



Certificate in Advanced English

Examination Report 0150 Syllabus

December 2008

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Examination Report

Syllabus 0150

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides a general view of how candidates performed overall and on each paper in the December 2008 session, and offers guidance on the preparation of candidates.

The overall pass rate for Syllabus 0150 was **71.08%**.

The following table gives details of the percentage of candidates at each grade.

| 0150 | |
|-------|------------|
| GRADE | PERCENTAGE |
| A | 8.08 |
| B | 15.96 |
| C | 47.04 |
| D | 9.74 |
| E | 19.18 |

- **Grading**

Grading took place during January 2009 (approximately six weeks after the examinations).

The five CAE papers total 200 marks, after weighting. Papers 1-5 are each weighted to 40 marks. It is important to note that candidates do not 'pass' or 'fail' in a particular paper or component, but rather in the examination as a whole. A candidate's overall CAE grade is based on the aggregate score gained by the candidate across all five papers.

The overall grades (A, B, C, D and E) are set using the following information:

- statistics on the candidature
- statistics on the overall candidate performance
- statistics on individual questions, for those parts of the examination for which this is appropriate (Papers 1, 3 and 4)
- the advice of the Principal Examiners based on the performance of candidates, and on the recommendation of examiners where this is relevant (Papers 2 and 5)
- comparison with statistics from previous years' examination performance and candidature.

Results are reported as three passing grades (A, B and C) and two failing grades (D and E). Every candidate is provided with a Statement of Results, which includes a graphical display of the candidate's performance in each component, shown against the scale Exceptional – Good – Borderline – Weak.

In addition, the Statement of Results includes a standardised score out of 100 (which is converted from the aggregate mark of 200). This score allows candidates to see exactly how they performed. It has set values for each grade, allowing comparison across sessions of the examination:

Grade A = 80-100 marks
Grade B = 75-79 marks
Grade C = 60-74 marks
Grade D = 55-59 marks
Grade E = 54 marks or below.

This means that the score a candidate needs to achieve a passing grade will always be 60.

- **Special Consideration**

Special Consideration can be given to candidates affected by adverse circumstances immediately before or during an examination. Examples of acceptable reasons for giving Special Consideration include illness and bereavement. All applications for Special Consideration must be made through the local Centre as soon as possible after the examination affected.

- **Irregular Conduct**

The cases of candidates who are suspected of copying, collusion or breaking the examination regulations in some other way will be considered by the Cambridge ESOL Malpractice Committee. Results may be withheld because further investigation is needed or because of infringement of the regulations.

- **Notification of Results**

Candidates' Statements of Results are issued through their local Centre approximately two months after the examination has been taken. Certificates are issued to candidates gaining a passing grade (A, B or C) about six weeks after the issue of Statements of Results. Requests for a check on results may be made through the local Centre, within one month of the issue of Statements of Results.

Cambridge ESOL produces the following documents which may be of use to teachers or institutions preparing candidates for CAE:

- *Regulations* (available online, for information on dates, etc.)
- *CAE Handbook* (for detailed information on the examination and sample materials)
- *Examination Report* (produced in conjunction with the release of certain Past Papers)
- *Past Paper Pack* (made available periodically, approximately 10 weeks after the relevant examination session, including Question Papers 1-4, sample Speaking test materials, answer keys, CD and tapescript for Paper 4, and Paper 2 mark schemes and sample scripts).

Users of this Examination Report may find it useful to refer simultaneously to the relevant Past Paper Pack. This, together with further copies of this report, is available from the Centre through which candidates entered, or can be purchased using the order form online at www.cambridgeesol.org

If you do not have access to the internet, you can obtain an order form from:

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Feedback on this report is very welcome and should be sent to the Reports Co-ordinator, Cambridge ESOL, at the above address. Please use the feedback form at the end of this report.

PAPER 1 – READING

| Part | Task Type and Focus | Format | Number of Questions |
|------|--|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> Detail, opinion, tone, purpose, main idea, implication, attitude, text organisation features (exemplification, comparison, reference) | Three themed texts followed by two 4-option multiple-choice questions on each text. | 6 |
| 2 | Gapped text <i>Focus:</i> Text structure, cohesion and coherence | A text from which paragraphs have been removed and placed in jumbled order after the text. Candidates must decide from where in the text the paragraphs have been removed. | 6 |
| 3 | Multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> As for Part 1 | A text followed by 4-option multiple-choice questions. | 7 |
| 4 | Multiple matching <i>Focus:</i> Specific information, detail, opinion and attitude | A text or several short texts preceded by multiple-matching questions. Candidates must match a prompt to elements in the text. | 15 |

The CAE Reading Paper is designed to test the following reading skills:

- ability to form an overall impression by skimming text
- ability to retrieve specific information by scanning text
- ability to interpret text for inference, attitude and style
- ability to demonstrate understanding of text as a whole
- ability to select relevant information required to perform a task
- ability to demonstrate understanding of how text structure operates
- ability to deduce meaning from context.

Authentic texts are used for the CAE Reading Paper and are edited as little as possible for the purposes of test construction. The texts are of a number of types, including giving information, expressing an opinion/making a comment, description, advice/instructions and narrative. One or more of these text types may be combined to form a composite text. Sources of texts include newspapers (broadsheet and popular), magazines, journals, non-literary books, leaflets, brochures, etc. Texts selected do not assume specialist knowledge of a subject.

The format of the CAE Reading Paper is based on four texts, totalling approximately 3,000 words. The paper consists of two multiple-choice tasks, one gapped-text task, and one multiple-matching task.

Questions in Parts 1, 2 and 3 carry two marks each. Questions in Part 4 carry one mark each.

Candidates are required to transfer their answers onto an answer sheet, as instructed on the question paper. Candidates' responses are then computer-scanned.

