



New York State Testing Program

2006

NYSESLAT TRAINING GUIDE FOR SCORING SPEAKING



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Description of the Speaking Test

The Speaking test is individually administered in approximately 15 minutes and consists of 16 questions. The questions are read to the student by the test administrator from the *Directions for Administration* (DFA). The Speaking test questions, along with graphics, are also printed in the test booklet for each student to read while the test administrator is dictating the test.

The table below gives a detailed description of the types of activities in the Speaking test.

SPEAKING TEST			
Question Numbers	Activity	Description of Activity	Max Points per Question
A-C	Warm-Up	Simple questions—UNSCORED	0
1-5	Repeat/ Read Aloud	Student repeats a word, phrase, or sentence from a prompt that is both printed and spoken	2
6-10	Sentence Completion	Student completes a sentence; the first part of the sentence is both printed and spoken, and a picture suggests how the sentence should be completed	2
11	Storytelling	Student tells a story based on three sequenced pictures	4
12-16	Social Interaction	Student responds to a question or statement that requires a rejoinder	2

Complete Speaking Test Rubrics

Questions A–C	WARM-UP
DO NOT SCORE	

NOTE: During questions A–C, encourage each student to speak loud enough that his or her responses may easily be scored and help the student feel as comfortable as possible speaking. Be very positive—no response is incorrect.

Questions 1–5	REPEAT/READ ALOUD
Score Point 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response shows Good Fluency—accurate pronunciation of individual sounds; natural speech rate, intonation, and rhythm. • Response is linguistically accurate—no or very few minor phonemic/phonetic or grammatical errors.
Score Point 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response shows Some Fluency—some problems with pronunciation of individual sounds, speech rate, intonation, and rhythm, but these do not cause serious problems in intelligibility. • Response contains several linguistic errors—phonemic/phonetic or grammatical.
Score Point 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Fluency or refusal to speak; speaking only in native language; insufficient information to score or unintelligible.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING: In questions 1–5, single words, phrases, and sentences are repeated/read aloud primarily in order to assess pronunciation. You will be scoring individual sounds, such as vowels and consonants, which are called segments. These can occur word-initially, -medially, and -finally. For example, a student who says “djong” when trying to say “young” has made a pronunciation error in the first sound, or segment, of the word.

You will also assess rate of speech, rhythm, and intonation, which are called suprasegmentals. Very slow, halting speech is an example of a problem with rate of speech; speech that is at a fairly normal rate, but choppy, indicates a problem with rhythm. Typical English sentence intonation rises on the last content word of a sentence and then falls. Intonation that does not change at all or changes in an unnatural place would be inaccurate.

Each student is not creating original grammatical structures, so grammar errors will probably be infrequent and are not an important aspect to consider in scoring these questions. However, it is possible that a student might omit a word(s) or substitute one small function word (such as a preposition) for another. Either of these would be considered an error.

Questions 6–10	SENTENCE COMPLETION
Score Point 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good Structure and Precise Vocabulary; response is informationally appropriate to the prompt. • Response is free of linguistic errors—pronunciation or grammatical—or contains a few minor errors.
Score Point 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some Structure and Some Vocabulary although one or more words may not be precise; response is somewhat informationally appropriate to the prompt. • Response contains a few serious linguistic errors—pronunciation or grammatical—or several minor errors but is intelligible.
Score Point 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Structure; Unintelligible; insufficient information to score; refusal to speak; speaking only in a language other than English; only repeating prompt.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING: Questions 6–10 assess the student’s ability to create an original short sentence based on a picture. Part of a sentence is provided in print and aurally, and the remaining part that each student creates should be a sentence. You will be evaluating the sentence as to whether it contains the necessary features—a subject and a verb, which should agree (she is running, they are running). In addition, the printed part of the sentence may require a specific verb tense, so you will also be scoring the sentence as to whether the verb tense is appropriate. For example, “Yesterday . . . (plus a picture of a boy and girl at a zoo)” requires a sentence in the past tense. A student would be expected to say something like this: “Yesterday the boy and girl were at the zoo.” Both the subject and verb are plural and in agreement, and the verb is in the past tense, as indicated by “yesterday.”

