

Task 2: Speaking (a monologue)

Overview of task

In this speaking task learners record information familiar to them in a continuous monologue (approximately 90 seconds).

Task guidelines for learners

Requesting Information

Your best friend is going to a language school in London for two weeks in August. You would like to go with her. You phone the school to get more information about courses on offer and hear the following message:

‘We are sorry that there is no one to take your call at the moment. If you wish to know more about any of our courses, please leave your name, full address, telephone number, age if you are 17 or under, the type of language course you are interested in and when you would like to come to our school. We shall send you all the relevant information promptly. Thank you for calling Angloschool.’

You do the following before leaving the message on the phone:

- Practise giving the necessary information to your partner. Remember to spell out words that may be difficult to understand such as street names.
- Then look at the form your partner has completed while you were speaking. Discuss with your partner how you can improve your presentation.
- When you are happy with your presentation, record your message giving all the relevant information.

Notes for teachers

(i) Assessment focus

The task is intended to assess learners’ ability to:

- respond to a request for information;
- present familiar information clearly and coherently;
- sustain spoken discourse for 60-90 seconds;
- use appropriate stress and intonation;
- spell out words;
- provide numbers; and
- use short forms.

The task is designed to meet the following Learning Targets:

- to produce or exchange a range of formal and informal messages both oral and written (ISc in KS3);
- to obtain and provide objects, services and information in real and simulated situations (ISe in KS3); and
- to provide or find out, select, organize and present information on familiar and less familiar topics (KSa in KS3).

Unit Two Part 2
Task 2: Speaking

(ii) Relation to the curriculum

Learners need to build up confidence in providing information and sustaining spoken discourse on familiar topics (see *CDC Syllabus for English Language (Secondary 1 - 5) 1999*, p. 66).

(iii) Advice on using the task

Since the task is intended for formative assessment, learners should be given ample opportunity to rehearse what they want to say and to receive feedback from their partners. The partner could be asked to complete a form such as the one below to check that the information given is easy to understand.

While you are listening to your partner take down the following information:
Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone number: _____
Age: _____
Type of course: _____
Wants to start course in: _____

Proposed feedback mechanism

Although there are a number of ways learners could be given feedback on the above task, perhaps the most effective would be for them to receive a sheet like the one below. It is to be completed by the teacher while listening to the learners' recordings. This would indicate where the teacher was not able to retrieve the correct information. Additional comments on stress and intonation as well as use of short forms such as "I'm" and "I'd" could be added at the end.

Here is the information I heard on your tape:
Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone number: _____
Age: _____
Type of course: _____
Wants to start course in: _____
My additional comments are as follows:

Adapting the task

The advantage of such a task is that it is possible to give learners individual feedback on their spoken language. There are numerous ways such a task may be adapted. Learners may be asked to look up information about a museum or shop in Hong Kong and then record the information about opening and closing hours, facilities, how to get there, etc. This could be done for a friend or as a tourist information recording. Alternatively, while working in pairs learners may be given different information (jigsaw task) which they need to share or exchange in order to complete a form.

Task 3: Integrated project

Overview of task

In this project learners gather information on a specific topic through emailing learners in another school and then use the information to complete a group presentation. This task will encourage learners to broaden their horizons beyond the immediate context of their own school.

Task guidelines for learners

School Life

You are going to do a project in which you find out about school life in places outside Hong Kong. Each group will be asked to find out about a different school. You will then exchange emails with a group of learners in another school. At the end of the week you will present the information you have collected to your class.

You want to find out about:

- The school routine and the school timetable;
- The facilities at the school;
- The range of activities at the school;
- The size of the classes;
- The number of students at the school;
- School holidays;
- What the students you are 'talking to' like / dislike about the school; and
- Any other interesting information you can think of.

You should follow the steps below.

Step 1: In your group write down the questions you want to ask about the other school. Think about the order in which you want to ask the questions. Then try asking each other the same questions about your own school (i.e. those you have written down). Show your questions to your teacher.

Step 2: Revise your questions based on your teacher's feedback. Then send your revised questions to your assigned group in Singapore, Australia, Britain, etc.