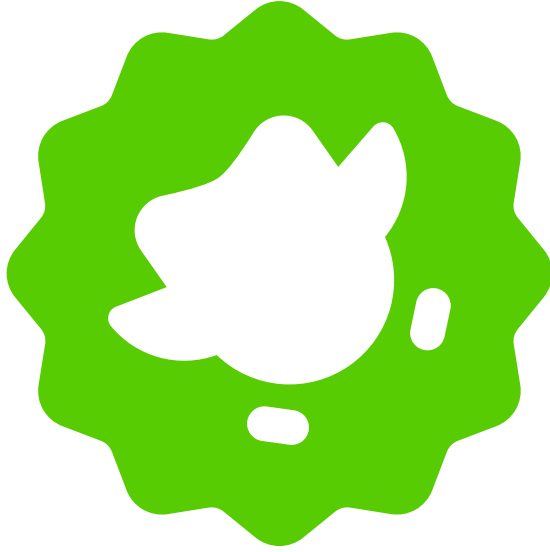




duolingo english test



Scoring Guide



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8 Glossary

1. Introduction

The Duolingo English Test (DET) is an English proficiency exam offered by Duolingo. The test is designed to assess an individual's English language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing using AI. It is available online and can be taken at any time.

The Duolingo English Test is also computer adaptive. Computer-adaptive tests change the difficulty of the questions based on the test taker's performance in the test as it progresses. For example, if a test taker gets a question wrong, then the next question will be easier. And if a test taker gets a question correct, then the following question will be more difficult. Adjusting the questions to match the test taker's skill level creates a more efficient test experience. It means that test takers will not waste time answering questions which are too easy or too difficult.

The DET evaluates the English level of each test taker using AI. The DET AI is trained to understand language ability the same way that people do. This Scoring Guide will show how the DET AI calculates scores for each test taker. We hope this guide will empower test takers with a better understanding of the DET.

2. Duolingo English Test Scores

2.1 Overall Score

After completing the DET, test takers receive an overall score. The maximum score for the DET is 160. The minimum score is 10. Scores are given in 5-point increments (i.e., 10, 15, 20, 25, etc.). The DET score scale is aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). The CEFR is an international standard of language proficiency.

2.2 Subscores

Test takers also receive eight subscores. There are four individual subscores and four integrated subscores.

The four individual subscores are:

- Listening
- Reading
- Speaking
- Writing





Weighted combinations from answers to different questions contribute to each skill subscore. For example, weighted scores from the Listen and Type and Listen and Respond contribute to the Listening subscore.

There are also four integrated subscores. They are:

- Literacy (reading and writing)
- Conversation (speaking and listening)
- Comprehension (reading and listening)
- Production (speaking and writing)



These are calculated by averaging the individual subscores and rounding to the nearest five. For example, a test taker's score for production would be the sum of their speaking and writing subscores, divided by two.

Like the overall score, subscores are given on a scale of 10-160. The overall score is an average of the four individual subscores. There may be a small difference between the average of the integrated subscores and the overall scores, due to rounding.

2.3 Sharing DET Results

Once their test is certified, test takers receive an email. This email tells them that their test has been certified and their results are ready. Test takers should then log in to their accounts. Test scores can be found in the 'My Results' section of a test taker's home page. From there test takers can send their scores to universities and schools by clicking the 'Send Results' button. Test takers must confirm their selections before the scores are sent.

Test takers can send their test results to an unlimited number of universities and schools at no cost. The results are sent electronically, and the institutions can access these as soon as they are sent.

2.4 How Institutions Use Results

Most institutions use the DET as a measure of test takers' English ability. Based on the results, institutions make decisions about admissions and placements. This is similar to how other English proficiency tests are used. Many institutions set minimum score levels for admissions. Check each university's website for information about their requirements.

For descriptions of test questions, visit https://englishtest.duolingo.com/prepare/question_types.

As well as scores, the DET provides information about test takers through their speaking and writing samples. These are shared along with test takers' overall scores and subscores.

2.5 What Institutions See

Test takers and institutions both see the same report. As well as the report, institutions can read test takers' Writing Samples and watch their Speaking Samples. The Speaking Sample is a video recording, so institutions can see test takers as well as hear them. Institutions can use the Speaking and Writing samples to get to know test takers better and learn more about their English abilities.





3. Comparisons

3.1 Score Comparison

	IELTS	TOEFL iBT
160	8.5-9	120
155	8	119
150	8	117-118
145	7.5	113-116
140	7.5	109-112
135	7	104-108
130	7	98-103
125	6.5	93-97
120	6.5	87-92
115	6	82-86
110	6	76-81
105	6	70-75
100	5.5	65-69
95	5.5	59-64
90	5	53-58
85	5	47-52
80	5	41-46
75	4.5	35-40
70	4.5	30-34
65	4.5	24-29
10-60	0-4	0-23

For a more detailed comparison visit <https://englishtest.duolingo.com/scores>

3.2 Question Comparison

Skill	DET	IELTS	TOEFL
Listening	Listen and Respond; Listen and Type Time: 14-17 min	4 Sections Time: 30-40 min	34-51 Questions Time: 60-90 min
Reading	Fill in the Blanks; Interactive Reading; Read and Complete; Read and Select Time: 28-38 min	40 Multiple choice questions Time: 60 min	36-56 Questions Time: 60-80 min
Speaking	Listen Then Speak; Read Then Speak; Speak About the Photo; Speaking Sample; Read Aloud Time: Up to 11 min	Interview, long turn, discussion Time: 11-14 min	6 Speaking tasks Time: 20 min
Writing	Interactive Writing; Summarize the Conversation; Write About the Photo; Writing Sample Time: Up to 19 min	2 Writing Tasks Time: 60 min	2 Writing tasks Time: 50 min

3.3 Question Scoring Comparison

There are three ways in which questions are scored on the DET. Different questions use different scoring.

- Right or wrong. Answers are simply graded correct or incorrect. Details are given in section 4.
- 0 to 1 scale. Answers are graded on a scale depending on how close they are to the correct answer. Test takers get partial credit for answers which are not 'perfect'. Details are given in section 4.
- Grading criteria. Answers are graded on different aspects of test takers' language use. Details are given in sections 5 and 7.

