



Versant Professional English Test

Official Guide for Test-Takers

June 2021 | v1.0



Versant Professional English Test

The Versant Professional English Test (VPET) assesses the ability to communicate in everyday workplace English. It measures an individual's Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing skills. Businesses, universities and training organizations can use the test for benchmarking and evaluation as part of business English courses, or for development and advancement purposes.

VPET has 2 levels, covering lower and higher degrees of English proficiency:

Level 1: A1 to B1+, or GSE 10 to 58

Level 2: B1 to C2, or GSE 51 to 90

This guide will help test takers prepare for the both levels, as the item types are the same while the difficulty level of the items will vary. The guide provides examples of questions drawn from both levels, as well as tips for answering. You can use it to develop useful strategies for the test day.

Both levels have ten sections based on the item types shown in the table. Each part starts with instructions and a sample item so that you will know what to expect. Each question is timed, and the total length of the test is approximately 60 minutes.

As well as reading this guide, we recommend that you request a free unscored [sample test](#). You can also purchase a [practice test](#) that will give you a score within minutes, so that you can see how you might do on the real test.

Item type	Skill(s) tested	Items in test
Sentence Completion (Part A)	Reading and Writing	10
Passage Reconstruction (Part B)	Writing	3
Reading Comprehension (Part C)	Reading	6
E-mail Writing (Part D)	Writing	2
Dictation (Part E)	Listening and Writing	8
Response Selection (Part F)	Listening	8
Passage Comprehension (Part G)	Listening	6
Repeat (Part H)	Speaking	10
Speaking Situations (Part I)	Speaking	2
Story Retellings (Part J)	Speaking	3

Skills tested

The following table describes the skills assessed and scored by the test. An example score report is provided at the end of the guide.

Skill	Definition
Overall Ability	The Overall score reflects a candidate’s ability to understand spoken and written English in the international workplace. To get a high score, candidates need to be able to respond appropriately in various spoken and written tasks. Speaking at a conversational pace and in intelligible English are also important. Overall scores are based on an equally weighted combination of Speaking, Listening, Writing, and Reading scores.
Speaking	Speaking measures the ability to communicate in a range of everyday and workplace situations. The score is based on the ability to produce fluent, intelligible speech by using appropriate stress, rhythm, and intonation as well as accurate or appropriate grammar.
Listening	Listening assesses the ability to understand main ideas and specific details from a range of everyday and workplace speech. The score is based on the ability to comprehend the meaning of English spoken at a normal conversational speed.
Writing	Writing tests the ability to produce a variety of texts on everyday and workplace topics. The score is based on the ability of the candidate to express him/herself with clear, effective structure as well as appropriate tone and style according to the purpose and audience of the text.
Reading	The Reading score reflects the ability to understand written English texts on everyday and workplace topics. The score is based on the ability to operate at a functional speed to extract details and main ideas, infer the message, and construct meaning.

Access to the test

The Versant Professional English Test is taken online and autoscored using Pearson's highly reliable, state-of-the-art technology. Results are available in minutes. To take the test you will need:

- Test instructions and a Test Identification Number (TIN) from your test administrator.
- Access to a computer.
- A good internet connection.
- An up-to-date web browser or the [Versant Computer Delivered Testing \(CDT\) software](#) (for Windows).
- Headset with a microphone connected to your computer.
- A quiet room where you can take the 60-minute test without interruptions.

Your test administrator may also ask you to take the test using a remote monitoring system. You will be notified in advance if this is the case.

Navigating the test

- To start the test, you will be asked to enter your Test Identification Number (TIN).
- You will then be asked to go through some system checks to ensure that your audio and microphone are working.
- Once the actual test begins, an examiner's voice will guide you and explain how to answer the different types of questions.
- Each new section starts with an instruction screen and a sample item, so that you can see what to do on each section.
- Each question is timed. In some cases, the system detects when you have finished responding and presents the next item.
- If you do not complete an answer in the allowed time, your work will be saved automatically, and whatever you put in as your answer will be submitted.
- If you finish a question early, it's a good idea to check your answer. If you think it's good, click Next to move on to the next question.
- You can only move forward – it is not possible to go back to a previous question or re-record an answer.

