

TEST 1

Overview: Speaking and writing

Part I of the PTE Academic test is Speaking and writing. This part tests your ability to produce spoken and written English in an academic environment.

The table shows what you will see in the test, which you will take on a computer. When practising with this book, you will have to write your written answers in the book, your notebook or on your own computer, and you could record your spoken answers on your own computer or mobile phone.

Part I: Speaking and writing					
Speaking (total time 30–35 minutes)					
Task type	Number of tasks	Task description	Skills assessed	Text/Recording length	Time to answer
Read aloud	6–7	A text appears on screen. Read the text aloud into your microphone.	reading and speaking	text up to 60 words	varies by task, depending on the length of text
Repeat sentence	10–12	After listening to a sentence, repeat the sentence into your microphone.	listening and speaking	3–9 seconds	15 seconds
Describe image	6–7	An image appears on screen. Describe the image in detail into your microphone.	speaking	n/a	40 seconds
Re-tell lecture	3–4	After listening to or watching a lecture, re-tell the lecture in your own words into your microphone.	listening and speaking	up to 90 seconds	40 seconds
Answer short question	10–12	After listening to a question, answer with a single word or a few words into your microphone.	listening and speaking	3–9 seconds	10 seconds
Writing (total time 50–60 minutes)					
Task type	Number of tasks	Task description	Skills assessed	Text/Recording length	Time to answer
Summarize written text	2–3	After reading a passage, write a one-sentence summary of the passage.	reading and writing	text up to 300 words	10 minutes
Write essay	1–2	Write an essay of 200–300 words on a given topic.	writing	up to 4 sentences	20 minutes

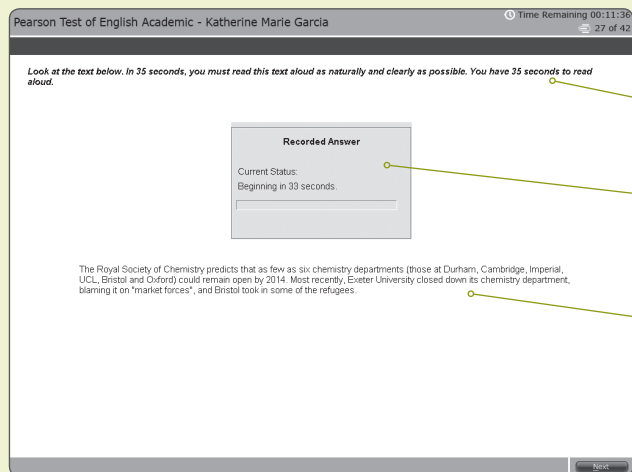
Each recording is played only once. You may take notes using the Erasable Noteboard Booklet and pen, and use these notes as a guide when answering the tasks.

Speaking task types are not timed individually, but writing task types are. In both sections you can refer to the timer in the upper right-hand corner of the computer screen, *Time Remaining*, which counts down the time remaining for the Speaking section.

Read aloud

About the task type

This is a long-answer speaking task type that tests reading and speaking skills. You have to read aloud a short text, with correct pronunciation and intonation. You will do 6–7 *Read aloud* tasks.



Instructions

Recording Status box that tells you when the microphone opens and when it closes

Text that you have to read aloud

Strategies

Read the text through first

- Use the 30–40 seconds before the microphone opens to skim the text and understand the topic.
- Use the punctuation and grammar to identify where pauses will be needed between meaning groups.
- Identify any words that may be less familiar to you and think how they might be pronounced.
- Read the first part aloud before the microphone opens. This will help you to begin speaking when you hear the tone.

While you read

- Begin reading as soon as the tone sounds and the recording status changes to a blue bar. As you read, stress the words that carry important information. Use pausing to group the text into meaningful chunks.
- Use rising intonation to show a contrast, and falling intonation to show that you have finished a point or sentence, or come to the end of what you are saying.

Take your time

- You have plenty of time so do not rush. Read with meaning, at a normal volume. Do not leave out any words.
- If you make a mistake, correct it and continue. Do not stop reading, and do not begin again at the beginning. Click 'Next' when you are ready to go on to the next task.