Question type	Questions per test	Individual Subscore	Scoring
Read and Select	15-18	Reading	Right or Wrong
Fill in the Blanks	6-9	Reading	Right or Wrong
Listen and Type	6-9	Listening	0 to 1 scale
Read and Complete	3-6	Reading	Right or Wrong
Read Aloud	3-6	Speaking	0 to 1 scale



Question type	Questions per test	Individual Subscore	Scoring
Interactive Reading: Complete the Sentences	2	Reading	Right or Wrong
Interactive Reading: Complete the Passage	2	Reading	Right or Wrong
Interactive Reading: Highlight the Answer	4	Reading	0 to 1 scale
Interactive Reading: Identify the Idea	2	Reading	Right or Wrong
Interactive Reading: Title the Passage	2	Reading	Right or Wrong
Interactive Listening: Listen and Respond	2	Listening	Right or Wrong
Interactive Listening: Summarize the Conversation	2	Writing	Writing criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Grammar, and Lexis.
Write About the Photo	3	Writing	Writing criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Grammar, and Lexis.
Interactive Writing	1	Writing	Writing criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Grammar, and Lexis.
Listen, Then Speak	2	Speaking	Speaking criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Fluency, Grammar, Lexis, and Pronunciation.
Speak About the Photo	1	Speaking	Speaking criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Fluency, Grammar, Lexis, and Pronunciation.
Read, Then Speak	1	Speaking	Speaking criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Fluency, Grammar, Lexis, and Pronunciation.
Writing Sample	1	Speaking	Writing criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Grammar, and Lexis.
Speaking Sample	1	Speaking	Speaking criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Fluency, Grammar, Lexis, and Pronunciation.

4. Scoring for Comprehension Questions

All of the comprehension (listening and reading) questions on the test are computer adaptive. These are graded by the DET AI. The AI grades different questions in different ways. For more information about the question types in the DET, please see the Test Taker Guide.

4.1 Read and Complete

In Read and Complete, test takers type the missing letters to complete unfinished words in a passage. There is a correct answer for each unfinished word. Test takers' answers are marked "right" if they match the correct answer and "wrong" if they do not.

⌚ 3:00 for this question

Complete the text with the correct words

The Design of a Thermometer

The design of the modern thermometer has evolved throughout the centuries. The known was in 1593. This a thermometer water measure in . The modern was in 1714. This thermometer introduced two features, mercury and a standardized scale, which are still used in thermometers today.

CONTINUE

4.2 Fill In the Blanks

This question asks test takers to "Complete the sentence with the correct word." Test takers see a single sentence with one unfinished word. Test takers must type the missing letters in this word. Test takers are marked "right" if they spell this correctly and "wrong" if they spell it incorrectly.

⌚ 0:20 for this question

Complete the sentence with the correct word

I got up really this morning, so I'm feeling quite sleepy now.

CONTINUE



4.3 Read and Select

In this question, test takers see a word and must decide within five seconds if this is a real English word or not. Test takers will see up to 18 of these words in a row. Test takers are scored "right" when they correctly identify a word as being real or not real. They are marked "wrong" for each time they incorrectly identify a word as being real or not real.

A screenshot of the Duolingo English Test interface for a 'Read and Select' question. At the top, a timer shows '0:05 for this question'. The main text asks 'Is this a real English word?' followed by the word 'somether'. Below the word are two buttons: a blue checkmark icon with the text 'Yes' and a blue 'X' icon with the text 'No'.

4.4 Listen and Type

In Listen and Type, test takers hear a statement and then type this. Answers to this question are given a score between 0 and 1, depending on how close they are to the correct answer. The closer the response is to the correct answer, the higher the score.

A screenshot of the Duolingo English Test interface for a 'Listen and Type' question. At the top, a timer shows '1:00 for this question'. The main text asks 'Type what you hear'. Below this is a blue speaker icon with a white sound wave, and a small text label 'REPLAY (0:11)'. Underneath is a large, empty text input field. At the bottom right, there is a 'Next' button.

4.5 Read Aloud

In Read Aloud, test takers see a written statement, then read it out loud. The DET AI then transcribes what the test taker says. This transcription gets compared with the original written statement. Similarities and differences between the original written statement and the transcription are measured. This results in a score of between 0 and 1. The fewer the differences the higher the score.

⌚ 0:20 for this question

Record yourself saying the statement below



"Precipitation increased proportionally to atmospheric humidity, and hence significantly faster than global climate models predict."

RECORD ME

4.6 Interactive Reading

Interactive Reading includes five different question types. Complete the Sentences, Complete the Passage, Identify the Idea and Title the Passage are all multiple-choice questions. Answers to these questions are graded either “right” or “wrong”.

⌚ 0:00 for 6 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential _____ of various ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems _____ different components working together to manage, regulate, and _____ desired conditions in a process or conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any _____ system, control systems are _____ subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the _____ between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely _____ ensuring that the _____ conditions are met with minimal discrepancies.

Select the best option for each missing word

⌵ Select a word

⌵ Select a word

⌵ Select a word

⌵ Select a word

⌵ Select a word

⌵ Select a word

⌵ Select a word

CONTINUE

⌚ 0:00 for 5 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies.

Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust _____.

Select the best sentence to complete the passage

☐ The state machine describes how the system responds to each input and how it transitions from one state to another.

☐ PID, or Proportional-Integral-Derivative, is a commonly used control system in engineering to enhance system performance.

☐ Input-output equipment are essential parts of digital systems, and it is important to understand how they work.

☐ The greater the proportional gain, the stronger the control action will be for a given error.

CONTINUE

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⌚ 8:00 for 2 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies. Error reduction in control systems can be achieved through various methods, one of which is feedback control. Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust itself to correct this discrepancy. This adjustment can involve regulating factors such as temperature, pressure, or flow rate to bring the system back to the desired state. By continuously monitoring and adjusting, feedback

Select the idea that is expressed in the passage

- ☐ The controller can adjust the output as needed by using proportional, integral, and derivative parameters to maintain stability and precision of the system.
- ☐ Feedback control is a technique used to reduce errors in control systems by monitoring and adjusting factors to bring the system back to the desired state.
- ☐ Engineers must calculate the error, or the difference between the set point and actual temperature, and adjust the heating source accordingly.
- ☐ Control systems generally function without need for error.