General tips

- Some questions require spoken responses, and some written answers.
- Answers to speaking questions are recorded, so make sure that you are in a quiet room with no background noise (even loud fans and air conditioning can cause interference). People speaking around you will cause their voices to be recorded along with yours, making it hard for the system to score you correctly.
- When answering speaking questions:
 - Ensure your headset is properly connected (to avoid static or technical issues).
 - Speak clearly at a normal volume (don't shout or whisper).
 - Speak at a normal speed (do not rush or speak extra slowly).
 - Consider which words need to be stressed.
 - Pay attention to punctuation (e.g., commas, and periods) as these will give you clues for pauses in your speech.
- Use the timer to keep track especially for longer written answers.
- When answering in writing, consider spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation.

A [video](#) with tips for test takers is also available online.

Part A: Sentence Completion

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

A Sentence Completion

Instructions

Please type one word that best fits the meaning of the sentence. Type only one word. You will have 25 seconds for each sentence. Click "Next" when you are finished.

You see:

You type:

It's _____ tonight. Bring your sweater.

cold

Replay

Next

Example question

A Sentence Completion

1 / 10

Complete the sentence.

He always kept a flashlight in his car in case of an

00'23"

Next

What will you have to do?

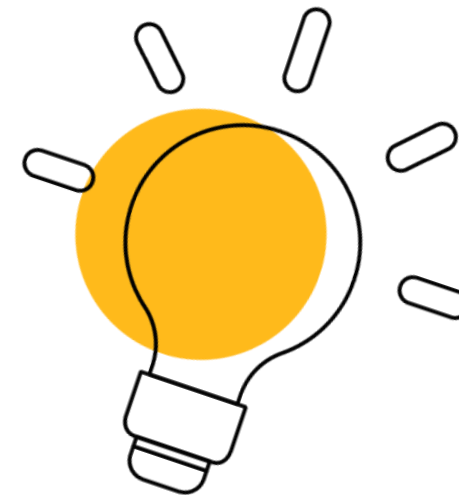
- You will see a sentence that has a missing word.
- You must enter one word that best fits the meaning of the sentence.
- You will have 25 seconds to answer.

What skills are being tested?

- This question assesses your vocabulary knowledge as well as your understanding of a given English sentence.

Sentence Completion *tips*

- Consider the overall meaning of the sentence.
- Look at the words either side of the gap and use your knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to choose the missing word.
- Pay attention to spelling and capitalization.
- Only type one word.



You can practice by completing the sentence below. Remember you will have 25 seconds to answer.

He always kept a flashlight in his car in case of an .

Part B: Passage Reconstruction

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

B
Passage Reconstruction

Instructions

You will have 30 seconds to read a paragraph. After 30 seconds, the paragraph will disappear from the screen. Then, you will have 90 seconds to reconstruct the paragraph. Show that you understood the passage by rewriting it in your own words. Your answer will be scored for clear and accurate content, not word-for-word memorization. After 90 seconds, your work will be saved automatically.

You read:

Mike went for ten job interviews. At the last interview, he finally received a job offer.



You type:

Mike had ten job interviews. He got an offer after the final interview.



 Replay
  Next

Example question

B
Passage Reconstruction

1 / 3

Rewrite the passage using your own words.

Please type here.


 01'29"
  Next

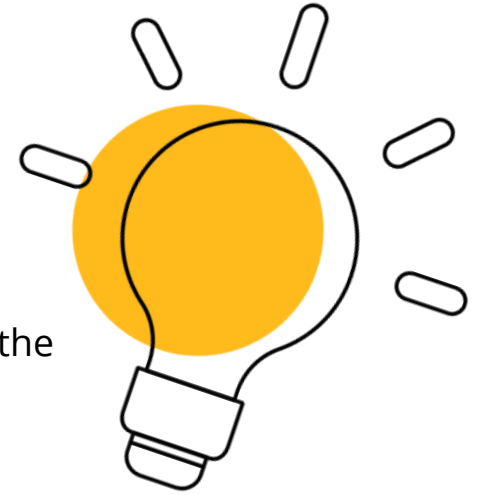
What will you have to do?

- You will read a passage on the screen. The passage will disappear after 30 seconds.
- After the passage disappears, you need to rewrite the meaning of it in your own words.
- You have 90 seconds to rewrite the passage.