Candidates are allowed 75 minutes for the processing of texts, completion of tasks and transfer of responses to the separate answer sheet. Centres are not required to return question papers together with the answer sheets; **candidates must therefore ensure that they transfer all their answers to their answer sheet within the 75 minutes allowed for Paper 1.**

- **Candidate Performance**

The CAE Reading Paper is designed to test understanding of text at paragraph and whole-text level, not only at sentence level. The multiple-matching task, especially those questions testing understanding of opinion as well as of information, will often require candidates to read an extended section of text, or collate what has been read over a number of short sections of text. Similarly, the multiple-choice and gapped-text tasks require candidates to look beyond the immediate context for an answer. Each part of the paper is text-based; the texts are drawn from a range of mainly contemporary sources, written for different purposes, and presented in different formats.

In this version of the Reading Paper, candidates coped very well with the tasks, with Part 4 proving slightly more challenging than the other three parts.

Part 1, Questions 1-6: Television

These three texts with four-option multiple-choice tasks, focusing on detailed comprehension, were handled well by most candidates. In **The interview**, Question 2 proved challenging for some weaker candidates. The answer is A and this can be found in two places in the text. Firstly, the writer states that he 'didn't tolerate any waywardness...' and secondly, he states that JJ and Jess 'decided that my programme was a joke and acted accordingly...'. Some weaker candidates thought the answer was D. They may have been attracted to this option because they misunderstood the meaning of 'a sense of humour failure' at the end of the second paragraph.

TV Criticism was slightly more challenging than the other two texts. In Question 4, the answer is D and the information required is found in the second paragraph: 'banality of the newspaper reporting is still staggering'. Weaker candidates thought the answer was A but the writer says that 'Television has been central to the lives of two generations...' which does mean that TV plays a large part in most people's lives but not 'too great a part'. Candidates may have had difficulty with the word 'banality' in the text. However, a candidate at advanced level should be able to deduce from the context that this word has a negative meaning.

Part 2, Questions 7-12: Calls from the Deep

The gapped-paragraph task focuses on text structure and the ability to predict text development. Consequently, it is often necessary to consider large sections of the text, or even the overall organisation, in order to reconstitute a particular part. Candidates found this the least challenging part of the paper. Candidates picked up on the fact that there is a contrast between 'The sounds produced by many creatures haven't yet been catalogued...' in A and '...even those species which have been well monitored...' in the paragraph after Question 11. The most challenging question was 12. Weaker candidates chose F, which is the distractor, an option which is likely but not in fact correct in the context of the text. They may have been attracted to this option, which talks about 'a giant squid', because there is a reference in the paragraph after 12 to 'some creature bigger than any whale'. However, if they had read F more closely they would have noticed that it is talking about a lack of information about the giant squid, particularly about any sounds they make, whereas the paragraph after 12 refers to 'this sound'.

Part 3, Questions 13-19: Thor Heyerdahl

This four-option multiple-choice task focused mainly on candidates' detailed comprehension and candidates coped with it well. Question 16 proved to be the most challenging. The answer to Question 16 is D and can be found in the phrase 'when investigating the region's oceanography...', therefore from non-archaeological evidence. Weaker candidates thought the answer was A but this would be the answer to a question about Heyerdahl deciding to build a raft rather than the actual question in 16.

Candidates should read the whole question and text very carefully before they choose their answer. It is important to understand the whole meaning of a phrase, sentence or paragraph rather than the meaning of individual words.

Part 4, Questions 20-34: Old Friends Reunited

Candidates found this multiple-matching task to be the most challenging part of the paper, with Question 20 being particularly challenging. The answer lies in section D: 'we each hold down challenging responsible posts with all that entails...'. Weaker candidates thought the answer was in section A as it contains a phrase which mirrors the question though does not answer it: 'remarkably similar careers...'. There is no mention in section A of the demanding nature of their jobs. Question 30 also proved problematic for weaker candidates. The answer was in section D: 'I was a bit disconcerted though to find she'd renounced her provincial accent...'. Possibly candidates may have had difficulty with linking 'taken aback' in the question with 'disconcerted' in the text. A popular wrong answer to this question was A, which talks about the friend changing her name to Cristiana. However, there is no mention in section A of being 'taken aback' at this news. Candidates need to ensure that the section they choose reflects all the elements of the question. It is also important not just to match words in the question with words in the text as this will usually lead to a wrong answer.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

When preparing for the CAE Reading Paper, students should be encouraged to read for interest and to develop their own views on a wide range of topics. When reading, they should aim to identify the writer's purpose and to distinguish different types of writing, for example, factual, descriptive, argumentative, and so on. They also need practice in recognising main ideas, as this will help them anticipate the type of question that they may be asked.

- **DOs and DON'Ts for CAE PAPER 1 – READING**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | skim through each text and highlight any 'key' pieces of information. |
| DO | interact with the text and form an opinion on what you're reading. |
| DO | underline important words in the question and make sure that you have a clear understanding of their meaning. |
| DO | ensure that information is stated in the text, if the question refers to something that's 'said' or 'stated' or 'mentioned'. |
| DO | check that the answer you've chosen reflects all parts of the question. |
| DO | read around the part of the text that you think contains the answer, in order to be sure that you haven't missed anything important. |
| DO | leave difficult questions to the end of the task, and then come back to them. |
| DO | leave time to double-check your answers to challenging questions. |
| DO | read any subtitles because they'll help set the context for the text. |
| DON'T | be put off by vocabulary you don't know. Continue reading the text to see whether the meaning becomes clear. |
| DON'T | attempt any question without reading it at least twice. |
| DON'T | try to answer questions without close reference to the text. |
| DON'T | assume that matching individual words or phrases in a question with the same or similar words in the text means that you've located the answer to the question. |
| DON'T | spend too much time on any one part of the paper. |

PAPER 2 – WRITING

| Part | Task Type and Focus | Format | Number of Tasks and Length |
|------|---|---|---|
| 1 | <p>QUESTION 1</p> <p>Writing one of the following: an article, a report, a proposal, a letter</p> <p><i>Focus:</i> evaluating, expressing opinions, hypothesising, persuading</p> | <p>Candidates are required to deal with input material of up to 150 words. This may include material taken from advertisements, extracts from letters, emails, postcards, diaries, short articles, etc.</p> | <p>One compulsory task</p> <p>180–220 words</p> |
| 2 | <p>QUESTIONS 2–4</p> <p>Writing one of the following: an article, a competition entry, a contribution to a longer piece, an essay, an information sheet, a letter, a proposal, a report, a review</p> <p>QUESTION 5 (Question 5 has two options)</p> <p>Writing one of the following, based on one of two prescribed reading texts: an article, an essay, a report, a review</p> <p><i>Focus:</i> varies according to the task, including comparing, giving advice, giving opinions, justifying, persuading</p> | <p>A situationally based writing task specified in no more than 80 words</p> | <p>One task to be selected from a choice of five</p> <p>220–260 words</p> |

CAE Paper 2 is designed to test a candidate's ability to write continuous English appropriate to a given task. The questions supply candidates with sufficient information, both about the content of a task and the target reader, to enable them to decide on an appropriate style and register. The questions also give precise guidelines as to the content of the particular task. Candidates are allowed 1 hour 30 minutes to produce a maximum total of 480 words across two questions.