Testing focus [Scoring](#) ▶ [page 147](#)

Subskills tested

Reading: identifying a writer's purpose, style, tone or attitude; understanding academic vocabulary; reading a text under timed conditions.

Speaking: speaking for a purpose (to repeat, to inform, to explain); reading a text aloud; speaking at a natural rate; producing fluent speech; using correct intonation; using correct pronunciation; using correct stress; speaking under timed conditions.

Preparation

- Practise reading sentences out loud, grouping the words into meaningful chunks. Practise putting short pauses at commas and between meaning groups, and longer pauses at full stops.
- Select 6 or 7 short texts of 2 or 3 sentences (up to 60 words) from a magazine or online. Look at the punctuation and grammar and mark the chunks with a slash /. Time yourself reading each one. After 40 seconds, go on to the next text.
- Listen to the way the final sound in one word links to the first sound in the next when people speak. Try to do this when you read aloud.
- You will score higher if your fluency shows a natural rhythm, which is given by chunking and stress. Read a sentence and clap your hands on each stressed word. Be aware of the weak forms between stressed words.
- When practising reading aloud, read on smoothly even if you make a mistake as hesitations, false starts and repetitions can lower your score.
- Practise using rising intonation in lists and falling intonation at the end of sentences.
- When you learn a new word, use a dictionary that has the words recorded so you can check both the pronunciation of the sounds and where the word stress falls.
- You will read more fluently if you understand what you are reading, so work on your reading and vocabulary skills as well as your speaking skills.

Read aloud

TIP STRIP

- 1 Break the text up into chunks and pause slightly between each one as you read. Before the recording begins, use the punctuation to help you decide where to pause and where each new chunk will begin.
- 2 As you read, stress the words that carry important information. This makes it easier to understand what you are saying.
- 3 Use rising intonation patterns to show a contrast. For example, here you need to contrast the *buildings* with *trees*.
- 4 Try to get the word stress right on multi-syllable words. In Text 4, there are words that end in 'ion'. Usually, the stress falls on the syllable before this – *pollution*, *combustion*, *stations*.
- 5 Look for sense groups, as well as the grammatical structure, to notice which groups of words should be said in one chunk:
/ to provide individuals with an income / once they stop working /.
- 6 Use falling intonation patterns to show that you have finished a point, or come to the end of what you are saying:
on our moods, about our lives.



In the test, there are 6–7 tasks. For each task, you read the text aloud into the microphone. The wording in the instructions below is the same as you will see in the actual test. See page 12 for help.



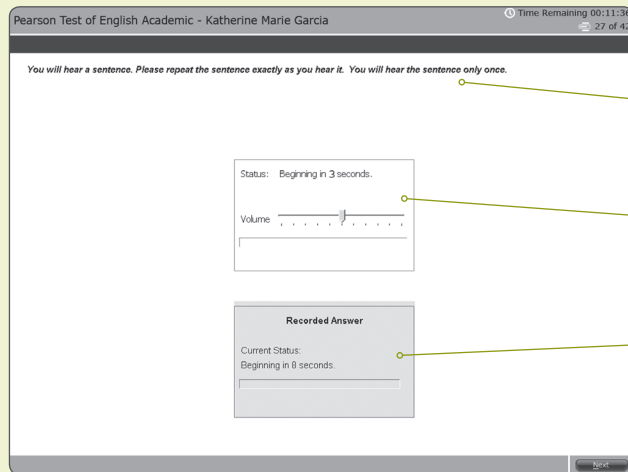
40 sec. Look at the text below. In 40 seconds, you must read this text aloud as naturally and as clearly as possible. You have 40 seconds to read aloud.

