



Language  
Cert

Exam Preparation tips  
for LanguageCert International ESOL

A1 & A2

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# **EXAM PREPARATION TIPS**

## **FOR A1 & A2 LEVEL CANDIDATES**

The following tips have been compiled to help both teachers and students while preparing for the LanguageCert International ESOL A1 or A2 level Exams (Written and Spoken).

After some initial familiarisation with both parts of the exams, students may be provided with the following tips or with your own simplified/paraphrased version depending on your students' profile.

## Tips for the LISTENING tasks

### Before the Listening tasks

- Every time you practise, be positive, calm and focused.
- Read the instructions very carefully. Ask for clarifications if necessary.
- Read questions and/or answer choices. That will help you understand what the text is about.
- Underline key words in the questions so that you remember what to pay attention to.
- Keep in mind that the information asked usually follows the same order as the info on the recording.
- Pay attention to any heading (in part 4). It tells you about what you are going to hear!

### During the Listening tasks

- Try to first understand the general meaning.
- Pay attention to the way the speaker talks. This may help you find the correct answer.
- Listen and choose an answer even if you are not sure about it.
- Look at the next questions. That'll help you more easily understand what follows.
- Don't worry if you do not know some of the words. Try to guess them.

### After the Listening tasks

- Make sure you have answered all questions.
- If you can't decide on the right choice, simply choose the one which seems to be the 'best'.
- Check once more if you have written up to 3 words in Part 4 (for A2 Listening tasks only).
- Don't forget that all answers need to be on your Answer Sheet.

## Tips for the **READING** tasks

### **Before the Reading Tasks**

- Know what the Reading tasks are like. It helps to know what may be on the exam.
- Remember you may be asked a variety of question types (e.g. which word best fits in a gap or which statement matches a notice).

### **During the Reading tasks**

- Read the instructions very carefully and know what to do before you answer any question.
- Always pay attention to the title of your text (if there is one). The title helps you understand what the text is about.
- Read the whole text before you answer the question(s) about it.
- Also read all the questions carefully. They may help you better understand the text.
- Don't worry if there are new words in the text. Try to guess their meaning (look at the sentences before and after those words).
- Underline the words which you think are important.
- Always choose an answer (in the case of a multiple-choice question) even if you are not sure of it.
- Remember you have 1 hour 20 minutes for both the Reading and Writing tasks. Keep an eye on the time.
- If you can't answer a question, carry on and you may come back to it later.

### **After the Reading tasks**

- Always re-read the text and check your answers once more.
- If there are still unanswered questions, write or choose an answer, even if you are not sure it is the right one.
- Remember multiple choice questions have one answer only.

## Tips for the WRITING tasks

### How to better perform in terms of 'Task fulfilment'

- Read the topic carefully. Every single word is important. Underline key words and know exactly what you have to do: write a letter, an email or just a few related sentences?
- Make sure you answer all questions/cover all points given.
- While practising, you may write a draft but you simply do not have time for that on your Test Day.
- Do not indicate the number of words you have written. Do not write less and do not write more either as you will not be awarded extra marks for that.

### How to better perform in terms of 'Accuracy and Range of Grammar'

- Try to use short sentences.
- Carefully read the topic and think of the grammar to be used (e.g. what tense you need to use in the case of an invitation).
- Plan to finish early and have time for review (check for mistakes in tenses, articles, spelling etc.)

### How to better perform in terms of 'Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary'

- Know the most common topics that may be on the exam.
- Regularly study your vocabulary throughout the year and know vocabulary related to those topics.
- While proofreading your text, check for repetitions. See if you can use other words instead (e.g. synonyms).

### How to better perform in terms of 'Organisation'

- Organise your text following the points given/questions asked.
- Remember emails and letters start and end in a particular way. Know how to start and end them.
- It is a good idea to memorise a few phrases/expressions for your emails/letters (e.g.: 'Thank you for sending me ...', 'Give my regards to ...', 'I look forward to ...').
- Use 'linking words' to join your ideas (e.g. 'and', 'but', 'or', 'also' etc.) and try not to use the same ones too often.

## Tips for the SPEAKING tasks

### How to better perform in terms of 'Task Fulfilment and Coherence'

- Try to remember what the Spoken Exam is like (duration, number of parts, tasks etc).
- Try to talk naturally and say as much as you can.
- Ask for clarifications if you don't really understand what you have to do or did not hear a question well. You won't be penalized for that.
- Remember that if the Interlocutor interrupts you, that is all right. You may have said more than enough!

### How to better perform in terms of 'Accuracy and Range of Grammar'

- While practising, if you notice you've just made a few grammatical mistakes, carry on. Don't stop. You'll do better next time.
- Use simple sentences.
- Before you answer any question, think of the grammar to be used (e.g. if you have to talk about your interests, think: what tense should you use?).
- If that can help you, copy some sentences with some grammar rule, practise them and memorise them for your Test Day.
- Read as much as you can. This will help you with your grammar.

### How to better perform in terms of 'Accuracy and Range of Vocabulary'

- If you can't remember a word, say it in another way, paraphrase it.
- Know the most common topics that may be on the exam.
- Know vocabulary related to those topics.
- Try not to repeat the same words over and over again. Use synonyms or paraphrase.

### How to better perform in terms of 'Pronunciation-Intonation-Fluency'

- Try to speak clearly. Practise with your teacher, classmates or friends.
- While practising, don't worry too much if you make a few mistakes. You'll do better next time.
- Organise your ideas before answering questions, especially in Part 4 where you have to talk about a topic.
- In class, try to speak in English as much as possible. Think in English and try not to translate.
- While answering a question, try to speak non-stop and avoid hesitations and pauses.
- Try to sound natural as often as possible even if you have memorized a few topics.
- Remember to listen to a lot of English (on television, radio etc.) That will certainly help you with your Speaking skills!

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