Each paper has a compulsory Part 1 and a choice from five questions in Part 2. Part 1 requires candidates to process up to 150 words of input material, using the information appropriately in order to carry out the task. Part 2 covers a range of task types and includes two set text options.

All scripts are marked by experienced examiners, who must attend a training and standardisation day before they commence any marking. Examiners award marks according to a General Mark Scheme, which has detailed Performance Bands from 0–5, where Band 3 describes a 'satisfactory' level. Within the bands, examiners place the script more exactly at bottom, middle or top of the band range, e.g. 3·1, 3·2, 3·3. These scores are converted to provide a mark out of 20 for each piece of writing.

Examiners also use a Task-specific Mark Scheme for each question. This describes satisfactory Band 3 performance and covers content, organisation, range, register and format, and effect on target reader.

Examiners work in small teams and are monitored and advised by Team Leaders, who in turn are monitored by the Principal Examiner.

- **Candidate Performance**

Part 1 asked candidates to write a letter to a friend about a holiday job in the UK, comparing two jobs, saying which job they thought was more suitable and giving reasons. The task involved processing the information given in a note and two job advertisements. The task required candidates to use the language of description, justification and recommendation in their answers.

The choices in Part 2 provided candidates with a range of task types and topics. Candidates had to select from a report about education in their country, an essay about family life and an article about giving presents. The choice also included two set text questions, both reviews of the selected books.

The article was the most popular task and was chosen by just over 40% of the candidates. The second most popular task was the report, which was chosen by about 33% of the candidates. The essay was selected by about 22% of candidates and the set text tasks were the least popular, being attempted by just under 3% of the candidates in total.

The majority of the candidates for this paper produced work that was satisfactory or better than satisfactory. There were a number of scripts that exhibited a natural use of language with good use of cohesive devices and an ambitious range of vocabulary and structures. There were, however, also many examples of language that was not at the required level, showing problems even with simple prepositions and tenses. Some candidates used linking words and phrases mechanically rather than appropriately and this caused problems with, rather than helped, the cohesion of their writing.

Part 1, Question 1

On average, candidates gained a satisfactory mark in the Part 1 question.

Stronger candidates made good use of the input material, developing the information provided to demonstrate a wide range of structure and vocabulary. These candidates paid due attention to the layout appropriate to a letter and they were consistent in their use of register. They also successfully developed the element of persuasion and presented the different points as a coherent whole.

Weaker candidates relied heavily on the vocabulary and structures of the input and were not able to paraphrase effectively. They also sometimes omitted one of the key points of the question. Most commonly they failed to compare both jobs and just chose one to describe. Some also failed to include themselves in the job situation and assumed Alex would be doing the job alone. Several of the weaker candidates made basic language errors, e.g. with the use of simple present verb forms or with the spelling of everyday words, and others made errors that resulted in miscommunication. There were also problems with the use of linkers, which were used inappropriately.

Part 2, Question 2

This was a popular Part 2 question but it produced the lowest average mark, aside from Question 5b (one of the set text questions).

Stronger candidates used report layout and formal language with ideas being skilfully developed. They demonstrated a wide range of vocabulary relevant to the topic of education. They developed all the aspects of the question in order to produce well-balanced answers which were

informative in tone. These candidates were particularly skilled at developing the last content point regarding improvements.

Weaker candidates generally wrote unbalanced answers which were poorly organized and struggled to produce an appropriate level of language. Again, cohesive devices were used inappropriately or inadequately and these candidates failed to produce language in a consistently appropriate register.

Part 2, Question 3

This was the least popular Part 2 question, aside from the set text questions, and the average mark was satisfactory.

The question was generally well considered with some answers showing a good level of maturity and analysis. Stronger candidates also demonstrated a range of appropriate vocabulary and structure and made good use of linking devices.

However, some candidates tried to incorporate 'wise sayings'. As these were often direct translations, they were not often successful. Others tried to write semi-academic essays – quoting 'experts'. These were rarely successful as they tended to attempt over-complex sentences and often managed to lose track of their original 'thought'.

Part 2, Question 4

This was the most popular of the Part 2 questions and the candidates who did choose to answer it generally wrote quite good responses. It produced the highest average mark on Part 2 of the paper, aside from Question 5a (a set text question).

Stronger candidates addressed all aspects of the question, developing their ideas well and using a natural article style. They also showed evidence of a range of structures and vocabulary appropriate for CAE level candidates.

Weaker candidates tended to omit a point or produced unbalanced responses, often using language which was inaccurate or did not display the range of vocabulary and structure expected at this level. A few candidates misunderstood the question and wrote about 'free gifts' – as used to persuade people to buy magazines and comics.

Part 2, Question 5a

Although this was not a particularly popular question, there were some extremely impressive answers. It produced the highest average mark of all the questions on the paper, probably because it was attempted by a number of candidates who were familiar with the story and able to write an appropriate answer.

Part 2, Question 5b

This was the least popular question on the paper and produced the lowest average mark. Although some answers were good, several candidates invented their own story with no reference to the set text at all. This meant that they could only score a very low band and were awarded a zero if there was no attempt to answer the set question.