CONTINUE

⌚ 8:00 for this question

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies. Error reduction in control systems can be achieved through various methods, one of which is feedback control. Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust itself to correct this discrepancy. This adjustment can involve regulating factors such as temperature, pressure, or flow rate to bring the system back to the desired state. By continuously monitoring and adjusting, feedback

Select the best title for the passage

- ☐ Analog and Digital Systems
- ☐ Power Supplies and Simple Circuits
- ☐ The Economics of Electric Power
- ☐ Electric Motor and Drive Systems
- ☐ Reducing Errors in Control Systems

CONTINUE

Highlight the Answer is graded differently. In Highlight the Answer, test takers see a question about a passage. They must click and drag to highlight the answer to the question. Test takers' answers to this question are compared to a correct answer. Test takers are given a grade between 0 and 1 based on the difference between the text they highlighted and the correct answer. The closer the test taker's answer is to the correct answer, the higher the score.

⌚ 8:00 for 4 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies. Error reduction in control systems can be achieved through various methods, one of which is feedback control. Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust itself to correct this discrepancy. This adjustment can involve regulating factors such as temperature, pressure, or flow rate to bring the system back to the desired state. By continuously monitoring and adjusting, feedback

Highlight text in the passage to answer the question below

What are some factors that can be regulated in feedback control?

Click and drag to highlight text

CONTINUE

4.7 Interactive Listening

Interactive Listening has two parts: Listen and Respond, and Summarize the Conversation. In Listen and Respond test takers participate in a conversation. They listen to a speaker, and have to select the best response each time it is their

turn from a multiple choice list. Answers to this are marked “right” or “wrong”. Summariza the Conversation is scored differently. Details of how answers to this question are scored are given in Section 7.5.



The screenshot shows a Duolingo interface for a conversation exercise. At the top, it says "4:09 for 8 questions". Below that, the instruction is "Participate in a conversation about this scenario". There is a small character icon and a text input field. Below the input field, it says "Number of places: 8". The instruction "Select the best response" is followed by three radio button options:

- ☐ Have you even considered taking up a new hobby like painting or dancing while you're studying abroad?
- ☐ I'm not sure about studying abroad, but I want to travel to Spain someday. What are your thoughts?
- ☐ Oh, that's interesting! They're both popular destinations, you know?

A "Continue" button is at the bottom right.

To learn more about how all these questions are scored, please see the DET Technical Manual on our Publications page.

(Link - <https://englishtest.duolingo.com/research/publications>)





5. Grading Criteria for Production Questions

Answers to production (speaking and writing) questions are scored by the DET AI. The AI has different scoring models for the different speaking and writing questions. Each answer is assessed on different aspects of speaking and writing. Answers to speaking questions are graded on six criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Fluency, Grammar, Lexis, and Pronunciation. Writing answers are graded on four criteria: Content, Discourse coherence, Grammar, and Lexis. We will now look at each of these criteria in turn.

5.1 Content

Task achievement / Relevance: How well does the test taker answer the question? For example, are all parts of the question fully answered? Does the test taker stay on-topic?

Appropriacy of style: Does the test taker use an appropriate level of formality for the question? For example, do they use more formal vocabulary and more complex grammar for a written essay? And do they use more first-person language when speaking about themselves?

Development: How well does the test taker present and develop their ideas? For example, do they support their opinions with details and examples?

Effect on the reader or listener: How clearly does the test taker communicate their ideas? Is the answer engaging? The effect on the reader or listener is a result of the combination of Task achievement, Appropriacy of style and Development.

5.2 Discourse coherence

Clarity: How easy is it to understand the test taker's ideas and position? This is affected by the grammar and vocabulary that the test taker uses.

Cohesion: How well are parts of the answer connected? For example, does the test taker use linking expressions and appropriate pronouns?

Progression of ideas: Does the order of ideas in the answer make sense? Logically organized ideas help make the test taker appear more convincing.

Structure (writing questions only): How well is the answer organized at a 'global' level? For example, is there a clear introduction and conclusion? Does the test taker use paragraphs where applicable, and use an appropriate format (for

example, not a bullet-point list for an essay)?

5.3 Fluency

Fluency is only assessed on speaking questions.

Speed: How easy to understand is the test taker's rate of speech? Is the rate of speech comfortable to listen to? (Note: There is no ideal speech speed).

Chunking: How naturally does the test taker pause? Does the test taker pause at the end of grammatical units (like clauses or phrases)? Do they use pauses for emphasis? Or do they pause unnaturally when trying to remember how to say something?

Breakdowns and repairs: How much does the test taker rely on filler words and repetition? How often do they start and stop? Some use of these strategies is natural. Using these too much can impact fluency.

5.4 Grammar

Grammatical complexity: Does the test taker use a range of grammatical structures to express their ideas? For example, is there a mixture of simple and complex sentences, active and passive voice, and different verb tenses?

Grammatical accuracy: How accurately are grammatical structures used? For example, is there subject-verb agreement? Are the verb tenses correct? Do grammatical mistakes make the answer difficult to understand?

Punctuation (writing questions only): How accurate is the punctuation? Do punctuation errors make the message difficult to understand?

5.5 Lexis

Lexical diversity: Does the test taker use a range of words and phrases to express themselves? Are they able to avoid repetition?

Lexical sophistication: How well does the test taker use less common words and phrases to express their ideas more precisely?

Word choice: Do the words that the test taker used make sense? Are they natural and appropriate for the question? Do errors in word choice stop the test taker from being understood?

Word formation: Are the forms of the words used, correct? For example, does the



test taker use the correct part of speech (for example “happy” or “happiness”).

Spelling (writing questions only): How accurately does the test taker spell words? (Note: US or UK spelling conventions are both acceptable.) Do spelling mistakes make the answer difficult to understand?

5.6 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is only assessed on speaking questions.

Intelligibility: How easy or difficult is it to understand the test taker’s message?

Individual sounds: How accurately does the test taker produce the sounds of English? (Note: All varieties of standard English pronunciation are acceptable.) However, test takers must use pronunciation which is easy to understand.