- 1 Market research is a vital part of the planning of any business. However experienced you or your staff may be in a particular field, if you are thinking of introducing a service to a new area, it is important to find out what the local population thinks about it first.
- 2 Not a lot is known about how the transportation of goods by water first began. Large cargo boats were being used in some parts of the world up to five thousand years ago. However, sea trade became more widespread when large sailing boats travelled between ports, carrying spices, perfumes and objects made by hand.
- 3 When the young artist was asked about his drawing, he explained that he had started by taking a photograph of himself sitting by a window at home. He then drew his face from the photograph and replaced the buildings which were outside the window with trees. This gave the picture a softer, more artistic background.
- 4 Humans need to use energy in order to exist. So it is unsurprising that the way people have been producing energy is largely responsible for current environmental problems. Pollution comes in many forms, but those that are most concerning, because of their impact on health, result from the combustion of fuels in power stations and cars.
- 5 Clearly, times are changing and while many people are saving for their retirement, many more still need to do so. Most countries have a range of pension schemes that are designed to provide individuals with an income once they stop working. People need to take advantage of these if they are to have sufficient money throughout their retirement years.
- 6 According to recent research, sunshine and warm weather have a positive effect on our moods. The British Journal of Psychology has published a report in which it claims that anxiety levels fall when temperatures rise, while increased exposure to sunshine makes us think more positively about our lives.

Repeat sentence

About the task type

This is a short-answer speaking task type that tests listening and speaking skills. You have to repeat a sentence that you hear, with correct pronunciation. You will do 10–12 *Repeat sentence* tasks.



Instructions

Audio Status box and volume control

Recording Status box that tells you when the microphone opens and when it closes

Strategies

Be ready

- The Audio Status box will count down from 3 seconds and then the recording will play.
- Be ready to hear, understand and repeat the short sentence (3 to 9 seconds). Stay focused.

Focus on the meaning

- Listen to the way the speaker groups words into meaningful phrases, and copy this phrasing.
- Listen for the speaker's intonation and try to copy it.
- Listen for the grammatical structure to help you to reconstruct what you have heard.
- There isn't time to write the words.

Speak clearly

- Wait until the blue bar that shows the microphone is open, then speak; there is no tone. Remember, the microphone will close after 3 seconds of silence.
- Take a breath before you speak; this will help you speak clearly.
- Say every word you hear, but if you don't know a word, say what you think you heard.
- Pronounce the vowels and consonants clearly, and link words together as the speaker did.
- Speak at a normal speed and volume, and don't rush – you have plenty of time.
- Don't try to copy the speaker's accent; just speak normally.
- Click 'Next' to move on.

Testing focus [Scoring](#) ▶ [page 147](#)

Subskills tested

Listening: understanding academic vocabulary; inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words; comprehending variations in tone, speed and accent.

Speaking: speaking for a purpose (to repeat, to inform, to explain); speaking at a natural rate; producing fluent speech; using correct intonation; using correct pronunciation; using correct stress; speaking under timed conditions.

Preparation

- Train your short-term memory by repeating short announcements or advertisements that you hear; ask a friend to read aloud 10–12 short sentences from a magazine for you to repeat each one.
- Develop your understanding of English grammar so that you recognize verb phrases and clause structure. When you hear someone speaking, repeat the words to yourself and think of the structures they used.
- Your score will be higher if you say the correct words in the right sequence, so practise saying phrases with correct word order.
- Use a dictionary where you can listen to the words pronounced in different accents so that when you learn a new word you also know what it sounds like.
- Practise saying new words with the correct syllable stress. Check the dictionary if you are not sure.
- Notice where people put the stress in sentences – the important words are stressed and the other words are weak or unstressed. Try to do this when you speak; your score will be higher if your rhythm, phrasing and stress are smooth and effective.
- Listen to someone giving a talk in a podcast and stop the recording regularly so you can repeat the words you heard. Begin by stopping after 3 or 4 words, then gradually expand until you stop about every 7–9 seconds.
- Listen to podcasts by speakers with different English accents to become familiar with them.

Repeat sentence

TIP STRIP

- 1 Listen to the way the speaker groups the words into meaningful phrases, e.g. *such as cost and function, the design of a bridge*.
- 2 Speak as clearly as you can. If you mumble, your words may not be recognized.
- 3 Listen to the speaker's intonation and aim to copy this.
- 4 Listen to the syllable stress on long words, such as *financial* and *available* and say the words the same way.
- 5 Note how the speaker uses word stress to highlight the important information, for example, *Extra seminars*. Try to do the same.
- 6 Your score will be improved if you produce correct word sequences including phrasal verbs such as *switch off* and noun phrases such as *electronic devices*.
- 7 Many words in a sentence are unstressed or 'weak forms', for example in the phrase *as a team*, *as* is unstressed. You will not hear weak forms clearly but the grammar tells you they are present.
- 8 Remember there is no tone before the microphone opens in this task, so start to speak as soon as the Status box changes to 'Recording'.
- 9 Be prepared for long noun phrases before the verb in some tasks, as in *Detailed analysis of population growth*.
- 10 You will hear a range of accents in this task, but don't try to copy the accent. Just speak naturally.