What skills are being tested?

- This question tests Writing skills, especially your ability to reproduce key points and details in your own words in everyday and workplace English.

Passage Reconstruction *tips*



- Read the passage for understanding. Don't worry about memorizing specific phrases.
- When writing, use your memory and try to re-create the meaning of the passage. You don't need to use the same words, but it is important to have the same meaning.
- Do not write a quick summary – include all the details you can. The more, the better.
- Pay attention to spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.
- Write in complete sentences.

You can practice by rewriting the passage below. In the real test the passage will disappear after 30 seconds and you will have 90 seconds to enter your answer.

Thank you so much for being so understanding about our delay of shipment. It has been quite difficult to get materials from our suppliers due to the recent weather conditions. It is an unusual circumstance. In any case, we should be able to ship the products to you tomorrow. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Part C: Reading Comprehension

Instructions



C

Reading Comprehension

Instructions

Read a passage and two questions. Select the best answer to each question. You will have 3 minutes. If you finish early, click 'Next'.

Replay

Next

What will you have to do?

- You will see information about a situation. It may include a passage, graphs or charts. Any figures shown will be very basic and need only a limited understanding of graphs.
- You will be asked to answer two multiple-choice questions based on the information displayed.
- You will have 3 minutes to read the passage and answer the questions.

Example question

C

Reading Comprehension

1 / 3

Please read the passage.

Movie House
Saturday Schedule

Theater	Movie Title	Rating	Times (all p.m.)
1	The King's Army	★★★★	7:00 9:30 11:45
2	Anna's Plan	★	1:20 3:15 6:30
3	The Storm	★★★	12:15 4:45 7:30
4	Magic Beans	★★	2:15 5:00 8:30

Select the best answer to each question.

1. What movie got the most stars?

☐ The Storm

☐ Magic Beans

☐ Anna's Plan

☐ The King's Army

2. What movie starts first?

☐ Magic Beans

☐ The King's Army

☐ Anna's Plan

☐ The Storm

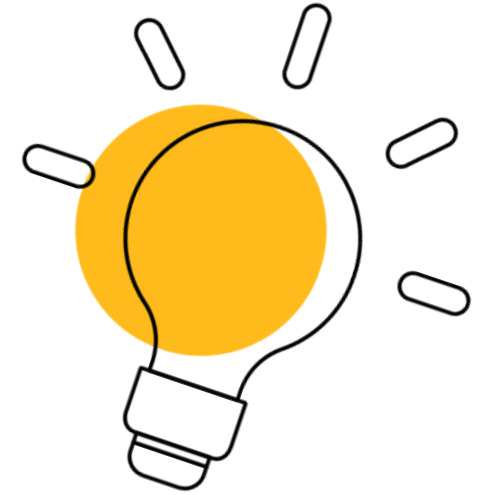
02:59"

Next

What skills are being tested?

- This question tests Reading including the ability to:
- Understand main themes of the passage.
 - Identify details in the text.
 - Infer the message based on the given information.
 - Evaluate coherence of the text.

Reading Comprehension *tips*



- Read the text carefully and consider what it is communicating.
- Read the question and look at the passage to see if you can find or figure out the answer.
- Answer both questions.

Practice by looking at the passage provided and answering the questions. You will have three minutes in the test.

Please read the passage.

Movie House Saturday Schedule						
Theater	Movie Title	Rating	Times (all p.m.)			
1	The King's Army	★★★★	7:00	9:30	11:45	
2	Anna's Plan	★	1:20	3:15	6:30	
3	The Storm	★★★	12:15	4:45	7:30	
4	Magic Beans	★★	2:15	5:00	8:30	

Select the best answer to each question.

1. What movie got the most stars?

- ☐ The Storm
- ☐ Magic Beans
- ☐ Anna's Plan
- ☐ The King's Army

2. What movie starts first?

- ☐ Magic Beans
- ☐ The King's Army
- ☐ Anna's Plan
- ☐ The Storm

Part D: E-mail Writing

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

D
E-Mail Writing

Instructions

Read a description of a situation and write an email addressing the issues described in the situation. You will have 9 minutes. You must write at least 100 words. You will be able to see how much time is left and how many words you have written. Write in complete sentences. If you do not finish in 9 minutes, everything you have written will be saved automatically and the next item will begin.