Word stress: How accurately does the test taker use word stress? For example, “baNAna” (correct) compared to “banaNA” (incorrect). And are they able to use word stress for emphasis or contrast? For example, “CHInese or JAPanese?”

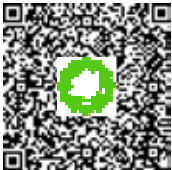
Sentence stress: How accurately does the test taker use stress? Are they able to use connected speech to maintain a natural rhythm?

Intonation: How much and how accurately does the test taker use intonation to convey meaning? For example, do they use falling intonation at the end of a list?

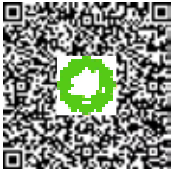


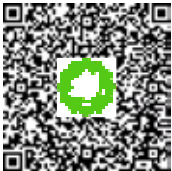
6. Sample Answers, Grades and Comments

6.1 Example Speaking Answers and Scores

Question (& Question Type)	Answer	Score Range	Explanation
What leads to overcrowding in places like prisons or schools? What can be done about it? (Listen, Then Speak)	The things that lead to overcrowding in prisons or schools is that the facility may be too small to handle the amount of people that are there, as well as the flow of the architecture, where people have to pass through several bottleneck points. To prevent the overcrowding of schools and prisons, they should regulate how many people are able to fit in the building, the capacity of the building, and direct the flow of the building so that not too many people are in the same place at once. 	155-160	Content: The test taker gives a sophisticated answer to the question. She highlights two possible causes of overcrowding and suggests solutions. Although the answer is short, it fully answers the question. Discourse coherence: The answer is clear, and puts no stress on the listener. The test taker uses pronouns naturally, (such as “they” to refer to authorities). Ideas are given in an order which makes sense to the listener. Fluency: The test taker speaks quickly and fluently. Pauses are short and natural. Grammar: The test taker uses a range of complex grammatical structures. These are used to express the relationship between ideas, especially different clause types and modals (for example, “To prevent... they should...”). Lexis: The vocabulary is natural and precise. Some less common lexical items are used (for example “bottleneck”, “too small to handle”, “regulate how many people”, “capacity of the building”). Pronunciation: The test taker’s pronunciation is easy to understand, although one word is incorrectly stressed (capaCity) and one sentence is unnaturally stressed (“amount of people that ARE there”).



Question (& Question Type)	Answer	Score Range	Explanation
Discuss restrictions on water usage. Why might restrictions on water usage be imposed? What are some of the effects of the restrictions? Will there be more water restrictions in the future? Why or why not? (Read, Then Speak)	Um... water restriction, well, restriction of water usage is imposed because in these days if you... open the tap the water automatically comes out. And... people tends to use a lot. So, when you think about the environment, which is not quite good, um... that is effect to preserve the environment and resources. I think in the future it will be more restriction because we are spending still too much water. Um... but eventually, maybe in the future, we will develop some technology to preserve the water better way instead of each of us get the restriction of the usage. 	100-125	Content: This answer is relevant. It answers all three questions. However, the response to the second question is not as fully developed as the other two. The test taker attempts to discuss more complex ideas. He does this by imagining future developments for managing water usage. Discourse coherence: This answer is coherent. However, there is a limited use of discourse markers. Some parts of the answer lose coherence (such as section "that is effect to..."). Fluency: The sentence flow has several long and unnatural pauses. Breakdowns are relatively common. Grammar: The grammatical structures in this answer are mostly appropriate for describing the present and future. There are some grammatical errors. These include "people tends", "that is effect to", and "spending still too much". Lexis: The lexis is appropriate for the question. Lexical chunks include "preserve the environment", "develop some technology", and "automatically comes out". There are some unnatural collocations (for example "preserve the water better way", "not quite good" and "get the restriction"). Yet these do not impact communication. Pronunciation: The individual sounds the test taker uses are mostly clear. Inaccurate word stress occasionally makes the test taker difficult to understand (for example "PREserve", "REsources"). Sentence stress is reasonably accurate. However, there is some unnatural chunking. The test taker's intonation is sometimes flat. Overall, these pronunciation issues do not prevent the test taker's message from being conveyed. A listener would be unlikely to need to ask for clarification.

Question (& Question Type)	Answer	Score Range	Explanation
Describe someone who is well-organized. Who is this person? How do they stay organized? Are you well-organized? (Read, Then Speak)	Oh, I think my colleague, uh, Mr. Zheng, is well-organized person. And he, he have a very clean closet, and uh one day when I open .. uh.. his closet, I find the clothes are arranged uh very very very tidely, very tide. Uh, I don't think I'm very organized. I always uh put my... my phone... my iphone and computer in my desk, very... not uh well, well-organized. Uh... I think I must uh... improve my situation to become well-organized my. 	30-55	Content: The response is relevant, describing a well-organized colleague. The second of the questions (how they stay organized) is not answered. Discourse coherence: There is repetition in the answer. The test taker attempts to give evidence to support ideas, but cannot, due to a lack of vocabulary. Fluency: Fluency is greatly affected by long pauses. The use of fillers seems to show the test taker trying to remember language. Sentence stress and chunking make the test taker difficult to understand. Grammar: The grammatical structures are basic and often inaccurate (for example "he have", "in my desk", "is well-organized person"). Lexis: The vocabulary is relevant but limited. There is a lot of repetition (for example "very", "closet", "clothes"). Pronunciation The pronunciation of individual sounds is often inaccurate (for example /'veri/ [very], /'kləʊzɪz/ [clothes], /ʌ'ru:wɪndʒdə/ [arranged], /fʊn/ [phone]). These fluency and pronunciation problems make the test taker difficult to understand. A listener would be likely to need to ask for clarification.