The picture provided suggests the kind of nouns and verbs to be used in the completed sentence. The student’s response should make sense in relation to the situation portrayed. Choice of vocabulary (preciseness of vocabulary) is to be assessed. Additionally, pronunciation, rate of speech, intonation, and rhythm should be evaluated.

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Question 11	STORYTELLING
Score Point 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows High Level of Ability to produce a spoken response to a set of three pictures. • Very Few Errors (minor) in pronunciation and grammar; speech includes complex sentence structures; vocabulary is precise and varied, including idiomatic expressions. • Errors never distract listeners' attention or cause confusion about meaning. • Speech is well organized; information is plausible and precise and is presented logically and with appropriate transitions.
Score Point 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows Ability to produce a spoken response to a set of three pictures. • Some Errors (mostly minor) in pronunciation and grammar; some variety in sentence structure; vocabulary in general is appropriate and varied, perhaps including some use of idiomatic expressions. • Errors generally do not distract listeners' attention or cause confusion about meaning. • Speech is generally well organized; information is generally plausible and precise and is presented logically and with appropriate transitions.
Score Point 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows Some Ability to produce a spoken response to a set of three pictures. • Numerous Errors in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary; heavy reliance on simple sentence structures, with almost no use of idiomatic expressions. • Errors are often distracting to listeners and cause confusion about meaning. • Speech may be insufficient and present poorly organized or disorganized information; information may be imprecise or inaccurate.
Score Point 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very Limited ability to respond to a set of three pictures. • Speech contains Very Little Correct pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary; single words instead of complete thoughts. • Numerous and serious problems distract listeners and cause confusion about meaning; may be incoherent in places. • Amount of speech is minimal; information may be irrelevant or inaccurate.
Score Point 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too Minimal to score or Unintelligible; refusal to speak; no response; response in a language other than English or only repeating prompt; insufficient information to score.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING: Question 11 consists of a single storytelling task based on a set of three sequential pictures. This type of task elicits an extended response, which is expected to be longer than any of the other tasks in the Speaking test. The amount of language produced as well as the quality will be assessed.

Pronunciation, rate of speech, intonation, and rhythm should also be evaluated along with grammar and the ability to choose appropriate and precise vocabulary. In addition, organization is evaluated since the set of pictures support the use of organizational devices, such as first, next, then, and last.

Questions 12–16	SOCIAL INTERACTION
Score Point 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Appropriate for the prompt; vocabulary is precise. • Response is free of linguistic errors—pronunciation or grammar—or contains only a few very minor errors.
Score Point 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Somewhat Appropriate for the prompt; one or more words may not be precise. • Response contains a few serious linguistic errors—pronunciation or grammar—but is intelligible.
Score Point 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response Unintelligible or refusal to speak; speaking only in native language or only repeating prompt; insufficient information to score.

DIRECTIONS FOR SCORING: Questions 12–16 assess the ability to respond in a socially appropriate manner to a short conversation opener, which typically would elicit a brief rejoinder from a native English speaker. You will assess the appropriateness of the response. While appropriate and precise vocabulary are important to the response, there is usually not just one way to respond. For example, to the question “Hi, how are you?” there are different acceptable responses:

- I’m fine, thanks.
- Fine, thanks. How are you?
- Great. What about you?
- Great!
- I’ve been better.
- Not doing so well.

In addition to different content, responses can also differ in structure, as shown in the sample responses above. A response can be a complete sentence, but it doesn’t need to be. A sentence fragment or a single word might also be considered completely appropriate responses. Pronunciation, rate of speech, intonation, and rhythm should also be evaluated along with grammar.

