes make communication difficult. There is an attempt to repair or clarify communication when needed. There is some attempt to use the target language pronunciation. Understanding requires some effort from the listener.	Band 2 2.3, 2.2, 2.1
Few of the main points of the task are communicated. Responses are not extended. Hesitation makes communication difficult. There is no attempt to repair or clarify communication when needed. There is little attempt to use the target language pronunciation. Understanding requires considerable effort from the listener.	Band 1 1.3, 1.2, 1.1
Response below Preliminary (grade 4) level.	Band 0

Completing a mark sheet

The facing page shows an example of a completed mark sheet, and the following notes explain how to complete the various sections.

Using a PENCIL, complete one mark sheet for each candidate. The Examination Details, Centre No. and Centre Name will already have been completed.



Before completing the mark sheets, ask your Examinations Officer for a list of candidate numbers for your students.

Accredited Teacher No. – leave this box empty.

Candidate Name – write the candidate's first name and family name.

Candidate No. – write the number in the top row of boxes, then confirm the number by shading the appropriate boxes in the grid below.

Ensure that the number you enter on this mark sheet matches the number supplied by the Examinations Officer. If they do not match, candidates might not receive their grades.

What is the candidate's first language? – Select one of the languages listed or, if a suitable language is not listed, write the language in the box provided.

Task attempted – mark the number of the set of visual materials you used in part 1 task 2.

Marks awarded – for part 1 and part 2, you must award ONLY ONE mark in each row (Language and Communication). If you need to change a mark, rub out the original mark and underline the new one.



Note that the final 'To be completed by the Moderator' section of the mark sheet is for completion by an External Moderator and not by your centre.

Preparing Preliminary speaking tests

Any teacher can conduct a Preliminary speaking test and is responsible for ensuring that the test is conducted correctly.

Before conducting a speaking test, read through this booklet to familiarise yourself with the test structure, the test topics and vocabulary. This familiarity will help you to select the best task for each candidate and to ensure that you use a variety of topics. Please note that this booklet is for use for one academic year.

Managing time

The total duration of all the assessed activities in a test should be 6 minutes. This allowance does not include the time required to introduce a candidate, or for any administrative activities.

Throughout the test, keep a careful track of the time. Move through the tasks appropriately, ensuring that each candidate is given the opportunity to demonstrate their ability by responding fully to the whole range of prompts. Allocate the full time to each task so that every candidate has a fair opportunity to speak. When the required time for the task has passed, do not ask further questions that will cause the test to overrun. When a candidate has finished the activities for a task, bring the task to a clear finish.

Separating the test parts

You can conduct part 2 of a speaking test separately from part 1 at any convenient time before or after it.

Choosing topics and pictures for assessments

For this booklet, we have selected topics and pictures that allow a range of vocabulary to be covered. Use the full range of material available and vary the topics and tasks for different candidates. Ensure that you do not repeat areas of vocabulary in the test. For example, the topic you choose for the personal information task must be different from the subject of the candidate's presentation.

Using questions correctly

When you act as an examiner, be aware that your technique can significantly influence how well a candidate can demonstrate their ability to speak a language.

For part 1 task 1

- Only use the questions provided in this booklet. However, you can subsequently rephrase a question to assist a candidate who is struggling.
- When rephrasing questions, use open questions (for example, 'What do you do at the weekend?') rather than using closed questions (for example, 'Do you play tennis?'), which only require yes/no answers.

For part 1 task 2

For the *Photo content* statement, only use the statements provided in this booklet. For the *General comment* questions, use the questions in the booklet, but if necessary your own topic-related questions may be used. These questions must allow the candidate to focus on their own personal response to the picture/topic and allow opportunity for the candidate to express their opinions.

- Target questions at any aspect of the topic.
- The language tested in the statements and questions should not overlap.
- Ensure that your language is at the appropriate level for the Preliminary stage.

Avoiding malpractice

When you conduct speaking tests, take care to follow the guidelines in this booklet and to be consistent and impartial in your dealings with candidates. If you deviate significantly from recommended practice, you risk arousing suspicions of 'malpractice'. We consider malpractice to be any attempt to give an unfair advantage, or any breach of the regulations governing the conduct of assessment that may threaten the integrity of Asset Languages. So remember:

- use a variety of topics from this booklet when testing a group of students; you must not give all candidates the same tasks
- although it is important to prepare candidates for a speaking test, you must not coach them to the point where questions are rehearsed
- to ensure fairness to all candidates, take care to respect the timings for each task.

Choosing a suitable location for conducting tests

For part 1 tasks

Before conducting the part 1 tasks, find and reserve a room that is suitable both for assessing candidates and for recording the test sessions.