6.2 Example Writing Answers and Scores

Question (& Question Type)	Answer	Score Range	Explanation
Describe the last group project you completed in school. How did the group members work together to complete the tasks? What did you learn about yourself while working together with others? (Writing Sample)	When I was in university I completed a group project to present a complicated subject in mathematics known as second- order partial differential equations. This was a big project for my group and counted for much of our grades, so we broke up the project into smaller steps and began work as soon as possible. We each took responsibility for one part of the subject and learned all we could about it until we became experts. Then we came together and discussed the subjects to ensure we were all on the same page. Once we were strong in our understanding, we found a classroom where we could practice presenting the information we had learned, and each took turns. The other group members gave me feedback on my section of the presentation, and I gave them feedback on theirs. Then we were ready to present, and were able to complete the presentation without any mistakes. While doing this project, I learned a lot about how to work with others to accomplish a large, daunting task. It's all about preparation and coming at it in a methodical, well organized way. I also learned how to really listen and get where my teammate was coming from, a courtesy which my group members really showed me throughout this process.	155-160	Content: The response fully answers the question. The answer describes in detail a group project that the test taker completed. This piece of writing has an excellent effect on the reader. Discourse cohesion: The response is coherent throughout. There are three paragraphs, each with a clear central topic. The answer is cohesive, with linking expressions (for example "then," "once," and "also") showing the progression of events and appropriate pronouns (for example "we" and "our"). The style is appropriate for the genre and is easy to understand. There is no strain on the reader at all. Grammar: A range of grammatical structures is used to communicate the order of events. This includes future time clauses and compound sentences. The grammar is accurate throughout the answer. Lexis: Vocabulary is also used naturally, precisely and accurately. The answer contains appropriate collocations and idiomatic language. For example, "broke up the project into smaller steps", "ensure we were all on the same page", "daunting task", "come at it in a methodical, well organized way".

Question (& Question Type)	Answer	Score Range	Explanation
As society changes, some traditions are abandoned. What is one traditional element of your culture that you believe will soon be lost? Explain the reasons for this change. (Writing Sample)	In China there was a tradition to go home and pay a visit to parents and relatives at least once every year. This is because that traditional Chinese families are usually very big and their relations are based on lands in the village. They plant the food and split the harvest together. No matter how far you go, the root of your family tree will still be where they are. But for now we have more and more big cities, our families become smaller because of the technonogies and industries. We don't need to work together as a family anymore. So many people choose to travel abroad on the Spring Festival instead of going back to their hometown. This come home tradition will soon be lost.	100-125	Content: The response mostly achieves the task requirements. The answer includes a suitably developed discussion of a tradition in China that is changing. The level of language allows for successful task completion and a good effect on the reader. Discourse coherence: The response is generally well-structured. There is a clear progression of ideas. However, the sentence about families becoming smaller due to technology and industry is not explained. There are also some lapses in coherence due to the use of cohesive devices, (for example, "But for now we have more and more big cities"). Inconsistent referencing, switching between first, second and third person, also harms coherence. Grammar: The answer includes a mix of simple and complex grammatical structures. These are generally used accurately. However, the sentence starting "This is because that..." is unclear. Lexis: The vocabulary is generally accurate and appropriate. The answer includes some less common vocabulary and collocations. For example, "split the harvest", "travel abroad", and "lands in the village". However, some word choice errors make the answer more difficult to understand. For example, "This come home tradition", and "plant the food".



Question (& Question Type)	Answer	Score Range	Explanation
Boys and girls should attend separate schools. Do you agree or disagree? Why? Give specific reasons for your answer. (Writing Sample)	i don't agreed this opinion. because i think boys and girls shouldn't be seperated. when they attend school,they will be happy to see them. they can play together. study together.that will be fun and make them feel a normal citation.to seperate them in ditterent school,its	30-55	Content: This response minimally answers the question. The response is on-topic, but the opinions expressed are not always clear or developed. The response ends suddenly without completing the idea. Discourse coherence: The test taker only communicates a basic opinion in this answer. The response is very limited. There are problems with cohesion. For example, the pronoun referencing in the third sentence is unclear. Grammar: The range of grammatical structures is very limited. The test taker mostly uses language from the question and basic sentence forms. Perhaps because of the limited range, the accuracy is quite high. There are some errors in spelling (for example "seperate", "citation") and grammar (for example "i don't agreed"). Punctuation is often faulty. Lexis: The range of lexis is very limited, with a lot of repetition. There are some errors in word choice (for example "feel a normal [situation]").

7. Criteria for Individual Production Question Types

Below are grading criteria for different production (speaking and writing) question types. These grading criteria are used by human reviewers to grade answers from test takers. The scores given by the human reviewers are used for test development and quality assurance. These ratings are used to train the DET AI. We also use these ratings to check that the scores given by AI and by human reviewers are the same.

7.1 Speak About the Photo

In Speak About the Photo, test takers must describe an image that appears on the screen. They have 20 seconds to look at the picture before the recording begins. Test takers then have up to 90 seconds to describe the image.



Score	Description
155-160	Content: The response fully achieves the task requirements. The response fully describes the image. Discourse coherence: The answer is coherent and cohesive. The test taker is extremely easy to understand. Fluency: The flow of speech is natural and highly fluent. Pauses are natural. Grammar: The answer includes a very wide range of grammatical structures. There are no grammatical errors other than slips characteristic of expert speakers. Lexis: There is accurate use of vocabulary, collocations, and idiomatic language. Lexis is appropriate, precise, and nuanced. Pronunciation: Words are clearly pronounced. Intonation is appropriate throughout. Stress is accurate.



Score	Description
130-150	Content: The response describes the image. Discourse coherence: The answer is coherent and cohesive. The test taker is very easy to understand. Fluency: The flow of speech is mostly natural and fluent. Most pauses are natural. Grammar: The answer includes a wide range of grammatical structures. Grammatical errors are rare. Lexis: Accurate use of vocabulary, collocations, and idiomatic language. Lexis is appropriate. There is a broad range of lexis. Pronunciation: Most words are clearly pronounced. Any inaccurate pronunciation does not affect intelligibility. Intonation is appropriate apart from some minor mistakes. Stress is mostly accurate.
100-125	Content: The response mostly achieves the task requirements. The response describes the image. Discourse coherence: The answer is mostly coherent and cohesive. The test taker is easy to understand. Fluency: The flow of speech is reasonably fluent. Most pauses are natural. There might be longer or unnatural pauses. These do not affect intelligibility. Grammar: The answer includes a range of grammatical structures. Grammatical errors usually do not impact communication. Lexis: The use of vocabulary is generally accurate and appropriate for the question. Pronunciation: Most words are clearly pronounced. Some inaccurate pronunciation may affect intelligibility. Intonation is mostly appropriate. Stress is mostly accurate.

