

English Language Proficiency (055)

Purpose

The purpose of the English Language Proficiency test is to identify examinees who have demonstrated the level of language skills required of educators seeking bilingual certificates and endorsements. Information on who is required to pass the test and when the test should be taken may be obtained from program advisors, campus certification officers, regional offices of education, and the Illinois State Board of Education's Certification Web site: www.isbe.net/teachers.htm.

Test Characteristics

Number of test items: 55 multiple-choice test questions and 2 constructed-response assignments

Score scale: The English Language Proficiency test is scored on a scale from 100 to 300.

Passing score: a scaled total test score of 240 or above

Test Structure

The English Language Proficiency test contains the following subareas and test item structure.

Subarea No.	Subarea Title	No. of Scorable Multiple-Choice Test Questions	No. of Scorable Constructed-Response Assignments
I.	Reading Comprehension	55	
II.	Writing Proficiency		1
III.	Oral Proficiency		1

Test Framework

The complete test framework for this field, containing the test objectives and descriptive statements for each subarea, can be found on the ICTS Web site at www.icts.nesinc.com.

Test Administration

The English Language Proficiency test is administered as a full-session test during the morning or afternoon test session at scheduled test administrations. Each test session is five hours long.

Scoring

Results are reported as scaled scores in a range from 100 to 300. The total test score is based on an examinee's performance on the entire test, including the number of multiple-choice questions answered correctly and the scores received on the constructed-response assignments. The proportion of the total test score derived from the multiple-choice test questions is 50 percent; the proportion derived from the constructed-response assignments is 50 percent.

To pass the English Language Proficiency test an examinee must obtain a scaled total test score of 240 or above.

Please note:

- There is no penalty for guessing.
- Subarea scores are presented on the same scale as the total test score.
- Subarea scores reflect different numbers of questions and are represented differently in the computation of the total test score; therefore, the average of the subarea scores generally will not equal the scaled total test score.
- Subarea scores will help assess an examinee's areas of relative strength and weakness.

Interpreting the Constructed-Response Scores

The constructed responses on the Language Proficiency tests are scored according to standardized procedures during scoring sessions held after each test administration. Scorers with relevant professional backgrounds receive training and use a process called focused holistic scoring. The process yields a score based on overall quality of the response rather than on an analysis of response components.

Each response is scored on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 representing an undeveloped response and 4 representing a response that is very well developed. No information about the examinee who prepared the response (e.g., name, institutional affiliation) is provided to the readers. Each response is read and scored independently by two readers; the sum of the two readers' scores is the total score assigned to the response. If the two initial readers' scores differ by more than one point, the essay is scored by a third reader.

A score of 8 for a constructed-response assignment would indicate that the first scorer assigned a score of 4 and that the second scorer assigned a score of 4. This would indicate that the response to the assignment was very well developed in regard to the performance characteristics. Similarly, a score of 2 would indicate that the first scorer assigned a score of 1 and that the second scorer assigned a score of 1. This would indicate that the response was totally undeveloped in regard to the performance characteristics.

The range of reader-assigned scores for each constructed-response assignment is from:

- 8 (4 + 4), which would represent a constructed response that is very well developed and that received the highest scores from the two scorers who rated the response, to
- 2 (1 + 1), which would represent a constructed response that is totally undeveloped and that received the lowest scores from the two scorers who rated the response.

This combined raw score is then converted to a scaled score, on a scale from 100 to 300, which is the score that appears on the score report for the constructed-response assignments.

The designation of a U (unscorable) is assigned to responses that are off topic, illegible, written in a language other than the required language, of insufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the topic. A designation of B is assigned if the constructed-response form is blank.

Scoring Scale

The scoring scale that is used to assign scores to examinees' responses to the constructed-response assignments in this test field can be found on the following pages.

Score Report Explanation

Each score report contains a section titled "How to Read Your Score Report" to help examinees interpret their test results accurately. Examples can be found on the ICTS Web site at www.icts.nesinc.com.

Study Guide

The study guide for this field can be found on the ICTS Web site at www.icts.nesinc.com.