Look for a room that:

- can accommodate yourself and a candidate in reasonable comfort
- is equipped with two chairs and a table or desk suitable for placing a cassette recorder and microphone
- is sufficiently quiet to avoid distractions and to permit you to make good quality recordings
- provides suitable conditions for a test: acceptable air temperature, ventilation, lighting and cleanliness
- does not display any materials that might help candidates during tests.

Later, when conducting tests, ensure that you maintain an ordered and quiet atmosphere.

If you designate another location as a waiting area, it should be some distance from the test room. Also, it should ideally contain enough chairs for candidates to sit while they wait.

For part 2

The requirements for part 2 are less demanding because you do not have to record candidates' presentations. However, you must ensure that you choose a room that provides the furniture and power supply that you need to work with an OHP or any other equipment needed to support the presentations. Also, if you choose to hold the presentations in front of a class or group, you need a room that can comfortably accommodate more people.

Controlling the quality of recordings

Before conducting any speaking tests, make a brief test recording in the test room. Listen to the recording to check that the microphone is suitably positioned on the table or desk to capture clearly the voices of both yourself and candidates. Also, after recording the first candidate, listen to the quality of the recorded sound to confirm that it is clear and comprehensible.

From time to time during a task, check the cassette recorder to confirm that it is still recording.

Labelling cassettes and cassette boxes

After completing the tests, you must clearly and securely label each cassette and its box with the assessment title, assessment code, centre name and centre number.

While you conduct tests, keep accurate lists of the sequence in which you record candidates. Then, in each cassette box, provide a list of candidates recorded on the relevant cassette (in the order you have recorded them) and all their candidate numbers. Also, distinguish between candidates recorded on side A and on side B. This information is to enable the External Moderator to identify which candidates appear on any particular cassette.

Conducting Preliminary speaking tests

Requirements for both part 1 tasks

For every candidate, record both part 1 tasks. Record no more than 10 candidates on each side of a 90-minute cassette. During the tests, use a watch or alarm clock to keep track of time.

Materials needed:

- this *Examiner's Booklet*
- a *Candidate's Booklet*
- candidate mark sheets
- a cassette recorder
- cassettes (provided by OCR)
- an external microphone
- a watch or clock, preferably with a second hand, suitable for timing the test.

Conducting task 1 of part 1 – Personal information task

The aim of task 1 is to give each candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to answer questions related to their life and circumstances.



Duration: 1 to 1½ minutes.

Before you begin the task, ensure that the cassette recorder is recording.

To conduct task 1

- 1 At the beginning of each recording, state clearly:
'Centre [number], [language], [stage] Asset Speaking Tests.'
- 2 Before you begin your assessment of each candidate, state clearly:
'Candidate [number], [candidate name].'
- 3 Read the opening English instructions to the candidate.
- 4 Read the opening greeting in the target language.
- 5 Choose questions from any topic, as long as the questions are suitable for the candidate.
- 6 Choose one topic only from this booklet and ask questions for up to 1½ minutes.

If a candidate struggles with a specific question or topic, try another question from any part 1 task 1 page.

Conducting task 2 of part 1 – Interaction task

The aim of task 2 is to give the candidate the opportunity to speak spontaneously and to respond to questions.



Duration: 2½ to 3 minutes.

To conduct task 2

- 1 Select a picture task and pass the *Candidate's Booklet*, open at the relevant task, to the candidate.
- 2 Announce the number and title of the picture for the cassette recorder.
- 3 Read the instructions in English to the candidate.
- 4 Wait 15 seconds to allow the candidate to look at the picture.
- 5 Read each statement in the *Photo content* box to the candidate, allowing good time for each of the responses. You must only use these statements. Prompt the candidate where necessary.
- 6 Ask the candidate questions from the *General comment* box. When a candidate struggles, prompt them or rephrase the question if possible.
- 7 Continue asking questions until 3 minutes have passed.
- 8 Record your assessment for part 1 on the mark sheet.

Conducting part 2 - Presentation

The aim of part 2 is to give the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to speak uninterrupted about a prepared topic and to answer questions about it.

You can conduct part 2 separately from part 1, at any convenient time before or after it. Also, you can opt to conduct this part in front of a small group or class.



Do not record this part of the speaking test.



Duration: 2 minutes.

Materials needed:

- this *Examiner's Booklet*
- candidate mark sheets
- a watch or clock, preferably with a second hand, suitable for timing the test
- an OHP, a projector or any other appropriate presentation equipment.

Preparation

Decide when to conduct the presentation. In advance of the test, ask each candidate to prepare a 1 to 1½ minute presentation.

You may conduct this part alone with a candidate or in front of a group or class. If you choose this second option, introduce part 2 to the group before the assessment begins. Stress to all group members that they:

- must remain silent throughout
- must not distract or interrupt candidates in any way during the presentations
- may only ask you questions, or interact with each other, after you have told them that part 2 is over.