⏮️ Replay
 ⏭️ Next

What will you have to do?

- You will see a short description of a workplace situation.
- Write an email about it to the specific person in the description.
- Write it using your own words.
- You have 9 minutes to read the situation and respond.
- You must write at least 100 words.

Example question

D
E-Mail Writing

1 / 2

Please read the information.

You recently purchased computers for your company. You bought the computers from an overseas company, even though a local company would have been cheaper. Your supervisor, Mr. Watson, wants to know why you chose to purchase them from the more expensive, overseas company and not from the cheaper, local company. Write an email to him giving three reasons that support your decision.

Your reasons must come from the following themes:

Type your e-mail.

Word Count: 0

Please type here.

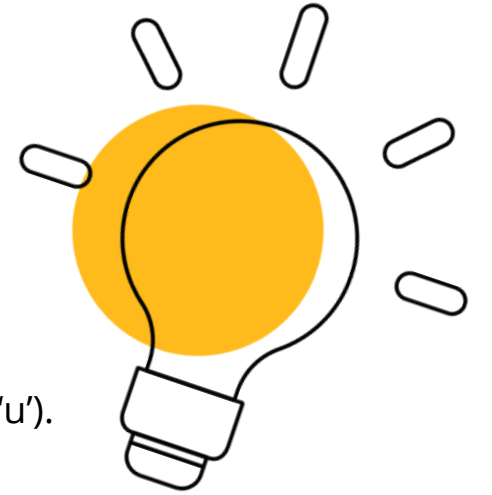
09'00"
⏭️ Next

What skills are being tested?

This question assesses your writing skills including the ability to:

- Produce grammatical sentences.
- Use appropriate vocabulary given the topic and situation.
- Organize ideas in a logical manner.
- Use a suitable tone to reflect the contents of the message as well as the relationship with the recipient of the email.

E-mail Writing *tips*



- Read the passage and instructions carefully. Address your email to the right person.
- Make sure your answer covers all the themes requested. Add details to support each idea.
- Write in a relatively formal way, suitable for the workplace. Do not use texting abbreviations (e.g. 'you' = 'u').
- Pay attention to spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
- Write at least 100 words in complete grammatical sentences. Writing more is always better.
- The Word Count displays the number of words you have written.

You can practice using the example below. Give yourself 9 minutes to read and respond.

You recently purchased computers for your company. You bought the computers from an overseas company, even though a local company would have been cheaper. Your supervisor, Mr. Watson, wants to know why you chose to purchase them from the more expensive, overseas company and not from the cheaper, local company. Write an email to him giving three reasons that support your decision.

Your reasons must come from the following themes:

- customer service
- warranty
- variety

You should include all three themes. Provide supporting ideas for each of your reasons.

Part E: Dictation

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

E Dictation
Instructions

Please type each sentence exactly as you hear it. You will have 25 seconds for each sentence. Pay attention to spelling and punctuation. Click "Next" when you are finished. After 25 seconds, your work will be saved automatically.

You hear:

Can you work on Monday?

You type:

Can you work on Monday?

Replay
 Next

Example question

E Dictation
1 / 8

Type what you heard.

00'24"
 Next

What will you have to do?

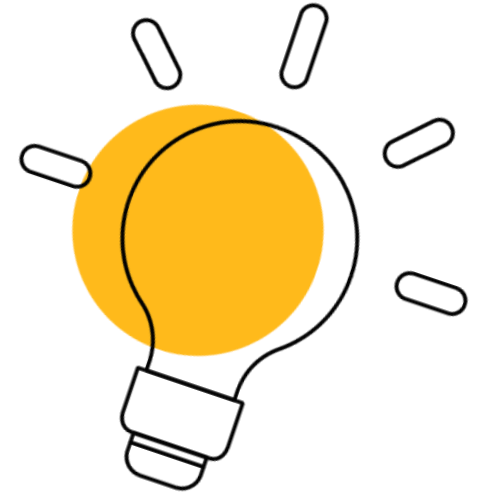
- You will hear a sentence spoken aloud.
- You will need to type the sentence word-for-word.
- You will hear the sentence only once.
- You have 25 seconds to type your answer.
- After this time, your answer will be saved.