In the test, there are 10–12 tasks. For each task, you listen and repeat the sentence you hear into the microphone. The wording in the instructions below is the same as you will see in the actual test. See page 14 for help.

▶ 2-11



15 sec.

You will hear a sentence. Please repeat the sentence exactly as you hear it. You will hear the sentence only once.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Pearson Test of English Academic - Katherine Marie Garcia". The top right corner displays "Time Remaining 00:11:36" and "27 of 42". The main content area contains the instruction: "You will hear a sentence. Please repeat the sentence exactly as you hear it. You will hear the sentence only once." Below this instruction, there are two interactive boxes. The first box, labeled "Status", shows "Beginning in 3 seconds" and a volume control slider. The second box, labeled "Recorded Answer", shows "Current status: Beginning in 8 seconds" and a text input field. A "Next" button is visible at the bottom right of the interface.

Repeat sentence: Each question is displayed on a new screen.

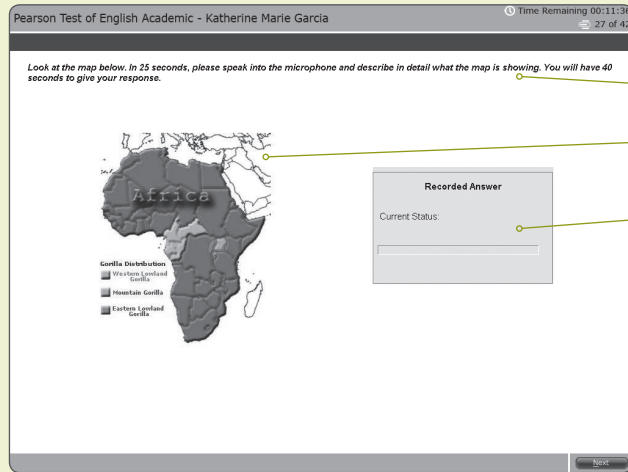
TEST

SPEAKING

Describe image

About the task type

This is a long-answer speaking task type that tests speaking skills. You have 40 seconds to describe the information in a graph, chart, map, picture or table. You will do 6–7 *Describe image* tasks.



Instructions

Image that you have to describe

Recording Status box that tells you when the microphone opens and when it closes

Strategies

Look carefully at the image

- You have 25 seconds before the microphone opens to look carefully at the image.
- Identify the main features or trends, and the names of features or variables in labels. Identify the significant features, major contrasts or changes over time. Think of any implications of the information, or any conclusions that can be drawn.
- Make notes of the main points on your Erasable Noteboard Booklet, and decide the order in which you will describe the information.

Focus on the main points

- After the tone, start with a general statement of what the image is about. Then describe the most important features or trends or contrasts.
- Don't try to describe every detail; use relevant data to illustrate the main points of the information.
- Use your notes to make sure your description is clearly organized.
- Conclude with a comment on any implications or conclusions.

Keep speaking

- Keep speaking. The more you say, the more thorough your description will be.
- If you make an error in the information, don't worry; correct yourself and move on. When the microphone closes, click 'Next'.

Testing focus [Scoring > page 148](#)

Subskills tested

Speaking: speaking for a purpose (to repeat, to inform, to explain); supporting an opinion with details, examples and explanations; organizing an oral presentation in a logical way; developing complex ideas within a spoken discourse; using words and phrases appropriate to the context; using correct grammar; speaking at a natural rate; producing fluent speech; using correct intonation; using correct pronunciation; using correct stress; speaking under timed conditions.