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

When preparing for the CAE Writing Paper, students should be given guidance and practice in writing a range of genres, e.g. review, article, report, etc. and in writing for different audiences. When writing, they should focus on their reason for writing, i.e. what they are trying to achieve: to persuade, to entertain, to inform, etc. They also need practice in extracting the salient points from input material and in organising their answer effectively. In other words, they need to focus on **what** they have to write (the content), **why** they are writing (their purpose) and **who** they are writing for (their target reader).

It may help students to have a full appreciation of the criteria they are being marked on, i.e. content, which means addressing all the points specified by the question, organisation and cohesion, range of vocabulary and structure, register, and effect on target reader. Providing regular feedback on students' work in terms of these five criteria may help them to bear them in mind when they have to write their actual answers in the examination.

Students will benefit from some guidance with regard to how they use their time in the examination room. They should be aware of the importance of allowing adequate time for reading the questions carefully and planning their answers. A practice paper answered under examination conditions will be of value here.

Too many candidates lose marks because they make basic language errors inappropriate for candidates at CAE level. Encourage students to recognise the language errors that they tend to make and try to develop their checking and correcting skills.

As candidates have to write their answers in a booklet, they need to be told that they must write to the word limit provided, rather than attempting to fill all the space, which is likely to lead to overlong and less well-planned work.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for CAE PAPER 2 – WRITING**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | try to avoid copying phrases from the input in Part 1. Use your own words as far as possible. |
| DO | read the question very carefully and note all the aspects of it which must be addressed. |
| DO | develop all the parts of the task so that your answer is well-balanced. |
| DO | think carefully about who you're writing for and how it would be appropriate to address that person. |
| DO | make sure that you know the standard conventions for writing genres such as letters, reports, proposals or articles. |
| DO | plan your answers carefully to make sure you have addressed all the necessary points. |
| DO | use linking devices in a way that is appropriate for a piece of writing at advanced level. |
| DO | choose the Part 2 question where you can best demonstrate a range of vocabulary and structure. |
| DO | allow yourself time to check your grammar, spelling and punctuation carefully. |
| DO | write approximately the number of words required by the exam – you probably won't be able to cover all the necessary points in fewer words and writing too much is likely to result in irrelevance. |
| DON'T | try to write out an answer that you worked on when preparing for the exam as it will not be an appropriate response to another task. |
| DON'T | attempt the set text question (Question 5) unless you are very familiar with the story. |

PAPER 3 – USE OF ENGLISH

| Part | Task Type and Focus | Format | Number of Questions |
|------|---|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Multiple-choice cloze <i>Focus: Lexical/lexico-grammatical</i> | A modified cloze text containing 12 gaps and followed by 4-option multiple-choice items. | 12 |
| 2 | Open cloze <i>Focus: Grammatical/lexico-grammatical</i> | A modified cloze text containing 15 gaps. | 15 |
| 3 | Word formation <i>Focus: Lexical/lexico-grammatical</i> | A text containing 10 gaps. Each gap corresponds to a word. The stems of the missing words are given beside the text and must be changed to form the missing word. | 10 |
| 4 | Gapped sentences <i>Focus: Lexical</i> | Questions are made up of three discrete sentences. Each sentence contains one gap. The gapped word is common to the three sentences. Candidates must write one word which is appropriate in all three sentences. | 5 |
| 5 | Key word transformations <i>Focus: Lexical and grammatical</i> | Eight separate items, each with a lead-in sentence and a gapped second sentence to be completed in three to six words, one of which is a given 'key word'. | 8 |

The Use of English paper is designed to test the ability to apply knowledge of the language system, including control of grammar, lexis, cohesion and coherence.

- **Response Format**

Candidates record their answers on a separate answer sheet, which is processed by trained markers and then computer-scanned. For each part of the paper, candidates put their answers directly onto the answer sheet. They either mark a letter or write one or more words next to the appropriate question number. The inclusion of example answers on the question paper is designed to provide support to candidates.

- **Timing**

Candidates are expected to complete all five parts of the paper in the allotted time of 1 hour. Any answers filled in on the question paper should be transferred to the answer sheet within the given time.

- **Marking**

Marking of the answer sheets is carried out by a team of carefully selected and trained markers who refer to a Mark Scheme. Markers are monitored by an experienced examiner and, where necessary, minor revisions are made to the Mark Scheme.

Questions in Parts 1-3 carry one mark each. Questions in Part 4 carry two marks, while Part 5 questions are marked on a scale 0-1-2.

- **Candidate Performance**

Part 1, Questions 1-12: Rowling's promise to save forests

Multiple-choice Cloze

Generally, candidates performed best in this part of the paper, especially in Questions 4, 9 and 10. Questions 2 and 3 were more challenging for weaker candidates who did not read beyond phrase level and thus failed to appreciate that only 'pledged' and 'pioneered' were appropriate in this context.

Part 2, Questions 13-27: Truffles

Open Cloze

Generally, candidates performed well in this part of the paper, particularly in Questions 19, 22 and 24, though had problems with Questions 13, 16, and 23. It is important for candidates to read the text carefully, focusing on the meaning of the whole sentence, paragraph and text, rather than only concentrating on the meaning of phrases in isolation. For example, for Question 13, some weaker candidates failed to take in the meaning of the whole sentence and wrote 'like' rather than 'unlike' for their answer.

Part 3, Questions 28-37: Mahler's Fourth Symphony

Word Formation

Performance on this part was mixed and, overall, candidates found it the most challenging part of the paper. Although Questions 32, 36 and 37 were well answered, candidates struggled with Questions 33, 34 and 35. Accurate spelling is essential in this part. Some candidates lost marks even though they had provided the appropriate word, because they had misspelled it. This was the case with Questions 28, 29, 33 and 35. With Question 30, a common problem was omitting to supply the plural 's' on the noun, while with Question 34, the third person suffix for the end of the verb was often omitted.

Part 4, Questions 38-42

Common word gapped sentences

Generally, candidates found this one of the more demanding parts of the paper, particularly Questions 40 and 42. In Question 42, some candidates lost the mark because they misspelled their answer. In Question 41, some candidates failed to get the mark because they used the wrong verb form. Generally, candidates performed best on Question 38.