What skills are being tested?

- This question assesses how well you understood a spoken sentence.
- It also tests how well you write a sentence you heard using appropriate grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Dictation *tips*

- Listen to the sentence before you start typing.
- Focus on the meaning of the sentence to help you remember it.
- Pay attention to spelling, capitalization and punctuation.



You can practice with the example given below. Try to type your answer in 25 seconds.



***Click to hear
the prompt***

Part F: Response Selection

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

F
Response Selection

Instructions

You will hear a sentence and then three possible responses. Click the letter A, B, or C to choose the correct response. You will have 8 seconds to answer.

You hear:

What time is it now?

A. I like reading newspapers.

B. Food is getting expensive.

C. It's nine o'clock.

You click:

☐ A

☐ B

☒ C

Replay
 Next

Example answer screen

F
Response Selection

1 / 8

Select the correct response.

☐ A

☐ B

☐ C

00'08"
 Next

What will you have to do?

- You will listen to a sentence.
- You will see three possible answers.
- You must choose the most appropriate answer.

What skills are being tested?

- This question assesses listening comprehension – the ability to recognize words, understand the meaning of a spoken sentence, and identify the best response based on the context.

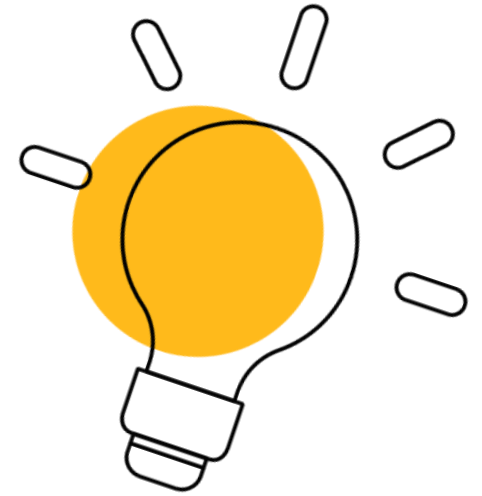
Response Selection *tips*

- Listen carefully and consider the overall meaning of the sentence.
- Listen to all the responses.
- Select only one answer.

Practice using the question below.



*Click to hear
the prompt*



Part G: Passage Comprehension

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

G

Passage Comprehension

Instructions

You will hear a story, followed by three questions. When you hear a beep, say your answer quickly and smoothly. Your answer should be a few words or a very short sentence.

You hear:

Jason woke up feeling sick. He called his boss and explained that he couldn't come into work. Immediately after making the phone ...

What problem did Jason have when he woke up

What did he do right after calling his boss

What did Jason do that after

You say:

He felt sick

Took medicine

He went to work

Example question

G

Passage Comprehension

1 / 6

Answer the question.

What will you have to do?

- You will hear a passage about an everyday or workplace situation.
- There will be three questions about the passage.
- You answer the questions by speaking out loud.

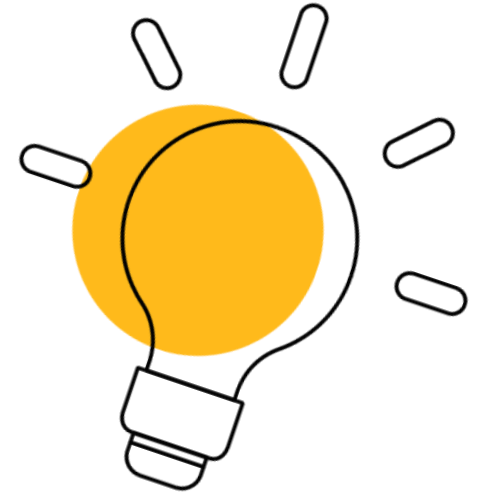
What skills are being tested?

This question tests your ability to:

- Understand the main points and details of the story.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the story using short spoken responses.

Passage Comprehension *tips*

- Listen carefully to make sure you understand the story.
- Answer using a short phrase or a very short sentence.



You can practice with the question below.



1. Click to hear the story.



2. Click to hear question 1.



3. Click to hear question 2.



4. Click to hear question 3.

Part H: Repeat

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

H Repeat

Instructions

Please repeat each sentence that you hear.

You hear:

You say:

"Leave town on the next train."