Score	Description
60-95	Content: The response partially achieves the task requirements. The response generally describes the image. Discourse coherence: The answer is somewhat coherent. The development of the answer is simple. The test taker is somewhat easy to understand. Fluency The flow of speech has long or unnatural pauses. These may make the answer difficult to understand. Grammar: The answer includes a limited range of grammatical structures. There are some grammatical errors. These may impact communication. Lexis: The use of vocabulary is generally accurate. The test taker uses a limited range of vocabulary. Pronunciation: Some words are not pronounced accurately. This sometimes affects intelligibility. Intonation is sometimes inappropriate or missing. There is some inappropriate use of stress.
30-55	Content: The response minimally achieves the task requirements. The response attempts to describe the image in a limited way. Discourse coherence: The answer may be repetitive and only somewhat coherent. The test taker is not very easy to understand. A listener would have to ask them for clarification in a real conversation. Fluency: The flow of speech is not fluent. The rate of speech may be very slow or have long or unnatural pauses. This affects intelligibility. Grammar: Grammatical structures are basic. There are frequent errors which may impact communication. Lexis: The vocabulary used is limited and often inaccurate. Pronunciation: Words are often unclear. Intonation may be inappropriate or missing. Stress is often unnatural. These issues make the response difficult to understand.



Score	Description
10-25	Content: The response does not achieve the task requirements. The response may be off-topic or very short. Discourse coherence: The test taker is not at all easy to understand. Fluency: There are long, unnatural pauses and repetitions. There are times when the test taker stops, and coherence is lost. Grammar: Only basic grammatical structures are produced. Grammatical errors are very common. Lexis: The vocabulary is very limited, inaccurate, and is inadequate for describing the photo. Pronunciation: Speech is often unintelligible because words are pronounced unclearly. Intonation is often incorrect or missing.

7.2 Read, Then Speak; Listen, Then Speak; and Speaking Sample

Read, Then Speak presents test takers with a written prompt that. Test takers can read the prompt and prepare for 20 seconds before the recording begins. Test takers must then speak for up to 90 seconds.



In Listen, Then Speak, test takers hear a prompt before speaking. They have 20 seconds to listen to the prompt before starting their answer. Test takers can listen to the prompt up to three times before they speak. Test takers must then speak for up to 90 seconds.



The Speaking Sample is the longest speaking question in the test. Test takers have up to 30 seconds to read a prompt before starting their answer. Once they start, they must speak for up to three minutes.



Score	Description
155-160	Content: The response fully achieves the task requirements. The response discusses complex ideas, is fully developed and is relevant to the topic. Discourse coherence: The response is coherent, and cohesive. The test taker is extremely easy to understand. Fluency: The flow of speech is natural and highly fluent. Pauses are natural. Grammar: The test taker uses a very wide range of grammatical structures. There are no grammatical errors other than slips characteristic of expert speakers. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is accurate, appropriate, precise, and nuanced. Pronunciation: Words are clearly pronounced. Intonation and stress are appropriate throughout.



Score	Description
130-150	Content: The response achieves the task requirements. The response discusses complex ideas, is relevant to the topic, and is well-developed. Discourse coherence: The answer is coherent and cohesive. The test taker is very easy to understand. Fluency: The flow of speech is mostly natural and fluent. Most pauses are natural. Grammar: The answer includes a wide range of grammatical structures. Grammatical errors are rare. Lexis: Accurate use of vocabulary, collocations, and idiomatic language. Lexis is appropriate. There is a broad range of lexis. Pronunciation: Most words are clearly pronounced. Any inaccurate pronunciation does not affect intelligibility. Intonation is appropriate apart from some minor errors. Stress is mostly accurate.
100-125	Content: The response mostly achieves the task requirements. The response discusses complex ideas, is well-developed and is relevant to the topic. Discourse coherence: The response is mostly coherent, and cohesive. A listener could easily understand the response without asking for clarification. Fluency: The flow of speech is mostly natural and fluent. Most pauses are natural. There may be longer and/or unnatural pauses. However, these do not make the response difficult to understand. Grammar: The test taker uses a range of grammatical structures. Grammatical errors usually do not impact communication. Lexis: The use of vocabulary is generally accurate. Pronunciation: Most words are clearly pronounced. Pronunciation errors may impact intelligibility at times. Intonation is mostly appropriate.

Score	Description
60-95	Content: The response partially achieves the task requirements. The response is relevant to the topic. The development is limited to familiar topics. Discourse coherence: The response may lack coherence or cohesion at times. The test taker is somewhat easy to understand. A listener could mostly understand the response but may have to ask for clarification. Fluency: The flow of speech has long or unnatural pauses. These may affect intelligibility. Grammar: The answer includes a limited range of grammatical structures. Some grammatical errors may impact communication. Lexis: Generally clear use of vocabulary but may be limited and/or inaccurate at times. Pronunciation: Some words may be unclear. Intonation and stress may be inappropriate or missing at times. This causes some unintelligibility.
30-55	Content: The response minimally achieves the task requirements. The response may be somewhat off-topic or short. The response is limited to familiar topics and may be only somewhat relevant. Discourse coherence: The answer may be repetitive and only somewhat coherent. The responses may be minimally developed and may have limited coherence or cohesion. The test taker is not very easy to understand. A listener would have to ask them for significant clarification in a real conversation. Fluency: The flow of speech is not fluent. The rate of speech may be very slow or have long or unnatural pauses. This affects intelligibility. Grammar: grammatical structures are basic. There are frequent grammatical errors which may impact communication. Lexis: Vocabulary is limited and often unclear and inaccurate. Pronunciation: Words are often unclear. Intonation may be inappropriate or missing. Stress is often unnatural. These issues make the response difficult to understand.



Score	Description
10-25	Content: The response does not achieve the task requirements. The response may be off-topic or very short. The response is limited to familiar topics, which may have minimal relevance. The response may not be developed. Discourse coherence: The test taker is not at all easy to understand. The responses may lack coherence and be very repetitive. Fluency: There are long, unnatural pauses and repetitions. There are times when the test taker stops, and coherence is lost. Grammar: Only basic grammatical structures are produced. Grammatical errors are very common. Lexis: Vocabulary is very limited, inaccurate, and is inadequate for answering the question. Pronunciation: Speech is often unintelligible because words are pronounced unclearly. Intonation is often incorrect or missing.