Part 5, Questions 43-50

Key word sentence transformations

Generally, candidates found this a challenging part of the paper, most notably Question 48. It is important to copy correctly from the stimulus sentence any words which are required in the key. For example, in Question 48, some weaker candidates miscopied or misread 'advice' as 'advise' and so lost the mark. It is also important to include words/ideas in the answer which are

crucial for maintaining the same meaning as the stimulus sentence. For example, in Question 46, some candidates lost the mark for failing to include the word 'his' before 'inability' and thus did not give the full meaning of the first sentence. In the same way, ideas which do not feature in the stimulus sentence should not be included in the answer. For example, in Question 46, some candidates lost the mark for writing 'most' as the first word of their answer – this idea does not occur in the stimulus. Candidates performed best on Questions 43, 45 and 46.

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Candidates at CAE level of English are expected to read extensively so as to be able to use a wide range of vocabulary in different contexts and to manipulate structure and form accurately. These skills are tested in different ways on the paper:

Vocabulary

- In Part 1, collocation is tested, as well as knowledge of phrasal/prepositional verbs and recognition of lexical appropriacy and shades of meaning.
- Part 3 is a word-building task. The candidate has to understand the surrounding context in order to produce the correct class of word and also to recognise whether a negative affix or a plural form is required. Accurate spelling is essential.
- In Part 4, candidates have to provide the one word which fits appropriately into three unconnected gapped sentences. Accurate spelling is essential. Any activities which draw students' attention to the different meanings and collocations associated with particular lexical items will be useful.
- Part 5 is a key word transformation task. Candidates are required to manipulate vocabulary, and structure and form, within a defined context. Any activities which increase awareness of collocations and expressions with parallel or synonymous meanings would be useful.

To be successful in these parts, students need to build up their active vocabulary. Developing an efficient personal system of recording newly acquired vocabulary will help the learning process. Students should also be encouraged to pay attention to correct spelling.

Structure and Form

- In the Part 2 open cloze task, candidates should be encouraged to check that their answers are correct in the context of the whole sentence, paragraph and text. Providing an answer which is correct only in the context of the immediate phrase is often not sufficient.
- Part 5 is a key word transformation task. Candidates are required to manipulate structure and form, as well as vocabulary, within a defined context. Any activities which focus on different ways of expressing the same ideas using different structures and/or expressions would be useful.

Candidates should be reminded to study the example they are given at the start of Part 5 carefully. They must include the given key word, which should not be changed in any way, in their answer. Their answer should not be more than 6 words in length, and the key word counts as one of the six words. Any contractions count as two words. Candidates are not required to write the whole sentence on their answer sheets – only the missing part of the sentence.

Candidates should also be reminded of the importance of copying correctly from the stimulus sentence any words which are required in the answer. It is also important to include words/ideas in the answer which are crucial for maintaining the same meaning as the stimulus sentence, for example, a time reference. It is equally important that ideas not contained in the stimulus sentence should not be introduced into the answer. The meaning of the answer sentence must be as close as possible to the meaning of the stimulus sentence.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for CAE PAPER 3 – USE OF ENGLISH**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | think about a variety of ways in which you can develop your English outside the classroom. |
| DO | think about how you learn vocabulary best, and then develop strategies to help this process. |
| DO | read the whole surrounding context before deciding on an answer. |
| DO | consider the options carefully in Part 1 before choosing your answer. |
| DO | remember that in Part 3 at least one question will probably test the use of prefixes. |
| DO | make sure that in Part 4 the word you produce fits correctly into all three sentences. |
| DO | check your spelling, as incorrectly spelled words will lose you marks. |
| DO | make sure your handwriting is clear and easy to read and that you have used capital letters for all your answers. |
| DO | write only one letter in each box on the answer sheet. |
| DO | make sure you transfer your answers to the answer sheet as you finish each part of the test. |
| DON'T | change the given key word in your answers in Part 5. |
| DON'T | use more than six words in your answer in Part 5. Contractions count as two words. |
| DON'T | wait until the end to copy all your answers onto your answer sheet. |

PAPER 4 – LISTENING

| Part | Task Type and Focus | Format | Number of Questions |
|------|--|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> feeling, attitude, opinion, purpose, function, agreement, course of action, gist, detail etc. | Three short extracts from exchanges between interacting speakers with two multiple-choice questions on each extract. | 6 |
| 2 | Sentence-completion task <i>Focus:</i> specific information, stated opinion | A monologue (which may be introduced by a presenter) lasting approximately 3 minutes. Candidates are required to complete the sentences with information heard on the recording. | 8 |
| 3 | Multiple choice <i>Focus:</i> attitude and opinion | A conversation between two or more speakers of approximately 4 minutes. There are six multiple-choice questions, each with four options. | 6 |
| 4 | Multiple matching <i>Focus:</i> gist, attitude, main points, interpreting context | Five short themed monologues, of approximately 30 seconds each. Each multiple-matching task requires selection of the correct options from a list of eight. | 10 |

- **Marking**

Candidates write their answers on a separate answer sheet, which is marked according to a detailed mark scheme and then scanned by computer. Each question carries one mark.

For security reasons, more than one version of the Paper 4 Listening test is made available at each session. As with all other CAE papers, rigorous checks are built into the question paper production process to ensure that all versions of the test are of comparable content and difficulty. In addition, for Paper 4, the marks are adjusted to ensure that there is no advantage or disadvantage to candidates taking one particular version.

- **Candidate Performance**

Test A

Part 1, Questions 1-6

There are three separate listening texts in Part 1, each with two questions. Candidates coped well with Extract One, especially with Question 2 which focused on the reporter's impression of the exhibition. Candidates picked up the fact that the reporter liked the exhibition itself through her use of the words 'wonderful' and 'delighted' and on her final comment about the lighting that gave the key, A. Candidates found Extract Two more challenging, especially Question 3 which required them to understand what the two speakers agree about. Catherine uses the word 'absolutely' to show her agreement with Tomas's statement: '... our new editor has realised we should have more free rein subject-wise', and she goes on to confirm this by contrasting the current situation with that existing previously.

