

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN MODERN GREEK

COMMUNICATION TASKS PART 1: SPEAKING

This booklet contains the communication tasks for *Part 1: Speaking*, which have been selected from the *Sourcebook of Speaking Tasks* that was provided by the Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment of the New York State Education Department in Albany.

The communication/speaking tasks must be **secure** from the time they are received through the time of the written test. They may be administered during the months of April and May.

Directions for administering and rating the students' oral communication performance are contained in the enclosed *Teacher's Manual*. **Please follow the instructions carefully.**



GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE ^{OF} AMERICA
DIRECT ARCHDIOCESAN DISTRICT OFFICE OF EDUCATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Regents comprehensive examination in each modern language is designed to measure students' attainment of learning outcomes at Checkpoint B of the State syllabus *Modern Languages for Communication*. The examination includes 24 credits for oral communication performance in Part 1 and 76 credits for a written test of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, and writing skills.

Part 1 of the examination consists of a formal speaking test to be administered at the school's convenience during the speaking test period, **which begins ten weeks prior to the written test and ends five calendar days prior to the written test.**

THE SPEAKING TEST

Description

The speaking test consists of communication tasks to be performed by students with their teacher. Each task prescribes a simulated conversation in which the student always plays the role of himself/herself and the teacher assumes the specific role indicated in the task. The tasks may involve one or more of the four communication functions specified in the State syllabus: socializing, providing and obtaining information, expressing personal feelings or opinions, and getting others to adopt a course of action.

Each student performs a total of two tasks, randomly selected from the 60 speaking tasks that the school has chosen from the sourcebook to make up Part 1 of the exam. Each task consists of a brief statement in English. To indicate the purpose and setting of the communication, the role of the teacher, and the person who is to initiate the conversation. Each task is designed so that it can be completed in six interactions between the student and the teacher. For the purpose of this manual, the student's part in each of these interactions is called an *utterance*.

The following procedures are recommended for selection of the Part 1 speaking test:

- Select the 60 speaking tasks from the sourcebook, taking care not to select any tasks that were used on the most recent administration of the examination

- Make a photocopy of each page of the sourcebook containing any of the 60 tasks selected;
- Cut out the 60 speaking tasks from the photocopied pages and mount them on index cards, one task per card;
- At the test administration, the student picks a card, hands it to the teacher, and the teacher reads the task aloud to the student.

OR

- Select the 60 speaking tasks from the sourcebook, taking care not to select any tasks that were used on the most recent administration of the examination;
- Renumber the selected tasks from 1 to 60. Also number small pieces of paper from 1 to 60 and place the numbered slips in a box;
- At the test administration, the student picks a numbered slip from the box and hands the slip to the teacher. The teacher locates the task that corresponds to that number in the sourcebook and reads the task aloud to the student.

For any given school year, the tasks not selected for Part 1 of a January or June examination may be used for instructional purposes. **However, caution must be exercised to ensure that the complete set of printed speaking tasks in the sourcebook is kept secure at all times.**

Administration and Rating

The speaking test is to be administered individually to each student at the school's convenience at any time during the speaking test period, either in the presence of other students or with only the teacher. The two tasks need not be administered to each student in one sitting; they may be administered one task at a time during the entire speaking test period. **The Part 1 speaking tasks must be kept secure from the time they are initially selected at the beginning of the school year to the end of the speaking test period.**

The student is to pick two tasks **at random** from the 60 speaking tasks previously selected to constitute Part 1. Depending on the administration method used by the teacher or school, the student will either:

- Pick an index card from the unnumbered group of 60 cards, hand it to the teacher, and the teacher will read the task aloud to the student;

OR

- Pick a numbered slip of paper from a box of 60 numbered slips and hand it to the teacher. The teacher will locate the task that corresponds to that number in the sourcebook and will read the task aloud to the student.

Once a task has been selected by the student, it cannot be substituted for another or done over if the first performance is unsatisfactory.* Care should be taken that no student selects the same task twice. In administering the test, the teacher has two major responsibilities: (1) to act as the student’s conversation partner and (2) to rate the student’s performance.

As the conversation partner, the teacher applies real-life communication devices in the target language to keep the students on task and to ensure the continuity of the conversation. Communication devices such as “Sorry, I didn’t understand that,” “Would you say that again, please?” or “No, what I meant was...” could be used in the target language for that purpose. An additional responsibility of the teacher as the conversation partner is to help bring the conversation to a natural conclusion.

As the conversation partner, the teacher influences the student’s performance by the nature of the eliciting attempts. In order to qualify for full credit, the student’s utterances must be consistent with the breadth and content expected at Checkpoint B in the syllabus. Utterances that are comprehensible and appropriate but insufficient in content receive

less than full credit. Very focused eliciting attempts may place students in situations in which such responses are unavoidable. Questions that focus narrowly on “who,” “when,” “where,” and “at what time,” for example, tend to elicit very limited responses which, although perfectly natural, do not provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate all they can do.

Whenever possible, eliciting attempts should be open-ended statements rather than questions. Whenever questions are unavoidable, they should be as open-ended as possible. Ideally, the teacher should say as little as is necessary to elicit maximum responses by students.