Preparation

- Practise interpreting different types of image, including line, bar and pie graphs, process diagrams and maps, that you see in news stories.
- Find an image that interests you. Take brief notes of the main points using key words, with arrows to indicate the order of what you will say. Practise using your notes to organize your description.
- Practise giving an overview by summarizing the information in an image in one sentence. Set a timer so that you are ready to give the overview after 25 seconds.
- You will score higher if you include, as well as all the main points, any developments or implications, or any conclusions that can be drawn.
- Set a timer for 40 seconds and practise describing a picture or graph so you are familiar with the time you have to speak in this task. Then find 6 or 7 images to describe, and practise describing all of them, with 25 seconds to look at each image and 40 seconds to describe it.
- Record yourself describing an image then compare your response with the image to check how complete your description was.
- Practise using words and phrases used to describe amounts (*more than, less than, approximately*) and trends (*rose, fell, fluctuated, remained stable*), as well as comparatives and superlatives (*greatest, highest, lowest, higher than, lower than*).

Describe image

TIP STRIP

- Look at the image carefully and make sure you understand what it shows. If you have a graph, look closely at both axes. In this graph, the vertical axis shows the percentage of the world population NOT the population figures.
- If there are two graphs or charts, this means you have to make comparisons. Look for the most significant similarities and differences.

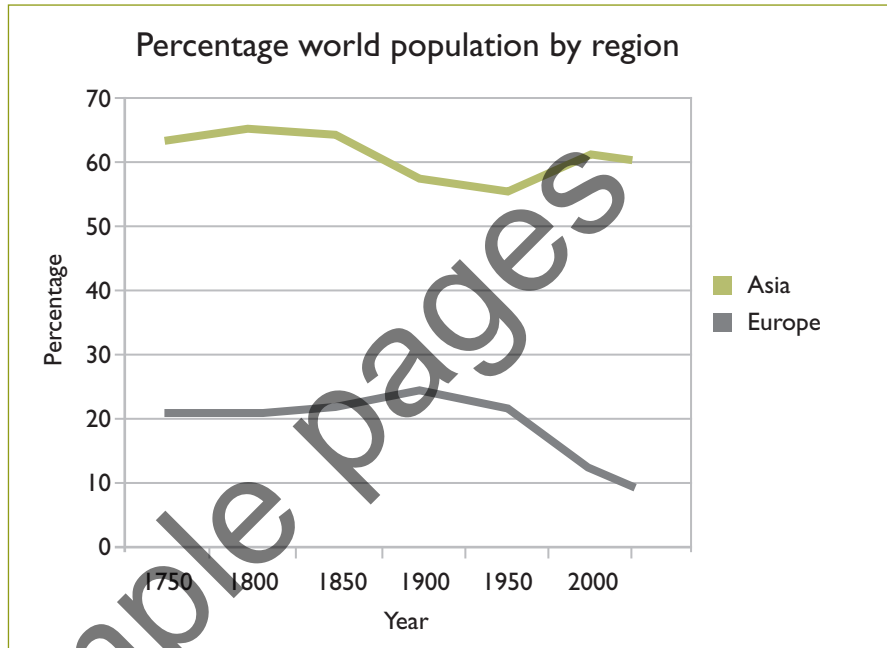


In the test, there are 6–7 tasks. For each task, you look at the image and describe it into the microphone. The wording in the instructions below is the same as you will see in the actual test. See page 16 for help.