7.3 Write About the Photo

In Write About the Photo, test takers are presented with a photo. They then have one minute to describe the image. The timer starts at the same time as the photo appears.

⌚ 1:00 for this question

Write a description of the image below for 1 minute



Write a description

Submit

Score	Description
155-160	Content: The response fully achieves the task requirements. The response is clear, relevant, and fully developed. It is written in an appropriate style. Discourse coherence: The response is smooth-flowing, coherent, and cohesive throughout. The test taker describes the image extremely effectively and in detail. Grammar: The test taker flexibly uses a wide range of grammatical structures. There are no errors other than slips characteristic of expert speakers. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is accurate, appropriate, and precise.
130-150	Content: The response achieves the task requirements. The response is clear, relevant, and appropriately developed. It is written in an appropriate style. Discourse coherence: The response is well-structured, coherent, and cohesive. The test taker describes the image clearly and effectively at some length. Grammar: The test taker uses a wide range of grammatical structures. Errors are rare. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is accurate, and appropriate. There is a broad range of lexis.
100-125	Content: The response mostly achieves the task requirements. The response is mostly clear, relevant, and developed. It is mostly written in an appropriate style. Discourse coherence: The test taker describes the image reasonably clearly and with some detail. The response is generally well-structured, coherent, and cohesive. However, there are occasional lapses in coherence, and cohesion. Grammar: The test taker uses a range of grammatical structures. Errors usually do not impact communication. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is generally accurate and appropriate for describing the image.

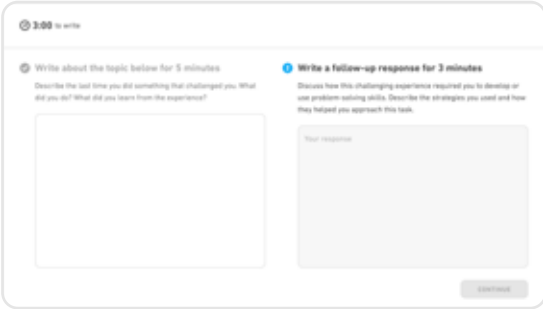


Score	Description
60-95	Content: The response partially achieves the task requirements. The response is not always clear, relevant, or developed. The style is not always appropriate. Discourse coherence: The test taker describes the image despite lapses. The response is somewhat organized. It may lack coherence or cohesion at times. Grammar: The test taker uses a limited range of grammatical structures. Some errors may impact communication Lexis: Vocabulary is generally clear but limited.
30-55	Content: The response minimally achieves the task requirements. The test taker gives only a basic description. It may be somewhat off-topic or short. The response is limited to simple descriptions or personal opinions. The content may be unclear or irrelevant. It may be written in an inappropriate style. Discourse coherence: The response uses some simple cohesive devices but may be repetitive or incoherent at times. It may be written in an inappropriate format. Grammar: The test taker uses basic grammatical structures. There are frequent errors which may impact communication. Lexis:
10-25	Content: The response does not achieve the task requirements. It may be off-topic or very short. The test taker does not adequately describe the image. The response is not organized. It is made up of isolated phrases and sentences. Discourse coherence: The response is limited to simple personal information. It does not describe the image. The ideas are often unclear or irrelevant. Grammar: The test taker uses only basic grammatical structures. Errors are very common. Lexis: describing the image.

7.4 Interactive Writing and Writing Sample

Interactive Writing is a two-part question. Test takers have up to 30 seconds to read an initial prompt before they must start writing. In Step 1, they will have up to 5 minutes to write their response to the initial prompt, which will be visible to them as they write. After submitting their answer, test takers will move to

Step 2 of Interactive Writing, where they will see a follow-up question. They must then write about this for up to three minutes. The follow-up question is based on the content of the answer to the first question.



Score	Description
155-160	Content: The response fully achieves the task requirements. The response is clear, relevant, and fully developed. It is written in an appropriate style. Discourse coherence: The response is smooth flowing, coherent, and cohesive throughout. The test taker communicates their ideas effectively and in detail. Grammar: The test taker flexibly uses a wide range of grammatical structures. There are no grammatical errors other than slips characteristic of expert speakers. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is accurate, appropriate, and precise.
130-150	Content: The response achieves the task requirements. The test taker communicates their position clearly and effectively at some length. The response is clear, relevant, and appropriately developed. It is written in an appropriate style. Discourse coherence: The response is well-structured, coherent, and cohesive. Grammar: The test taker uses a wide range of grammatical structures. Errors are rare. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is accurate and appropriate. The test taker uses a broad range of vocabulary.



Score	Description
100-125	Content: The response mostly achieves the task requirements. The test taker communicates their position fairly clearly and with some detail. The response is mostly clear, relevant, and developed. It is written in an appropriate style. Discourse coherence: The response is generally well-structured, coherent, and cohesive. However, there are occasional errors in structure, coherence, and cohesion. Grammar: The test taker uses a range of grammatical structures. Errors do not usually impact communication. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is generally accurate and appropriate for the question.
60-95	Content: The response partially achieves the task requirements. The test taker communicates their ideas and opinions despite lapses. The response is not always clear, relevant, or developed. The style is not always appropriate. Discourse coherence: The response is somewhat organized. However, it may lack coherence or cohesion at times. Grammar: The test taker uses a limited range of grammatical structures. There are some errors which may impact communication Lexis: Vocabulary is generally clear but limited.
30-55	Content: The response minimally achieves the task requirements. It may be somewhat off-topic or short. The response may be unclear, irrelevant, or written in an inappropriate style. The test taker communicates only basic impressions or opinions. Discourse coherence: The response is limited to personal opinions and topics. The response uses some simple cohesive devices but may be repetitive or incoherent at times. The response may also use an inappropriate format. Grammar: The test taker uses basic grammatical structures. There are frequent errors which may impact communication. Lexis: The vocabulary is limited and often inaccurate or unclear.

