

# Practice for the SPEC Test

## Preparing for the test.

1. You should familiarize yourself with the tasks on the test and develop a presentation (see #2 below). If you want to practice, use the practice test, record yourself, and listen to your responses.
2. Before the test, you will prepare to clearly present a topic of your choice from your field of study in words that an **introductory** undergraduate class could understand and to answer questions which will be asked of you during your presentation.

As you prepare for your presentation, please keep the following in mind:

- Your lesson is happening sometime in the middle of the semester rather than at the beginning. You should not begin your presentation by saying, "Welcome to this course. My name is ..."
- You should choose a topic suitable for undergraduates in an introductory level class in your discipline. You could explain a concept, define a term, describe a process or demonstrate a procedure. It might be helpful to look through some of the undergraduate textbooks used in your department for ideas. Most disciplines now have "open textbooks" online that you can access from home if you need ideas.
- When you prepare your presentation, prepare enough material for at least 10 minutes. Be sure that it allows you to use enough language so that you can demonstrate your level of language proficiency. If the material you choose is too simple and does not allow you to use enough language, the evaluators may not be able to accurately determine your language proficiency level.
- You may share your screen during the presentation to display a whiteboard, PowerPoint, or other visual if you choose. You may use notes or a copy of the textbook, but do not memorize or read from a script.
- Members of your audience will play the role of students and will interrupt you with questions related to the topic you present. (The "Raise Hand" and "Chat" features will not be used during the presentation.) This may mean that you will not finish everything you have prepared. This will not impact your score.
- You can ask the audience questions during your presentation. This includes asking the audience to clarify questions that they ask you.

## Introduction to the SPEC test

- In this test, you will demonstrate how well you use English to perform a variety of functions related to classroom activities. There will be two main sections: impromptu speaking and an interactive presentation. If you qualified and received an exemption, you will only take the second section of the test.
- Before each task, you will receive instructions from the proctor. Each task is timed. The time you will have to prepare and the maximum time you will have to speak will be stated at the beginning of each task. If you finish a task before time runs out, it is not necessary to continue talking if you feel your answer is complete. During the test, examinees are not permitted to read from a pre-prepared script.
- The test will be recorded. If technical difficulties interfere with the recording, the proctor may interrupt, and if they cannot be resolved, the test may be rescheduled.
- Your score for the test will be based on this recorded speech sample. These recordings are evaluated by at least two trained raters. Recordings are saved on a secure University server for five years after test administration.
- The total length of the test is approximately 25 minutes.

## Task 1: Impromptu Response

Preparation Time: none

Speaking Time: 2-3 minutes

We will ask 1-3 questions about educational experiences. Below are some example questions. During the actual test, you will not see a list of questions. We will ask questions like in an interview format. We will talk for up to three minutes.

To practice, set your timer for three minutes and answer any of the following questions.

1. Describe your favorite class.
2. Tell me about a time when you struggled at school.
3. Tell me how someone should prepare to study abroad (at a university in your home country).
4. In your previous institution, if you didn't understand some material from class, what did you do?

When you are done, go on to the next page.

## Task 2: Announcement of changes

Preparation Time: up to 30 seconds

Speaking Time: up to 2 minutes

You will assume the role of a TA of an undergraduate-level class. The professor sent information to the students earlier in the week. However, the professor recently made some changes. We would like you to announce the corrections to your students as if you were in the classroom and we are your students. When you are told to begin, you will have up to 2 minutes to announce the changes to us. If you finish a little early or if you do not finish announcing all the information, that will not impact your score.

Set your timer for 30 seconds and study the information below.

Now set your timer for 2 minutes and announce the corrections.

### Iowa Career Fair

Wednesday, September 15 ~~10:00 AM – 2:00 PM~~ **12:00 – 4:00 PM**

Main Ballroom in the Student Union Building

#### PREPARE FOR THE FAIR CHECKLIST FOR STUDENTS

- Download a map and a list of employers to your mobile device
- Attend a “Prepare for the Fair Session” on either **August 30** ~~September 1~~ at 8:30am or September 6 at 2:30 PM
- Get a professional photo taken in the lobby on the second floor. ~~Cost: \$5~~ **Free**
- Update Your Resume at the Career Center - 310 Iowa Hall
- Bring your Student ID, copies of your resume and dress for success! Wear **business casual** ~~casual~~ or professional attire.
- Parking - **North** ~~South~~ Ramp, Old Capitol Ramp, and Tower Place Ramp.

When you are done, go on to the next page.

## Task 3: Interactive Presentation

Preparation Time: 1 minute to set up before the presentation (e.g. share screen, take out notes)

Speaking Time: 10 minutes

- You will now have 10 minutes to present your chosen topic clearly. We will be your students and we will interrupt with questions for you to address. You will be When the timer goes off, we will stop there.
- Because you will be answering questions, you may not finish everything you have prepared. This will not impact your score so please do not rush through the material.
- You can ask the audience questions during your presentation. This includes asking the audience to clarify questions that they ask you.
- If you have a visual that you would like to share, please do that now.

Set your timer for 10 minutes.

You are now finished with the practice test.