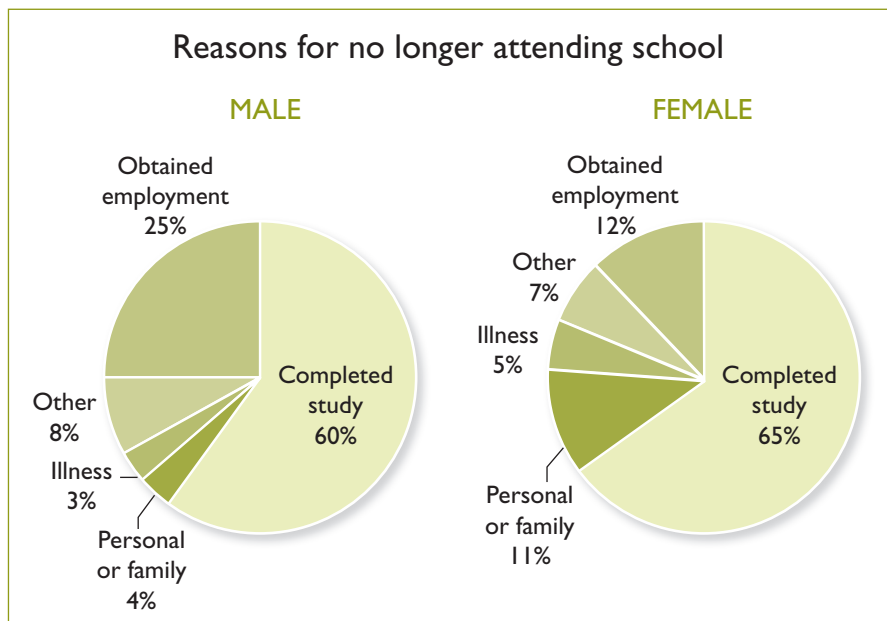
40 sec.

- Look at the graph below. In 25 seconds, please speak into the microphone and describe in detail what the graph is showing. You will have 40 seconds to give your response.



40 sec.

- Look at the charts below. In 25 seconds, please speak into the microphone and describe in detail what the charts are showing. You will have 40 seconds to give your response.




TEST


SPEAKING

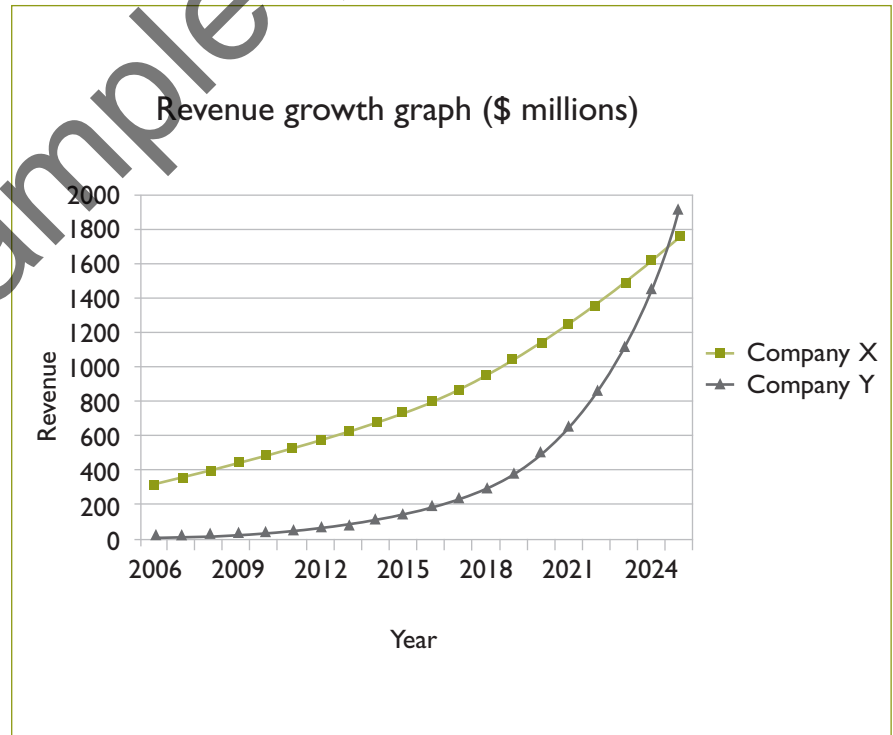
TIP STRIP

- 3 Look at the overall idea or pattern and make sure you describe that. Don't just focus on the details. You will score higher if you include possible developments, conclusions or implications.
- 4 When a graph gives information on large numbers or quantities, make sure you say these correctly. In this case, the graph title tells you that it shows figures in millions of dollars, not hundreds.

- 3  40 sec. Look at the chart below. In 25 seconds, please speak into the microphone and describe in detail what the chart is showing. You will have 40 seconds to give your response.