"Leave town on the next train."

Replay

Next

Example question

H Repeat

1 / 10

Repeat what you heard.

What will you have to do?

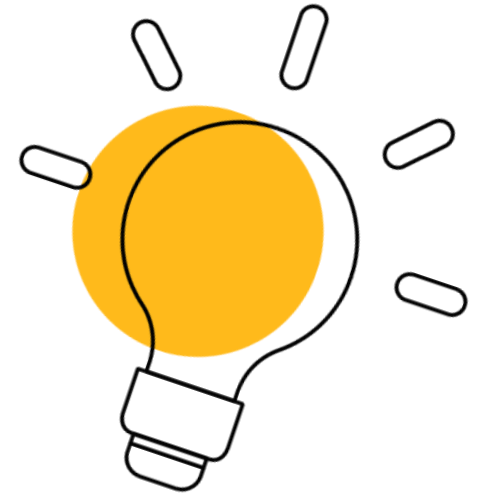
- You will hear one sentence at a time.
- You will be asked to repeat each one.
- You should repeat it exactly as you heard it.
- You have 15 seconds to answer.

What skills are being tested?

- This question tests Speaking skills.
- It measures how well you understand and reproduce a given sentence using accurate sentence structure as well as good pronunciation and fluency.

Repeat *tips*

- Listen to the prompt.
- Consider the meaning of the sentence.
- Repeat what you heard using the same rhythm, pauses, and intonation that you heard in the recording.
- Start speaking within 6 seconds, or the test will move on to the next question.



You can practice by listening to the prompt below.



***Click to hear
the prompt***

Part I: Speaking Situations

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

I Speaking Situations

Instructions

You will hear and read a description of a situation. You will have 10 seconds to think about your answer. Then you will hear a beep. You will have 60 seconds to answer the question. Please answer as completely as you can.

Replay
 Next

Example question

I Speaking Situations

1 / 2

Answer the question.

You borrowed a jacket from your friend, Mark. However, you spilled coffee on it, and it left a large stain. Mark calls and says he needs his jacket. What would you say to him?

00'59"
 Next

What will you have to do?

- You will hear and see a description of a situation.
- You will then be asked to respond to it.
- You respond by speaking out loud.
- You have 10 seconds to think about your answer.
- After the beep you have 60 seconds to respond.

What skills are being tested?

This question tests your ability to:

- Understand a given situation.
- Speak in a socially appropriate manner in the given context.
- Speak with good pronunciation and fluency.

Speaking Situations *tips*

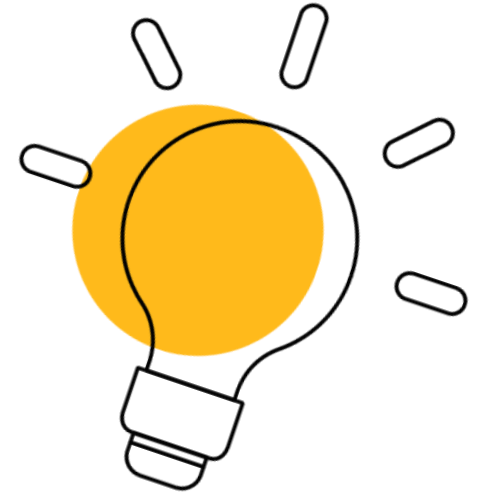
- Listen carefully to the story (situation).
- Consider what is happening and who is involved, for instance is it a formal or informal situation.
- Decide how you will respond. Are you apologizing, asking for something, or refusing to help? What social conventions do you need to observe?
- Make sure your words and intonation are suitable for the situation.
- Answer as fully as you can.
- Answer within 15 seconds or the test will move on.

You can practice using the example below. During the test you will have 10 seconds to think about your answer and 60 seconds to respond.



***Click to hear
the prompt***

You borrowed a jacket from your friend, Mark. However, you spilled coffee on it, and it left a large stain. Mark calls and says he needs his jacket. What would you say to him?



Part J: Story Retellings

Instructions



Click to hear instructions

J
Story Retellings

Instructions

You will hear three brief stories. Each story will be spoken once, followed by a beep. When you hear the beep, you will have 30 seconds to retell the story in English. Try to retell as much of the story as you can, including the situation, characters, actions, and ending. You will hear another beep at the end of the 30 seconds.

