

London Tests of English for Children

Teaching Tips for the Speaking Test

The Speaking Test consists of two stages: the first involving a board game, and the second involving topic cards. The tips here concern the board game stage. In this part of the test, children must look at questions written on cards, and ask and answer them. To provide lots of relevant speaking practice you can use the following activities:

1) Questionnaires

Write about half a dozen questions which require short answers (see Example 1), photocopy them and give them to half the children in your class. All these children should pick a partner among the rest of the class to ask their questions.

To ensure they listen to the replies, get them either to write the answers down or to try to remember them. When they have finished, ask each of the children who asked questions to tell the class, or to write for you, something that they found out (e.g. 'Aaron's favourite animal is a monkey', 'Sasha would like to be a teacher'). Make a note of which children asked the questions and, next time, give a set of questions to the other children in the class to ask.

Example 1

What is your favourite animal?
What job would you like to do?
What time did you go to bed last night?
Can you play a musical instrument?
What colour are your socks?
Are you good at singing?

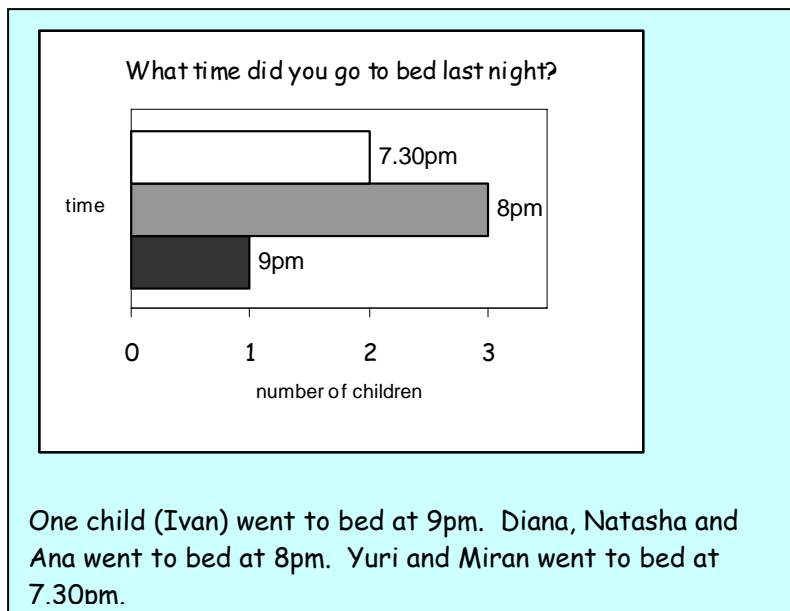
2) Surveys

Conduct this activity in the same way as above but get both halves of the class to ask each other the questions. When they have all asked the questions put the children in small groups, and get them to write up or tabulate their findings in posters for the classroom wall (see Example 2 and 3).

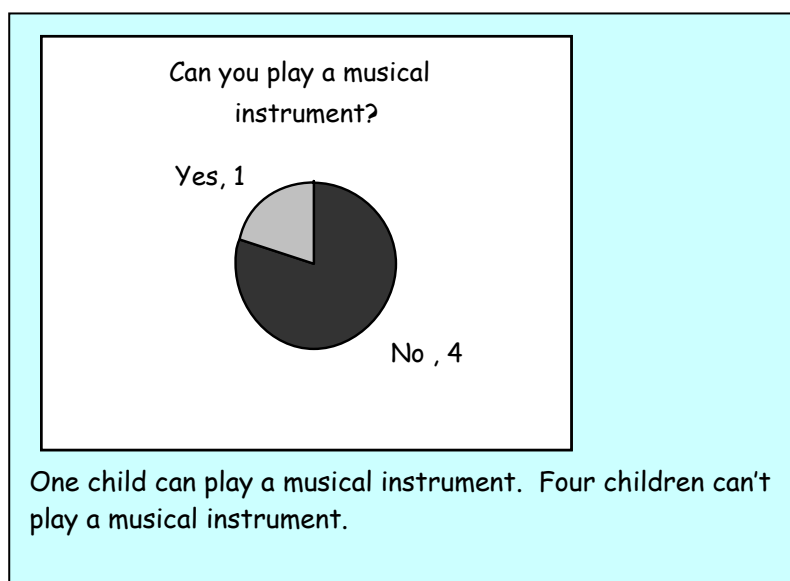
This is a nice activity to tie in with maths class-work on graphs and provides useful writing practice too. From the point of view of preparation for the LTEfC, it reinforces the idea in the children's minds that when they ask and answer questions in English, they are doing so for a communicative purpose.

The examiners will give better marks to candidates who convey a sense that when they are speaking English they are using the language to request and to give information.

Example 2



Example 3



3) Find somebody who...

This activity is a kind of race. Write a list of questions, as in Example 1, then, beside each one, write an answer which you expect at least one child in your class to give. For example, if you know that at least one child is very keen on horses, you could write 'horses' next to 'What is your favourite animal?'

Give all the children a copy of the list and tell everybody to stand up and mingle, asking each other questions until they find somebody who gives an answer which matches one on the list. Whoever asked the question should then write the name of the child who answered on their sheet of paper. Once a child has written a name next to every question, that child should shout "*finished!*" and is the winner. If you want to, you or the other children can check whether the names are correct by asking the child named the specific question. For example, if 'Anna' has been written down as the child who loves horses, Anna should be asked 'what is your favourite animal?'

Notes

- In the examples, we have included a variety of different question forms. Depending on the level of your students, you may prefer to begin by practising just one or two forms (e.g. 'what is your favourite ...?').
- In all these activities it is important that the children do not *show* the questions to the people they are asking. This is speaking and listening practice, not reading practice! They should look each other in the eye and communicate with their voices.
- If possible, get the children who are asking the questions to memorise them so that they do not need to keep referring to the list.
- Very important! Ensure that when asking questions the children use appropriate intonation. The examiners will be listening out for this!