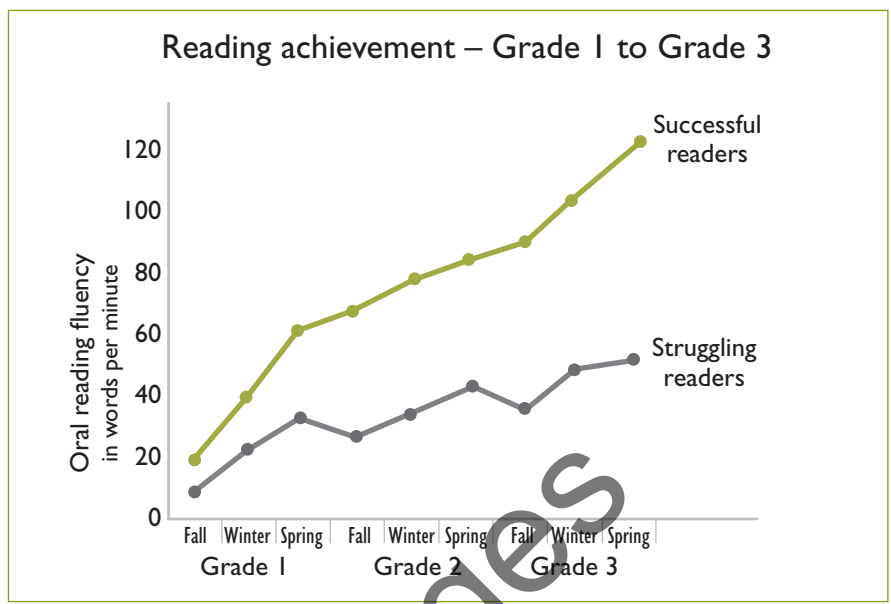
- 4  40 sec. Look at the graph below. In 25 seconds, please speak into the microphone and describe in detail what the graph is showing. You will have 40 seconds to give your response.




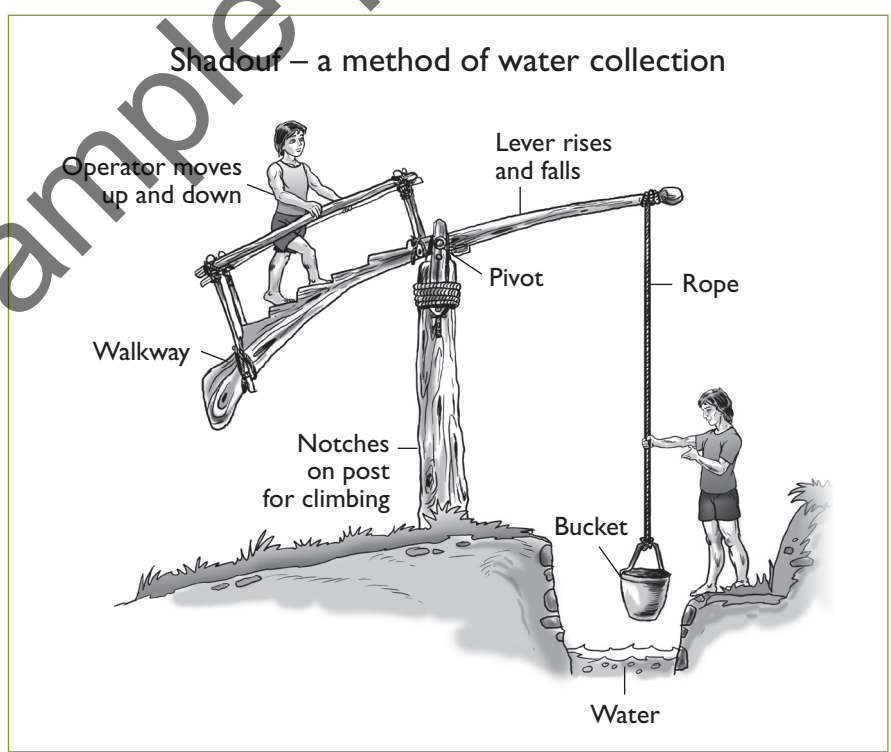
TIP STRIP

- 5 You cannot always describe every point on a graph. Look at the trend. If it is quite steady, describe what it shows overall and only highlight significant differences.
- 6 If you have a diagram of a process, start by describing the different parts or elements of the process and then move on to describing the process itself.