Replay
 Next

Example question

J
Story Retellings

1 / 3

Retell the story in your own words.

00'30"
 Next

What will you have to do?

- You will hear a short story. It will be spoken once.
- After a beep you should retell the story in your own words.
- You have 30 seconds to tell the story.
- After 30 seconds you will hear another beep and your answer will be saved.

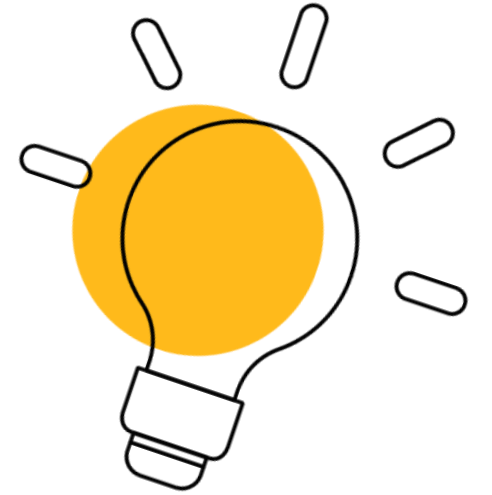
What skills are being tested?

This item measures your ability to:

- Understand the main idea and details of a short story.
- Retell the story in your own words using proper vocabulary and grammar.
- Speak with good pronunciation and fluency.

Story Retellings *tips*

- Listen carefully to the story.
- Focus and try to remember names, places and what happened.
- Try to include details as well as the key information in the story.
- Use your own words – do not repeat exactly what you heard.
- Speak clearly using complete sentences and correct grammar.



You can practice by trying the question below. You have 30 seconds to retell the story.



*Click to hear
the story*


VERSANT™

John Smith

Test Completion Date (GMT) 01 January 2021
Test Identification Number (TIN) 12345678

Versant Professional English Test - Level 1

Overall GSE Score

43

10 90

CEFR: B1

The candidate has good control and understanding of basic structures and functions. They can generally understand straightforward factual texts on familiar topics. They can skim and scan a short text. They can follow familiar topics if the speaker is clear and avoids idiomatic usage. They can give a straightforward description using linking words and devices. They can write straightforward connected text on routine factual information or familiar topics.

Understanding the Skills

Overall Score

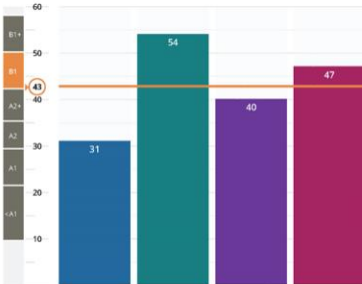
The Overall score on this test reflects a candidate's ability to understand spoken and written English in the international workplace. To get a high score, candidates need to be able to respond appropriately in various spoken and written tasks. Speaking at a conversational pace and in intelligible English are also important. Overall scores are based on an equally weighted combination of speaking, listening, writing, and reading scores.

GSE

The Global Scale of English (GSE) is a standardized, granular scale from 10 to 90, which measures English language proficiency. Visit [English.com/gse](https://www.english.com/gse) to learn more.

The **Level 1** test is appropriate for test-takers in the **GSE score range 10-58** (CEFR <A1 to B1+).

31 Speaking 54 Listening 40 Reading 47 Writing



Skill	GSE Score
Speaking	31
Listening	54
Reading	40
Writing	47
Overall	43

CEFR GSE

Pearson | English

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Page 1 of 3

TIN: 12345678

Current Capabilities in Detail

Speaking: **GSE: 31/90**

The candidate can talk about their life (family, friends, home, education, job), daily routines and basic activities in a simple way. They are able to describe their job and workplace using simple language. They can take part in common everyday or simple business transactions, and express agreement (e.g. deciding where to go for lunch). They may need support with less familiar topics.

📌 **Tips to improve:**

- Learn more vocabulary and phrases relating to home and work life (e.g. the workplace, free time activities, education, skills and abilities, jobs).
- Practice talking about work, routines, and family. For example, describe likes and dislikes, abilities, appearance and clothing, or familiar objects.
- Learn vocabulary and grammar to use in conversations in different places (e.g. shops, banks, train station) and situations (e.g. buying a ticket, asking where something is, opening a bank account).