Language Proficiency Constructed-Response Scoring Scale

Performance Characteristics for the Writing Proficiency Assignment

Purpose	the fulfillment of the objective of the assignment in reference to the intended audience, purpose, and occasion
Organization	the organization, development, and support of ideas
Vocabulary	the selected vocabulary and idiomatic expressions
Grammar	the constructed grammatical forms, character formations, and syntactic constructions, including spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation

Scoring Scale for the Writing Proficiency Assignment

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough application and a strong command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response thoroughly achieves the objective of the assignment and is completely appropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The ideas are clearly expressed in a unified discussion, and the supporting details are relevant and fully develop the stated ideas. The vocabulary reflects a broad command of the language and appropriate use of idiomatic expressions. The response shows a comprehensive command of grammar and syntax and mastery of spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation, with few, if any, errors.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate application and a satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response adequately achieves the objective of the assignment and is generally appropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The expressed ideas are generally clear and adequately organized, and the supporting details adequately develop some of the stated ideas. The vocabulary and idiomatic expressions reflect an adequate command of the language for communicating a complete message. The response shows an adequate command of grammar and syntax and contains minor errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation that do not interfere with communication.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial application and a limited command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response partially achieves the objective of the assignment and may not be entirely appropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The expressed ideas are somewhat unclear, partially organized, and developed in a limited way with minimal relevant support. The vocabulary is simple and lacks key words and expressions but is sufficient for communicating a partial message. The response shows a limited command of grammar and syntax and contains frequent errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation that partially impede communication of ideas.
I	<p>The "I" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the written assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response fails to achieve the objective of the assignment and may be inappropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The expressed ideas are unclear, disjointed, and inadequately developed and may lack relevant supporting details. The vocabulary is not adequate for communicating a complete message and contains word usage errors that impede communication. The response shows little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax and contains errors in spelling, diacritical marks, and punctuation so numerous that they impede communication.
U	The response is unscorable because it is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, not written in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.
B	There is no response to the assignment.

Language Proficiency Constructed-Response Scoring Scale

Performance Characteristics for the Oral Proficiency Assignment

Purpose	the fulfillment of the objective of the assignment in reference to the intended audience, purpose, and occasion
Fluency	the fluent and developed communication of the message
Pronunciation	the articulation and pronunciation of words and phrases
Vocabulary	the selected vocabulary and idiomatic expressions
Grammar	the constructed grammatical forms and syntactic constructions

Scoring Scale for the Oral Proficiency Assignment

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough application and a strong command of the performance characteristics for the oral proficiency assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response thoroughly achieves the objective of the assignment and is completely appropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The response is well developed and shows an elaboration of ideas, demonstrating a consistent flow of speech with few, if any, hesitations or pauses. The response demonstrates easily intelligible pronunciation with few, if any, errors. The response demonstrates an extensive command of appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions with few, if any, errors. The response demonstrates a comprehensive command of grammar and syntax, with only minor errors.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate application and a satisfactory command of the performance characteristics for the oral proficiency assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response adequately achieves the objective of the assignment and is generally appropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The response demonstrates adequately developed ideas, which show some elaboration, and maintains a steady flow of speech with occasional hesitations and pauses. The response demonstrates generally intelligible pronunciation, with occasional errors. The response demonstrates a good command of generally appropriate vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. The response demonstrates a good command of grammar and syntax, though some errors interrupt comprehension.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a partial application and a limited command of the performance characteristics for the oral proficiency assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response partially achieves the objective of the assignment and may not be entirely appropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The response shows limited development of ideas, which are sometimes unclear, and is occasionally difficult to understand because of an inconsistent flow of speech with frequent hesitations and pauses. The response demonstrates frequent errors in pronunciation. The response demonstrates a limited range of expression, using a very simple vocabulary that lacks key words and phrases. The response shows a limited command of grammar and syntax, as evidenced by frequent errors that partially impede comprehension.
I	<p>The "I" response reflects an inadequate application and a lack of command of the performance characteristics for the oral proficiency assignment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The response fails to achieve the objective of the assignment and may be inappropriate for the intended audience, purpose, and occasion. The response presents few, if any, comprehensible ideas and does so with minimal development; the response fails to maintain any flow of speech, as evidenced by frequent hesitations and pauses that interrupt comprehensibility. The response demonstrates inadequate pronunciation that contains numerous errors and is at times unintelligible. The response demonstrates little knowledge of vocabulary beyond the most common words and may include numerous misused and ill-formed words and expressions. The response has little command of basic elements of grammar or syntax, as evidenced by numerous and frequent errors that significantly impede comprehension.
U	The response is unscorable because it is unrelated to the assigned topic, inaudible/incomprehensible, not spoken in the required language, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.
B	There is no response to the assignment.