Abbreviated Speaking Test Rubrics

<p>Warm-Up Questions A–C</p>	<p>DO NOT SCORE</p>
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<p>Repeat/Read Aloud Questions 1–5</p>	
SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 2	<p>Good fluency Easy to understand No errors or very few minor errors</p>
Score 1	<p>Some fluency Somewhat difficult to understand Several errors</p>
Score 0	<p>No fluency Unintelligible No response Response in a language other than English</p>

<p>Sentence Completion Questions 6–10</p>	
SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 2	<p>Good structure Precise vocabulary Information appropriate Error free or a few minor errors</p>
Score 1	<p>Some structure Some vocabulary Information somewhat appropriate A few serious errors, but intelligible</p>
Score 0	<p>No structure Unintelligible Insufficient information No response Response in a language other than English Repeating prompt only</p>

Storytelling

Question 11

SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 4	High level Very few errors
Score 3	Shows ability Some errors
Score 2	Some ability Numerous errors
Score 1	Very little correct
Score 0	Too minimal Unintelligible No response Response not in English

Social Interaction

Questions 12–16

SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 2	Response appropriate * Vocabulary precise Error free or a few minor errors
Score 1	Response somewhat appropriate Vocabulary somewhat precise A few serious errors, but intelligible
Score 0	Response unintelligible No response Response in a language other than English Repeating prompt only

* A one-word response can receive a score of 2 if all criteria are met.

Speaking Scoring Training DVD Guidelines

Included with this training manual is a DVD of actual student responses with score points and explanations from the Speaking subtest for each level. The sample test questions with the corresponding scoring rubrics and scoring forms are on pages 13–25 of this manual. This DVD shows responses from different grades and ability levels representing the full range of score points from each of the rubrics. To demonstrate a realistic scoring situation, the students are grouped by test level rather than by the score points they earned. The DVD offers several opportunities to practice scoring.

Guidelines for trainers and/or test administrators are as follows:

1. Trainers should first review the Speaking Test table on page 5 in this manual. This table describes the various speaking activities. This information will provide a framework of the test before beginning the in-depth study of the Complete Speaking Test Rubrics on page 6 of this manual.
2. Thoroughly read and review the complete rubrics and scoring forms with the trainees before viewing the DVD. Trainees should obtain a good understanding of what is being measured in each speaking activity and the criteria that are used to evaluate student responses.
3. Insert the Speaking Scoring Training DVD into a DVD player and begin viewing the DVD.
4. Throughout the DVD, trainees will be given opportunities and time to practice scoring each of the item types: Repeat/Read Aloud, Sentence Completion, Storytelling, and Social Interaction.
5. Verify your practice score by comparing it to the score given by Harcourt's assessment specialists. For further detail, refer to the Speaking Score Points and Explanations chart beginning on page 26 of this manual.
6. Address questions on the practice scores as they arise. Trainers may pause the DVD or replay any response to promote discussion on the score points given or on the scoring process.

Speaking Test Samples

The scoring form on page 14 corresponds with the sample questions below.

Repeat/Read Aloud

1

His father

2

This doesn't fit me anymore.

3

The teacher said not to whisper.

4

I'll come as soon as I can.

Speaking Test Scoring Form

Repeat/Read Aloud			
Question Number	GOOD FLUENCY Score Point 2	SOME FLUENCY Score Point 1	NO FLUENCY Score Point 0
1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 2	Good fluency Easy to understand No errors or very few minor errors
Score 1	Some fluency Somewhat difficult to understand Several errors
Score 0	No fluency Unintelligible No response Response in a language other than English

Speaking Test Samples

The scoring form on page 18 corresponds to the sample questions in this section.

Sentence Completion

5

If I come to your house . . .



6

To get to the other side of the lake . . .