Content of a presentation

Each presentation should be an account of something the candidate is familiar with (for example, a description of a holiday/place of interest), or a 'promotional' presentation in which the candidate describes or recommends something (for example, a hobby or a place), or the candidate can give instructions or advice on how to do something (for example, cookery or how to plan a party).

A candidate must not bring any written notes to their presentation but may bring up to three visual prompts (containing no text) such as OHTs, PowerPoint slides, objects or photos.

To conduct a part 2 assessment

- 1 Introduce the part in English by reading from the 'Presentation' section in this booklet.
- 2 Read the target language introduction.
- 3 Listen to the candidate and only intervene if communication breaks down completely. In such a case, prompt and encourage the candidate.
- 4 When the candidate has finished, ask two questions in the target language about the presentation. The questions should be asking for basic, factual details or very simple opinions.
- 5 Read the closing statement to the candidate.
- 6 Record your assessment for part 2 on the mark sheet and bring the test to a formal close.

At this point you and other students may interact with the candidate in the usual way. This interaction does not form part of the assessment.

After completing tests

Ensure that you have completed all the mark sheets and labelled all the cassettes correctly.

If more than one teacher at your centre is conducting and marking the same speaking test, the centre must ensure that all teachers are marking to the same standard (standardisation) before submitting the tests to OCR.

After standardisation, hand all mark sheets and cassettes to the Examinations Officer for despatch to OCR for moderation. This moderation ensures that OCR standards are applied uniformly across all centres.

Support documents

For more support with conducting speaking tests, the following documents are available.

External Assessment Reference Guide

Ask your Examinations Officer for this guide, or download it from <http://www.assetlanguages.org.uk/examsofficers/default.aspx>.

The guide provides more information on administration and marks submission, when you can conduct speaking tests, the equipment needed, recording candidates, standardisation and submitting test marks with recordings.

Applying Speaking Criteria Booklet

See the accompanying letter for an application form to request this booklet, or download it from <http://www.assetlanguages.org.uk>.

The booklet provides more information on the Preliminary standard. It also contains a DVD with sample speaking tests, with accompanying marking commentaries, as well as tips for conducting a speaking test.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY CONTEXT

Part 1: Task 1 1 – 1 ½ minutes

Introduction	Centre [number]. French Preliminary Asset Speaking Tests. Candidate [number]. [Candidate name]. Hello. Come in and sit down. We're going to do your French Speaking test. We'll do most of it in French, but I'll tell you some things in English, so you know what to do. Right, let's start.
Not assessed	Bon, maintenant en français. Je m'appelle Xxx. Comment tu t'appelles ? Bon, on commence.

Note: Choose only one topic and ask questions to help elicit a 1-1 ½ minute conversation. If a candidate struggles with a specific question or topic, try another one from any Task 1 page.

Ta journée	Maintenant on va parler de ta journée. A quelle heure tu te lèves d'habitude ? Qu'est-ce que tu manges au petit déjeuner ? Comment vas-tu à l'école ? Qu'est-ce que tu fais à la récréation / à l'école ? Quels vêtements tu portes à l'école (habituellement) ? Que fais-tu le soir ?
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In the Examiner's booklet, three topics are provided for both Primary/Secondary and for Post-16 contexts.

TEACHERS SHOULD ADAPT THE TEXT TO THE APPROPRIATE FORM OF ADDRESS

1

Helping at home

Part 1: Task 2 2 ½ – 3 minutes

Introduction	Now I will speak in English again. Here is a picture which shows a boy washing a car [give photo to candidate]. Have a look at it and then I will ask you some questions about it. <i>[wait 15 seconds]</i>
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Photo content	Bon, maintenant en français. Parle-moi de l'endroit sur cette photo. Parle-moi de la personne sur cette photo.
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General comment	Que fait le garçon ? A qui appartient la voiture à ton avis ? Qui lave la voiture dans ta famille ? Tu aides souvent à la maison ? Quand ? Qu'est-ce que tu fais quand tu aides à la maison ? Tu gagnes de l'argent pour cela ? Qu'en penses-tu ?
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In the Examiner's booklet, four picture tasks are provided for French, German, Italian and Spanish.
For all other languages, three picture tasks are provided.

1

Helping at home



Part 2: 2 minutes

TEACHERS SHOULD ADAPT THE TEXT TO THE APPROPRIATE FORM OF ADDRESS

Presentation	<p>Right, let's speak in English again. Now I'd like to hear your presentation, and then I'll ask you two questions.</p> <p>Bon, maintenant en français.</p> <p>Je t'écoute. Tu peux commencer maintenant ?</p> <p>Merci.</p> <p><i>[Ask 2 questions]</i></p> <p>Let's finish in English. That's the end of your speaking test.</p>
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