Score	Description
10-25	Content: The response does not achieve the task requirements. It may be off-topic or very short. The test taker does not give a relevant opinion. The response is limited to simple personal information. It does not present an opinion. Ideas are often unclear or irrelevant. Discourse coherence: The response is not organized. It is made up of isolated phrases and sentences. Grammar: The test taker uses only basic grammatical structures. Errors are very common. Lexis: Vocabulary is very limited, and inaccurate. The vocabulary is insufficient to answer the question.

7.5 Summarize the Conversation

Summarize the Conversation always follows immediately after Listen and Respond. Details of how answers to Listen and Respond are scored are given in Section 4.6. In Summarize the Conversation, test takers are asked to write a summary of the dialogue from Listen and Respond in 75 seconds.

1:15 to write

Write a summary of the conversation you just had

Your response

CONTINUE



Score	Description
155-160	Content: The response fully achieves the task requirements. The response summarizes the situation, main ideas, and outcomes of the conversation. It includes other relevant information. Discourse coherence: The test taker clearly and coherently provides a summary of the conversation. The test taker gives a comprehensive outline of the conversation. The response is smooth flowing and coherent throughout. Grammar: The test taker uses grammatical structures naturally and appropriately to summarize. There are no grammatical errors other than slips characteristic of expert writers. Lexis: Vocabulary is accurate, appropriate, and precise. The test taker expertly paraphrases when necessary.
130-150	Content: situation, main ideas, and outcomes of the conversation. The test taker gives a good outline of the conversation. Discourse coherence: The test taker clearly and coherently provides a summary of the conversation. There are only rare lapses in clarity and cohesion. The response is smooth-flowing and coherent throughout. Grammar: The test taker uses grammatical structures appropriate for summarizing the conversation. Grammatical and spelling errors are rare. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is accurate, appropriate, and fairly precise. The test taker paraphrases effectively when necessary.
100-125	Content: The response mostly achieves the task requirements. The response mostly captures the situation and outcomes of the conversation. However, it may lack some less important information or get this wrong. Discourse coherence: The test taker gives a generally clear and coherent summary of the conversation. The response may include some errors which do not impact communication. The response is generally well-structured and coherent despite occasional lapses. Grammar: The test taker uses some grammatical structures appropriate for summarizing the conversation. Errors usually do not impact communication. Lexis: Vocabulary (including collocations and idiomatic language) is generally accurate and appropriate. The test taker paraphrases somewhat successfully.

Score	Description
60-95	Content: The response partially achieves the task requirements. The response captures some key aspects of the situation and outcomes of the conversation. However, some important information may be incorrect or missing. Discourse coherence: The test taker summarizes the conversation with variable clarity and coherence. The test taker gives a broad or partial understanding of the conversation. The response is somewhat organized but may lack coherence at times. Grammar: The test taker uses a limited number of grammatical structures appropriate for summarizing the conversation. There are some errors which may impact communication. Lexis: Vocabulary is generally clear but limited. This may stop the test taker from being able to paraphrase.
30-55	Content: The response minimally achieves the task requirements. The response captures some main points of the conversation. However, some key information is missing or incorrect. The summary may also be somewhat off-topic or short. Discourse coherence: The test taker provides an incomplete or inaccurate summary. The response may be repetitive, unclear, or incoherent at times. The test taker may have used an inappropriate format. Grammar: The test taker uses basic grammatical structures. These may be inadequate for summarizing the conversation. There are frequent errors which may impact communication. Lexis: The vocabulary used is limited and often inaccurate or unclear. There is little or no effective paraphrasing.
10-25	Content: The response does not achieve the task requirements. The response does not capture the main points of the conversation. Only basic information about the conversation is conveyed. Ideas are often irrelevant. The summary may be off-topic or very short. Discourse coherence: The test taker does not provide a relevant summary. The response is not organized and is composed of isolated phrases and sentences. It may use an inappropriate format. Grammar: The test taker uses only basic grammatical structures. Errors are very common. These greatly impact communication. Lexis: Vocabulary is very limited, and inaccurate. The lexis is insufficient for summarizing the conversation.



8. Glossary

Appropriacy of style: Using the right level of formality and perspective for a question.

Breakdowns and repairs: When a speaker pauses or stops speaking, then restarts.

Coherent: Logical and well-organized. Makes sense as a whole.

Cohesion: How well the ideas connect together.

Cohesive: Well-structured and connected writing. Ideas flow smoothly and form a complete whole.

Cohesive devices: Words or phrases used to connect ideas. For example, conjunctions (like and, but, or), relative pronouns (like who, whose, that), transition words (like furthermore, however, therefore), etc.

Collocations: Words that often go together and form natural combinations. For example, 'heavy rain', 'bright idea', and 'be angry at someone'.

Error: A mistake which speakers or writers make when trying to say something that is above their level of language. For example, a beginner level learner saying "I eated eggs for breakfast."

Format: The overall layout, structure, and organization of a piece of writing.

Genre: A type of writing. For example, an essay, a newspaper article, or a letter.

Lapses: Short or small mistakes.

Idiomatic language: Non-literal language, often set phrases, like 'cutting corners', or 'being on the same page'.

Institutions: Schools, universities or other organizations that accept the DET.

Intelligibility: Ability to be understood.

Intonation: The rise and fall of pitch in speech, conveying meaning or emotion.

Isolated phrases: Individual words or expressions that are not connected to the rest of the answer.

Lexical chunks: Fixed groups of words that frequently appear together in natural language. For example, “How are you?”

Lexis: Words, phrases, and chunks of language.

Nuanced: Having subtle variations or distinctions, allowing for more refined interpretations.

Paraphrase: Restating an idea in different words while keeping the original meaning.

Position: The test taker’s standpoint or perspective on an issue. For example, being for or against capital punishment.

Progression of ideas: The order that ideas are presented in.

Response: The answer given by the test taker.

Slips: Errors which speakers or writers make that they are able to correct themselves. For example, a native speaker using the wrong tense in a long sentence.

Stress: Emphasis placed on certain syllables or words in speech to convey meaning.

Style: How the word choice impacts the “voice” of the writing. For example, how formal the tone is, and the perspective (first, second or third person).

Task completion: Successfully answering the question.

Task requirements: What the question asks the test taker to do.

Unintelligible: Not able to be understood.