Part 2, Questions 7-14

This sentence-completion task was based on a talk about a trip across the Gobi Desert. Candidates found the task accessible, and it was generally well answered. Questions 8, 11, 12 and 13 were very well answered, whilst Questions 7, 9, 10 and 14 turned out to be more challenging. In Question 10, some candidates retrieved incorrect information from the text, giving the answer 'rice'. Other candidates had clearly located, but not understood, the key information, e.g. writing 'sunstorm' in Question 9. Some candidates gave too much information, e.g. giving the answer 'sandstorm all that night' for Question 9, when the additional information is already given in the sentence. Although this answer was marked as correct, the candidate has wasted time and space on the marksheet in writing more than was needed. Some weaker candidates had difficulties in the spelling of quite common words, for example, writing 'webside' in Question 14, and so lost the mark. Sometimes candidates attempted to paraphrase the information they had heard, but these attempts were not always successful, e.g. giving the answer 'picture cards' in Question 13, which does not exactly describe the gift that the speaker took. Candidates should be reminded that the words they need to write are heard on the recording, so they are not required to produce a paraphrase.

Part 3, Questions 15-20

This four-option multiple-choice task was based on an interview with a singer-songwriter. Questions largely focused on the opinions and feelings of the main speaker. The questions were generally well answered. Questions 17, 18 and 20 proved the most challenging, while candidates coped particularly well with Question 16 – picking up on the force of the speaker's answer about the musicians being 'fed up'. Information from this type of text is often summarised in multiple-choice questions through the use of adjectives and nouns describing feelings and attitudes, for example in Question 17, or the use of verbs of opinion and reporting verbs. Encouraging candidate awareness of, and sensitivity to, the use of such words to summarise the ideas expressed in the text is an important aspect of preparation for this task.

Part 4, Questions 21-30

This was a multiple-matching task based on five short extracts in which five speakers are talking about their jobs. Strong candidates coped well with the two tasks, particularly with Questions 21, 23 and 24, whilst Questions 28, 29 and 30 proved to be the most challenging. In Question 21, candidates successfully picked up on the fact that the speaker was attracted to the idea of visiting 'quite a few countries' and being 'away' – and used this to correctly identify the answer as G: 'the opportunity to travel more widely', even though we learn that some aspects of travel, such as waiting at border crossings, later proved less enjoyable. It is worth reminding students that this task focuses on gist listening skills. They may not understand every word and expression in the texts, but they have probably understood more than they realise of the speaker's general message, and will therefore often choose the correct answer even if they cannot be absolutely sure why. For example, in Question 29, there are a number of references to the speaker's needing to 'predict suitable working conditions' (B), e.g. 'to assess my chances of getting airborne', 'changeable' weather, and the 'meteorological office'. As with Part 3, awareness of, and sensitivity to the type of language used in the questions will help candidates feel prepared for this task. Once again, awareness of the use of nouns and adjectives to express attitudes and opinions is useful, as are the kind of abstract nouns that summarise ideas from the text.

• RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Listening tests are designed to give an objective assessment of an individual's listening skills. So, in preparing for the Listening test, it is important to focus on developing listening skills in general, as well as familiarising students with the format of the examination. Candidates should be

exposed to a range of different listening texts, if possible from a range of authentic sources, as each Listening test comprises a range of listening texts on different topics in different contexts. The focus of preparation should not be only on detailed listening; gist understanding of a text delivered at a natural speed is a valuable skill, and could form the basis of classroom discussion activities – which themselves can also provide an invaluable source of listening practice.

The ability of candidates to understand what they hear can improve dramatically if they are regularly exposed to audio or audio-visual materials: the more English they hear, delivered at natural speed in a variety of voices and contexts, the more practised they will become in extracting key information and gist meaning, even when they may not be able to decode every single word or phrase. These skills are essential to students at CAE level.

A daily learning programme which includes a ‘hearing English’ component from audio recordings may help prepare candidates for the Listening test. Candidates should be exposed to varieties of English, to speakers of different ages and backgrounds and to the language of different contexts, e.g. announcements, lectures, less formal talks, informal discussions, interviews, etc.

Candidates should be encouraged to deal with texts in different ways, depending on the nature of the listening task. For example, they might listen to a text once for gist, producing a summary of the main ideas or attitudes expressed. They could then be asked to listen to the same text again, this time retrieving specific information.

Make candidates aware of how much they themselves bring to a listening task. Encourage them to make predictions about listening texts from their own experience and world knowledge. In terms of examination technique, encourage students to read and think about the information provided on the question paper, both in the task instructions and within the questions themselves. A context sentence in the instructions for each task provides information about the speaker, topic and context of the recording. Encourage candidates to use this information to help them tune in to the text quickly when they hear it.

Remind candidates that they should use the pause before each recording to read through the task carefully, so they are prepared for what they hear. Encourage them to use the task on the question paper to guide them through the listening text and keep their place as they answer the questions. In Part 2, they can begin to make predictions about the type of information which they need to listen for in order to complete the gaps.

Remind candidates that in Parts 2 and 3, the questions generally follow the order of information in the recording – and therefore reflect the structure of the listening text. However, in Part 1, do point out to candidates that they need to listen to the whole extract carefully once through before choosing their answers: they should not assume too soon that they have heard the correct answer. Because the two questions each have a different focus in Part 1, information relevant to the answers could come from different parts of the recording, so they may not be able to answer the questions ‘in sequence’ as they would in a longer text. Raise candidates’ awareness of how speakers provide signals that they are about to change topic, give an example, express a personal opinion, disagree with something, etc. Such signals help us to follow the thread of the speaker’s argument, and also to locate the piece of text targeted by the questions. Help candidates to prepare for a listening task by identifying the focus of each question, so that they are ready to pay attention and retrieve the answers as they listen.

Remind candidates that, in Part 2 sentence-completion tasks, they should write clearly when they copy their answers onto the answer sheet, using capital letters.