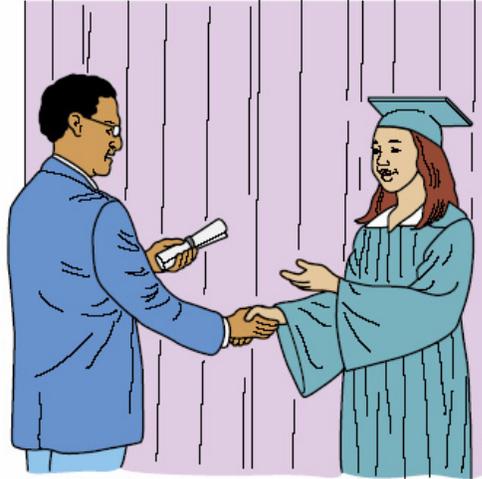
7

Her mother likes to be outside and . . .



8

When I'm eighteen years old . . .



Speaking Test Scoring Form

Sentence Completion			
Question Number	GOOD STRUCTURE PRECISE VOCABULARY Score Point 2	SOME STRUCTURE SOME VOCABULARY Score Point 1	NO STRUCTURE UNINTELLIGIBLE Score Point 0
5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 2	Good structure Precise vocabulary Information appropriate Error free or a few minor errors
Score 1	Some structure Some vocabulary Information somewhat appropriate A few serious errors, but intelligible
Score 0	No structure Unintelligible Insufficient information No response Response in a language other than English Repeating prompt only

Speaking Test Samples

The scoring form on page 23 corresponds to the sample questions in this section.

Storytelling

9

First
1



Next
2



Last
3



10

First
1



Next
2



Last
3



11

First
1



Next
2



Last
3



12

First
1



Next
2



Last
3



Speaking Test Scoring Form

Storytelling					
Question Number	HIGH LEVEL VERY FEW ERRORS Score Point 4	SHOWS ABILITY SOME ERRORS Score Point 3	SOME ABILITY NUMEROUS ERRORS Score Point 2	VERY LIMITED VERY LITTLE CORRECT Score Point 1	TOO MINIMAL UNINTELLIGIBLE NO RESPONSE RESPONSE NOT IN ENGLISH Score Point 0
9	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Speaking Test Samples

The scoring form on page 25 corresponds to the sample questions below.

Social Interaction

13

How fast can you run?

14

That story was pretty good.

15

Congratulations! You made the team.

16

You're lucky. You won!

Speaking Test Scoring Form

Social Interaction			
Question Number	RESPONSE APPROPRIATE Score Point 2	RESPONSE SOMEWHAT APPROPRIATE Score Point 1	RESPONSE UNINTELLIGIBLE Score Point 0
13	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

SCORE POINT	DESCRIPTION
Score 2	Response appropriate * Vocabulary precise Error free or one minor error
Score 1	Response somewhat appropriate Vocabulary somewhat precise One serious or two minor errors
Score 0	Response unintelligible No response Response in a language other than English Three or more errors

* A one-word response can receive a score of 2 if all criteria are met.

Speaking Test Score Points and Explanations

Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Repeat/ Read Aloud	1	a	2	This response shows good fluency. This student speaks with a natural speech rate and correct intonation.
		b	1	This student's response is intelligible; however, it indicates little fluency.
		c	2	This response indicates good fluency. This student demonstrates a high degree of accuracy.
		d	1	This response is intelligible, but incomplete. This student demonstrates little fluency.
		e	2	This student uses accurate pronunciation, and his response shows good fluency.
	2	a	2	This student speaks with accurate pronunciation and a natural speech rate. The response is error free and shows good fluency.
		b	2	This student's pronunciation is accurate. Her response demonstrates good intonation and rhythm.
	3	a	0	This response is unintelligible and shows no fluency.
		b	2	This response shows good fluency. The student speaks with accurate pronunciation and with natural rhythm and intonation.
		c	0	This response shows no fluency or comprehension. The student's speech is unintelligible.

Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Repeat/ Read Aloud	4	a	1	This response shows some fluency; however, the rhythm is choppy. This student has some difficulty repeating the sentence accurately.
		b	2	The student responds with mostly accurate pronunciation. There are some minor errors with intonation. Overall, this response demonstrates a natural speech rate and is fully intelligible.
		c	1	This response demonstrates some fluency. The student does not use the contraction and makes an error in the pronunciation of "soon."
		d	2	This student speaks with a very natural speech rate. The response is accurate and shows fluency.
Sentence Completion	5	a	0	This response is unintelligible, with only one or two recognizable words.
		b	1	This student's response is somewhat appropriate to the prompt. The answer is grammatically incorrect and incomplete, but it is intelligible.
		c	2	This student uses accurate sentence structure and precise vocabulary. She gives an appropriate response.
		d	1	This response is somewhat appropriate to the prompt. The student uses some structure in his answer, but the vocabulary is imprecise.

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Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Sentence Completion	6	a	0	This student responds completely in Spanish.
		b	2	This student uses good structure. Her vocabulary is appropriate and correct.
		c	1	This student indicates some knowledge of sentence structure, despite her giving an incomplete response.
		d	2	This student's response demonstrates precise vocabulary and correct structure.
	7	a	2	This student uses precise, idiomatic vocabulary. The structure of her response is error free.
		b	1	This student answers in a combination of languages. He uses some correct sentence structure.
		c	1	This student uses precise vocabulary. The response is appropriate to the prompt and intelligible. However, the response contains pronunciation and grammatical errors.
		d	1	This response is appropriate to the prompt. The vocabulary is basic, and the structure is incorrect.

Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Sentence Completion	8	a	1	This student responds fully to the prompt, even though there are some structural errors involving verb tense.
		b	2	This student responds accurately to the prompt. Her response includes precise, sophisticated vocabulary.
		c	1	The vocabulary used in this response is appropriate and the message is intelligible; however, there is a serious error in the structure.
Storytelling	9	a	4	This student presents a well-structured story in response to the prompt. She uses precise vocabulary and makes very few errors.
		b	1	This student attempts to tell a story but shows very limited ability to describe the prompt. She uses sentence fragments and her speech is minimal overall.
		c	2	This student shows some ability to respond. He relies on simple structures and uses some imprecise vocabulary.
		d	3	This student organizes his thoughts well and shows ability to describe the prompt fully. However, he makes some grammatical errors.

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Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Storytelling	10	a	1	This student shows very limited ability to respond to the prompt. The response is minimal, consisting of single words and phrases.
		b	4	This response is accurate to a high degree. It includes precise vocabulary and the use of complex structures. The few minor errors are not distracting to the listener, and the story is well developed.
		c	3	This student uses some complex structures with generally appropriate vocabulary. She presents her story logically, but she does make a few errors that may cause confusion.
		d	0	This student does not complete the task, so this response is insufficient to score higher.
		e	3	This student uses some variety of structure. She demonstrates fluency throughout the story, but the ending is too abrupt. She speaks with some sophisticated vocabulary but still makes word-choice errors.

Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Storytelling	11	a	0	This student responds only in French.
		b	3	This student responds fully with precise vocabulary. He organizes his story well but relies on simple structures. He makes some minor grammatical errors, but they do not cause confusion.
		c	4	This student presents a well-developed, error-free story. This response includes precise vocabulary and idiomatic language.

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Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Storytelling	12	a	1	This student shows some ability to respond to the prompt, but the errors are distracting to the listener. He relies on basic vocabulary. Overall, the speech is minimal, but comprehensible.
		b	3	This student uses some precise vocabulary. She is consistent in her use of structure and describes the prompt fully. However, her response is not in story form, and there are minor errors.
		c	4	This student shows a high ability to produce a response. He presents complex structures with very few errors. His story is well organized.
		d	2	This student shows some ability to respond to the prompt. He adds detail to his story, although the language is somewhat imprecise. He makes numerous errors throughout the story.
Social Interaction	13	a	0	This student cannot or will not respond.
		b	2	This student responds appropriately, demonstrating comprehension of the prompt. The single error is not distracting to the listener.
		c	1	This response is intelligible, although the meaning is vague. It is somewhat appropriate to the prompt, though imprecise.

Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Social Interaction	14	a	2	This response is error free. This student uses accurate and precise vocabulary to make her point.
		b	0	This student repeats the prompt without adding new information. This response is insufficient to score.
		c	2	This student gives a thoughtful and appropriate response. He uses precise vocabulary.
		d	2	This student gives a one-word response that is appropriate to the prompt. This response completes the interaction.
	15	a	0	This student cannot respond. She demonstrates a lack of comprehension.
		b	1	This student indicates some comprehension of the prompt and some fluency. However, this response contains a serious grammatical error.
		c	0	This student demonstrates a lack of comprehension. She cannot or will not respond.
		d	2	This response is short, but it is precise.
		e	1	This student responds somewhat appropriately to the prompt, but he makes some serious errors. This response is mostly intelligible.

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Score Points and Explanations				
Subtest	Question Number	Student	Score	Comments
Social Interaction	16	a	0	There is insufficient information for this student to score higher. He cannot or will not respond to the prompt.
		b	1	This student demonstrates some understanding of the prompt, but the response is grammatically inappropriate.
		c	2	This response is error free with precise vocabulary. It is appropriate to the prompt.
		d	0	This response is not appropriate to the prompt and demonstrates very little comprehension.
		e	2	This student responds appropriately to the prompt. He demonstrates good fluency and comprehension.

Frequently Asked Questions About the Speaking Test

What should I do during the Warm-Up questions?

As each student answers the Warm-Up questions, the teacher or test administrator can take the opportunity to coach the student to speak up and do his or her best. It is important to present the Warm-Up questions in a friendly and relaxed manner so the student feels comfortable speaking aloud.

If the test is untimed, why are there suggested times for pauses between items?

The Speaking test is untimed, but there is a suggested pause time for each item, which is an estimated time that should be adequate for most students to respond. Usually, if a student cannot respond within the suggested time, adding more time does not generally increase the likelihood of the student being able to respond. However, students should never be rushed. Therefore, a student should be given more time to respond if it appears that the student might be able to answer.

Should I look at the rubric while a student is speaking?

No. If you are reading the rubric, you might miss something important about the student's response. However, you should study the full Speaking rubric and examples carefully before you administer the test. During the test administration, you should look primarily at the key words above each score point on the scoring forms. If you need some extra help in making a decision, you can glance at the abbreviated rubric just below the bubbles.

What if the student does not use the picture to complete the sentence?

It is possible that an advanced student might be able to complete the sentence creatively and in a grammatically accurate manner without relying on the picture provided. If it is clear that the student is not using previously memorized language, the student should not be penalized for not using the picture.

If the student does not know the vocabulary for what is depicted in the picture, and the completed sentence is unidiomatic and/or ungrammatical, then the score should be lowered accordingly.

Why are there more points for the Storytelling activity?

For the Storytelling activity, each student is allowed a minute to prepare and then respond. The three pictures allow each student the opportunity to create a longer piece of discourse. Therefore, with a range of four points, those students who tell a story in greater detail can be awarded an appropriate score for their efforts.

What if the student has a one-word response for one of the Social Interaction items?

We are aware that a few of the Social Interaction Speaking items can elicit a one-word response, although we generally tried to limit this kind of item. In the directions for scoring the Social Interaction items, there is an example of a correct one-word response, "Great!" to the question, "Hi, how are you?"

However, if a student response is a simple "yes" or "no," the full 2 points should not be given even though this answer might be appropriate. With ESL students, plain yes-no responses are often an evasion from using the language. However, an enthusiastic "Great!" can be viewed as idiomatic, and therefore, something quite different, for which the full 2 points can be given.