Business Partner - B1:

SB: BW1 Global recruitment agency Task 5

SB: Level 1 Unit 7, 57

Understanding the Skills

Speaking

The Speaking score reflects the ability to communicate in a range of everyday and workplace situations. The score is based on the ability to produce fluent, intelligible speech by using appropriate stress, rhythm, and intonation as well as accurate or appropriate grammar.

CEFR: A2

Listening: **GSE: 54/90**

The candidate understands the main information in familiar standard texts and can distinguish between main ideas and supporting details. They can follow a conversation or an informal interview on common topics, guess speakers' opinions, and notice a joke has been made. They can understand the key points about a radio program on a work-related topic or a work-related presentation.

📌 **Tips to improve:**

- Listen to a conversation and try to notice how the speakers express their opinion through different words and phrases.
- Listen to different authentic T.V. or radio programs and practice identifying the general idea of the program.

Business Partner - B1:

SB: Unit 4.3 video 4

SB: Unit 3.3 video 3

SB: Unit 5.3 Video 2

3

SB: Unit 6.3 CS Dealing with disagreement Video

2-3

CEFR: B1+

Listening

The Listening score reflects the ability to understand main ideas and specific details from a range of everyday and workplace speech. The score is based on the ability to comprehend the meaning of English spoken at a normal conversational speed.

Pearson | English

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Page 2 of 3

TIN: 12345678

Current Capabilities in Detail

Understanding the Skills

Reading: **GSE: 40/90**

CEFR: A2+

The candidate can follow the sequence of events in a text on a familiar topic. They can scan a simple text and identify the main topic. They can understand the main information from simple diagrams (e.g. graphs and bar charts).

🔗 **Tips to improve:**

- Read a short work-related story and predict what you think will happen next.
- Read texts which include graphical information (diagrams, charts, tables) and try to connect the text and information in the images.
- Practice guessing meanings of difficult words in a text.
- Read stories and follow the sequence of events by focusing on linking words/phrases.
- Practice understanding a simple resume or cover letter.
- Find a job application form and practice completing it with correct information.

Business Partner - B1:

SB: Unit 2.2 Reading

3-5

SB: BW7 Red cushion furniture

SB: Unit 8.2 Reading ex2-5

SB: Unit 4.2 Reading 2-4

SB: Unit 4.2 Grammar present simple and past simple passive 5-7

SB: BW6 Visitor safety

Writing: **GSE: 47/90**

CEFR: B1

The candidate can write short, simple structured paragraphs on familiar topics. They can write simple work-related emails/letters giving or requesting information, descriptions of general work experience or jobs and responsibilities. They can write a basic summary of a simple text using the original wording and order. They can write personal emails/letters giving some details of events, experiences and feelings, and a letter of application with limited supporting details. They have good control of basic structures and functions but make mistakes when expressing more complex ideas or dealing with unfamiliar contexts.

🔗 **Tips to improve:**

- Find a job advert in a newspaper and write a basic letter of application, including supporting details.
- Pick a work-related experience and write about it, describing feelings and reactions and use linking words to connect your sentences.

Business Partner - B1:

SB: Unit 1.5 Task 3

SB: Unit 7.2 Writing 10

SB: Unit 1.5 Writing: Emails introducing yourself

SB: Unit 4.5 Task 3

SB: Unit 3.5 Writing: Email requesting an update

SB: Unit 4.5 Writing: Letter confirming an order

Writing

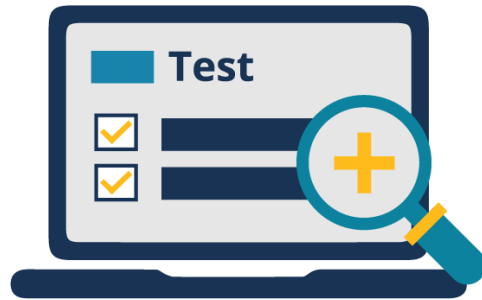
The Writing score reflects the ability to produce a variety of texts on everyday and workplace topics. The score is based on the ability of the candidate to express him/herself with clear, effective structure as well as appropriate tone and style according to the purpose and audience of the text.

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