Encourage candidates to answer all the questions, even if they are not sure – there are no marks deducted for wrong answers, and candidates may have been able to predict or understand more than they think.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for CAE PAPER 4 – LISTENING**

For all parts of the test:

- DO** listen to, and read, the instructions. Make sure you understand what you have to do.
- DO** think about the topic, the speaker(s) and the context. This will help you when you listen.
- DO** use the pause before each listening to read the questions through and think about what you need to listen for.
- DO** remember that your final answer is the one on the answer sheet. Copy carefully and check that you've followed the numbering correctly.
- DON'T** leave a blank space on the answer sheet. If you're not sure of an answer, you can guess. You don't lose marks for wrong answers and you've probably understood more than you think.

For Part 1:

- DO** concentrate on the question stem (given part), rather than the options, when reading before listening. It may help you to listen for the answer in the text and then match it to the closest option.
- DO** mark one answer to each question at the end of the first listening, even if you're not sure. The second listening can then be used to check your answers.
- DON'T** assume that you've heard the correct answer before the extract has finished. You need to listen to the whole Part 1 extract before choosing your answers.

For Part 2:

- DO** remember that the information on the page follows the recording. It's there to help you.
- DO** check that your answer makes sense in the gap. Look at the information both before and after the gap when checking your answer.
- DO** check that your answer is correctly spelled.
- DO** copy only the missing words onto the answer sheet.
- DO** try to use the actual words you hear on the recording.
- DON'T** try to write a long answer. Answers will be single words, numbers or short phrases which fit comfortably into the box.
- DON'T** write numbers out as words – it wastes time and you're more likely to make a mistake (i.e. write '21', not 'twenty-one').
- DON'T** repeat information which is already printed on the page.

PAPER 5 – SPEAKING

| Part | Task Type and Format | Focus | Timing |
|------|--|--|--|
| 1 | A conversation between the interlocutor and each candidate (spoken questions). | General interactional and social language | 3 minutes |
| 2 | An individual 'long turn' for each candidate with a brief response from the second candidate. In turn, the candidates are given three pictures to talk about. | Organising a larger unit of discourse; comparing, describing, expressing opinions, speculating | A 1-minute 'long turn' for each candidate, plus a 30-second response from the second candidate |
| 3 | A two-way conversation between the candidates. The candidates are given spoken instructions with written and visual stimuli, which are used in a decision-making task. | Sustaining an interaction; exchanging ideas, expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing, suggesting, speculating, evaluating, reaching a decision through negotiation, etc. | 4 minutes |
| 4 | A discussion on topics related to the collaborative task (spoken questions). | Expressing and justifying opinions, agreeing and/or disagreeing | 4 minutes |

• Marking

The CAE Speaking test is conducted by trained examiners, who attend annual co-ordination sessions to ensure that standards are maintained.

The assessor awards marks to each candidate for performance throughout the test according to five analytical criteria: Grammatical Resource, Vocabulary Resource, Discourse Management, Pronunciation and Interactive Communication. The interlocutor provides a mark for global achievement for each candidate, which assesses the candidate's overall effectiveness in tackling the tasks. These scores are converted to a mark out of 40. Combining the analytical marks of the assessor and a global achievement mark from the interlocutor gives a balanced view of a candidate's performance.

• Materials

The test materials for the December 2008 session comprised sixteen Part 2 tasks and eight Part 3 and 4 tasks.

All tasks are designed to elicit language of a suitably advanced level and range. The tasks are open and speculative, ranging beyond pure description, and give candidates the chance to demonstrate their range of language.

• Candidate Interaction

Candidates observed by Team Leaders were, on the whole, at ease when the test began, even when paired with candidates they did not know. Candidates who know each other well and those who have only just met perform equally well in Part 1. After a brief exchange of information with the interlocutor, the interlocutor then goes on to ask candidates further questions.

Occasionally, candidates are reluctant to expand on their answers. On the other hand, some over-enthusiastic candidates sometimes tend to dominate the interaction by over-expanding on their answers. Any candidate not taking up the opportunity to interact with the interlocutor in Part 1 and their partner(s) in Part 3 is invited by the interlocutor to say more in Part 4.

• Candidate Performance

Most CAE candidates are well prepared and highly motivated, which has a positive effect on their performance. Additionally, the structure of the test gives candidates ample opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities. Candidates who fail to take up these opportunities will not do particularly well in the Speaking test. Performance in the Speaking test may also be affected if candidates fail to do what they are asked to do, or fail to raise the level of their performance above the purely descriptive or mundane, particularly in Parts 2 and 3.

Part 1

Most candidates did well in this part of the test. The strongest candidates were those who made an attempt to answer the questions fully without pausing for too long to think about what they were going to say. Candidates were asked questions on a range of topics, e.g. Friends and family, Transport and travel, The media.

Part 2

Stronger, well-prepared candidates took full advantage of their opportunity to talk for one minute in Part 2, and to respond to the question about their partner's pictures. However, weaker or less committed candidates sometimes failed to do what they were asked to do, or forgot what they had been asked to do and did not refer to the task which appears in written form on the visuals sheet, so omitted to focus on the more speculative elements of the tasks. These candidates, therefore, found it more difficult to sustain their 'long turn' for one minute, to express their ideas effectively and to take up the opportunity to show what they could do. In addition, some candidates simply made a very short one- or two-word comment about their partner's pictures, depriving themselves of an opportunity to expand on their comments.

All Part 2 task types were 'Compare, contrast and speculate'.

Part 3

This collaborative task gives both candidates the opportunity to negotiate and co-operate with each other, discussing the allotted task fully, openly and clearly. Candidates who perform well are those who do not merely agree with their partner but who express their own views and opinions, or develop their partner's comments. Well-prepared candidates are often able to generate more ideas, thus producing a more varied sample of language with a wider range of structures and vocabulary, and avoiding unproductive silences.

Stronger candidates made use of the visuals (without itemising each one for its own sake, or making repeated reference to them) by including them naturally in their discussion, evaluating them and giving valid reasons for accepting or rejecting them when appropriate.

Candidates who performed well were those who followed the instructions they were given and, if necessary, referred to the task which appears in written form on the visuals sheet, showing they could handle a range of structures and vocabulary, and taking the task seriously. Those who performed less well had not followed the instructions carefully enough, did not focus on what they had been asked to do, or simply ran out of things to say.