5  40 sec. Look at the graph below. In 25 seconds, please speak into the microphone and describe in detail what the graph is showing. You will have 40 seconds to give your response.



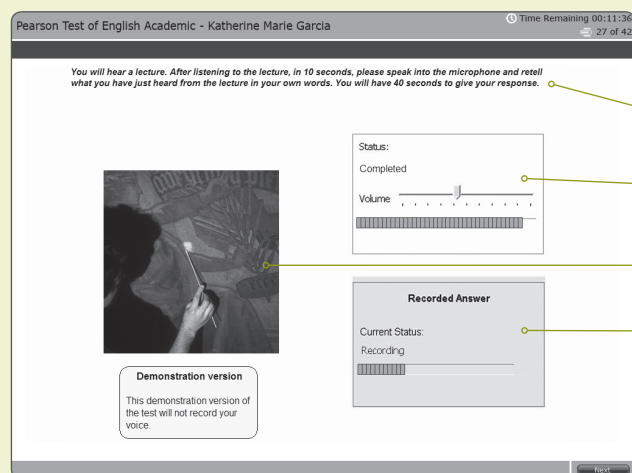
6  40 sec. Look at the diagram below. In 25 seconds, please speak into the microphone and describe in detail what the diagram is showing. You will have 40 seconds to give your response.



Re-tell lecture

About the task type

This is a long-answer speaking task type that tests both listening and speaking skills. You have to re-tell in your own words the information in a 60–90 second lecture. You will do 3–4 *Re-tell lecture* tasks.



Instructions

Audio Status box and volume control

Image related to the topic of the lecture

Recording Status box that tells you when the microphone opens and when it closes

Strategies

Be ready

- Before the recording begins, look at the image to help you to anticipate the topic of the lecture.
- Be ready to take notes on the Erasable Noteboard Booklet.
- Remember you can change the volume using the slider in the Audio Status box.

Take notes as you listen

- As you listen, take notes of the main and supporting ideas.
- Don't try to write down everything you hear. Use key words, abbreviations, symbols and arrows to capture the most important ideas and organize them so you can use your notes to speak.
- When the recording stops, you have 10 seconds before a tone indicates that the microphone is open and the blue bar appears in the Recording Status box. Use this time to plan how you will begin, and the order in which you will present the information.

Summarize

- Use your notes to summarize all the main points and add as many supporting details or examples as you can, as well as any implications or conclusions.
- Speak clearly and at a natural pace. You have 40 seconds to re-tell the information so you do not need to rush. When the microphone closes, click 'Next'.

Testing focus [Scoring](#) > [page 148](#)

Subskills tested

Listening: identifying the topic, theme or main ideas; identifying supporting points or examples; identifying a speaker's purpose, style, tone or attitude; understanding academic vocabulary; inferring the meaning of unfamiliar words; comprehending explicit and implicit information; comprehending concrete and abstract information; classifying and categorizing information; following an oral sequencing of information; comprehending variations in tone, speed and accent.

Speaking: speaking for a purpose (to repeat, to inform, to explain); supporting an opinion with details, examples and explanations; organizing an oral presentation in a logical way; developing complex ideas within a spoken discourse; using words and phrases appropriate to the context; using correct grammar; speaking at a natural rate; producing fluent speech; using correct intonation; using correct pronunciation; using correct stress; speaking under timed conditions.

Preparation

- Develop your own techniques for rapid note-taking. Decide on your own abbreviations and symbols and practise using them so they become automatic.
- Practise starting your response with a topic sentence that introduces the topic and main idea.
- The best responses will include any conclusions or implications, so always consider the significance of the information.
- Listen to 30 seconds of a lecture, noting the key words, then stop the audio and state the main point. Repeat this, extending the time to 90 seconds.
- Find podcasts of lectures with a transcript. Highlight the signal words that indicate the main points and the examples, or evidence, or opposing arguments, then listen for them in the audio. Use the signal words in your own re-telling of the lecture.
- Find 3 or 4 podcasts of lectures and listen to the first 90 seconds, taking notes. Time yourself for 40 seconds re-telling the extract from the lecture using your notes, then move on to the next one.