As conversation partner and rater, the teacher may make two attempts at eliciting any of the six student utterances. If the student has not produced a comprehensible and appropriate utterance after the teacher’s first two eliciting attempts at the beginning of the conversation, the student receives no credit for the entire task. However, during the conversation, if a student has not produced a comprehensible and appropriate utterance after the teacher’s second eliciting attempt, the student receives no credit for that utterance, and the teacher should shift to another aspect of the task.

To facilitate rating while acting as the conversation partner, the teacher should use a score sheet to keep track of the student’s utterances, to record the number of eliciting attempts for each, and to record the number of credits awarded for each utterance. A sample score sheet is provided.

Certain teacher-student interactions, although natural in the course of a conversation, do not provide evidence of the student’s ability to produce language. They should be disregarded for rating purposes. Examples of such interactions are:

- yes/no responses
- restatements of all or essential parts of what the teacher has said
- proper names used in isolation
- socializing devices (“Hello,” “How are you?” etc.) used in isolation. [**Note:** Socializing devices at the beginning of a conversation may serve the “initiating” purpose but do not qualify for credit as an utterance.]

* At times the task a student selects may not be appropriate for that student, usually due to a student’s particular disability or religious beliefs. In such cases, that student should be allowed to substitute another task. In order for the student with the disability to be eligible to substitute a task, that student must have been identified by the school district’s Committee on Special Education as having a disability, and the need for the substitution must be consistent with the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP). A student is eligible to substitute tasks due to religious beliefs if it can be demonstrated that the student has been excused from participating in similar conversational situations during the school year.

As the rater, the teacher gives a maximum of 12 credits for each task according to the following criteria:

- Award **2 credits** for each utterance that is comprehensible, appropriate, and consistent with the following proficiency statement at Checkpoint B of the syllabus:

“Can initiate and sustain a conversation, but limited vocabulary range necessitates hesitation and circumlocution. Can use the more common verb tense forms, but still makes many errors in formation and selection. Can use word order correctly in simple sentences, but still makes errors in more complex patterns. Can sustain coherent structures in short and familiar communication situations. Can employ selectively basic cohesive features such as pronouns and verb inflections. Extended communication is

largely a series of short, discrete utterances. Can articulate comprehensibly but has difficulty in pronouncing certain sounds in certain positions or combinations. Speech is usually labored. Has to repeat to be understood by the general public.”

As used above, the term *comprehensibility* means that the utterance would make sense to native speakers who know no English, and the term *appropriateness* means that the utterance contributes to the completion of the task.

- Award **1 credit** for each utterance that is comprehensible and appropriate but below the level indicated in the proficiency statement at Checkpoint B.
- Award **0 credits** for utterances that are incomprehensible or inappropriate following the teacher’s second eliciting attempt.

NEW GUIDELINES FOR SPEAKING

Each utterance receives

2 Points (Checkpoint B) if it is...	1 Point (Checkpoint A) if it is...	0 Points if it is...
<p>Comprehensible</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>Appropriate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>Contains a preponderance of the following Checkpoint B attributes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates and/or sustains and/or advances the conversation • Uses common verb tense forms (including, past, present, future) • Uses accurate structure • Is articulated comprehensibly • Uses a variety of vocabulary that may expand or clarify meaning • Is extended (may contain more than one short, discrete utterance) • Uses culturally correct gestures, social conventions, and/or idiomatic expressions. 	<p>Comprehensible</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>Appropriate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BUT</p> <p>Is a single, short, discrete utterance consisting exclusively of Checkpoint A vocabulary/structures</p> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <p>Contains little or no evidence of Checkpoint B attributes (see Checkpoint B)</p>	<p>Incomprehensible</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND/OR</p> <p>Inappropriate</p> <hr style="width: 50%; margin: 10px auto;"/> <p>Disregard if it is a...</p> <p>Yes/No response Socializing device Restatement of all or essential parts of what the teacher said Proper noun(s) in isolation</p>

In order to be scored, a student utterance at Checkpoints A and B must be:

- **Comprehensible:** Utterance makes sense to native speakers who know no English, but who are accustomed to speaking with nonnative speakers;
- AND**
- **Appropriate:** Utterance contributes to the completion of the task.

In order to receive TWO POINTS, a student utterance:

Contains a preponderance of the following attributes AND IS NOT a single, short, discrete utterance consisting exclusively of Checkpoint A vocabulary and structures:

- **Initiates and/or sustains and/or advances the conversation,** but may contain repetition, hesitation, or circumlocution.
- **Uses common verb tense forms (including past, present, future),** but may contain minor errors in formation and selection;
- **Uses accurate structure** in simple constructions, but may contain errors in more complex ones;
- **Is articulated comprehensibly,** but with difficulty for certain sounds, or in certain positions or combinations;
- **Uses a variety of vocabulary that is appropriate to the situation and may expand or clarify meaning,** but there may be minor inaccuracies;
- **Is extended,** but may contain short, discrete responses;
- **Uses culturally correct gestures, social conventions, and/or idiomatic expressions when appropriate.**

Note: Each utterance does not have to satisfy all of the criteria articulated above in order to score two points. The quality of the utterance should be predominantly characterized by these descriptors.