All Part 3 task types were 'Discuss, evaluate and select'.

Part 4

By this stage of the Speaking test, candidates are usually relaxed and more confident and most were able to contribute to the discussion with some authority. The interlocutor may draw out a more reticent or apparently weaker candidate to redress any perceived imbalance in candidate contributions. Candidates, however, should not assume that they have underperformed if the interlocutor begins Part 4 by addressing the first question to them. Candidates rarely 'dried up' at this stage; some even appeared eager to continue the discussion, although the interlocutor was tactfully trying to draw the test to a close. Oral Examiners are provided with a range of questions, both to ensure test security, and to provide ample opportunities for candidates to show what they can do.

• Comments on Released Test Materials

Part 1

Most candidates seem to find the first section of Part 1 a relaxing start to the test and have few problems answering the questions about themselves.

Candidates who performed well in the second section of Part 1 were able to answer quickly and confidently when expressing their opinions. For example, when asked:

'Who has more influence on your life – your friends or your family?'

they did not merely reply:

'Oh, my friends, I think.'

but produced a more extended response, e.g.

'Well, in some cases, it's my friends. But I suppose when it comes to the really important decisions I have to make, then I turn to my family. What they have to say always has a big influence on me – and I usually end up taking their advice.'

Similarly, when asked:

'What has been your most interesting travel experience?'

they did not merely reply:

'Travelling around Europe.'

but produced a more extended response, e.g.

'Without a doubt, travelling around Europe. There are so many different countries to visit – and each one is special in its own way. It was a very educational and enjoyable experience for me.'

And when asked:

'What kinds of television programmes are popular in your country?'

they did not merely reply:

'People watch sport – and soap operas.'

but produced a more extended response, e.g.

'Well, a lot of people are interested in sports programmes, or things like soap operas. But there is quite a demand for films and music, as well as things like the news. I think most people enjoy all sorts of different TV programmes, actually.'

Part 2

New experiences (Compare, contrast and speculate)

In this task, candidates were each given the same set of visuals, which showed people experiencing something for the first time. Candidate A was asked to compare two of the visuals, saying how important the experiences might be for the people, and what effect the experiences might have on them.

Candidates who did well did not merely describe what the experiences were, but compared the visuals, speculating as to what effect the experiences might have on the people. For example [when talking about the visual in the top left-hand corner]: 'In this picture, two young divers are exploring the world under the sea. It must be a magical experience – full of light and colour. It will probably make a big impression on them. And who knows, one of them might decide to become a marine biologist, or something like that. But, [when talking about the visual in the bottom left-hand corner] in this picture, these children are probably experiencing their first day at a new school. This can be a really terrifying experience. If it goes well, you can make new friends and enjoy your new life. But if you don't enjoy it, it can cause you a lot of problems and make you rather unhappy.'

A simple description of the visuals with a few short comments was not enough, e.g. 'These young people are having a holiday exploring the seabed. They're obviously enjoying themselves. But these children look a bit scared. It must be their first day at school. They don't look happy.'

Candidate B was asked which experience they thought would be the most memorable. Most candidates gave a brief response (up to about 30 seconds), quickly selecting one of the situations and pointing out that the most memorable experience might be the one that was the most exciting (or frightening) because it would remain in your mind for a long time to come and might affect you deeply.

Sitting (Compare, contrast and speculate)

In this task, candidates were each given another set of visuals to look at. The visuals showed people sitting in different places. Candidate B was asked to compare two of the situations, saying why the people might have chosen to be in the places, and how the people might be feeling.

Candidates who did well did not merely describe the visuals, but compared them, speculating about the people's reasons for being in the places, and how the people might be feeling. For example [when talking about the visual in the top left-hand corner]: 'In this picture, the people might have decided to go and see the art exhibition because they are passionate about all kinds of art. They may even be studying art at college or university. They probably go to art exhibitions quite often and it's quite obvious that they are really enjoying discussing the different kinds of paintings they have gone to see, and enjoying each other's company. It's quite different in this situation [when talking about the visual on the right] because the people have gone to see a film with special effects. It might be quite frightening because the glasses they are wearing make everything seem very close and realistic. The people are smiling at the moment and probably feeling quite relaxed, but they might feel different later if the film is a horror film or something like that.'

A simple description of the visuals with a single short comment was not enough, e.g. 'These two people have chosen to go to an art exhibition and they are probably enjoying looking at the paintings very much. But these people are sitting watching a film and wearing special glasses. They feel that they are in the situation they are watching'.

Candidate A was asked who they thought was enjoying the experience most. Most candidates gave a brief response (up to about 30 seconds), quickly selecting one of the pictures and making some brief comments about what the people might be really enjoying about the experience.

Parts 3 and 4

Attracting employees (Discuss, evaluate and select)

Part 3

Candidates were shown some visuals and asked to imagine that a company wanted to attract more employees. Their task was to talk to each other about the advantages and disadvantages for the company in offering the different things to employees, and then decide which two would appeal to employees most.

Candidates who did well did not simply describe the visuals, e.g. 'This is giving employees more holidays, and this one is giving them more money.' Instead, they speculated as to what effect more holidays and more money might have on the company itself, e.g. 'If the company gives its employees more holidays, this might create some problems for the company. Yes, the employees will be more relaxed and happier, but then you have to cover for people when they are on holiday. So it might end up being too expensive for the company. Wouldn't you agree?'

Flexitime and free car parking were considered to be advantageous for the company and employees alike. For example, car parking might cost the company more money but it meant that employees would arrive at work more relaxed and on time, and flexitime might actually benefit the company as it would mean that someone was actually in the building earlier or later in the day to answer calls, etc. Candidates who did less well did not fully speculate on both the advantages and the disadvantages for the company, or tried to reach a decision too early about which two things would appeal to employees most. The decision should be the conclusion of the discussion, not a decision to make at the beginning of the task, leaving the candidates with little else to talk about.

Part 4

Candidates who gave good performances were able to talk about the following:

- what they thought was the best way for a company to advertise jobs, e.g. 'Well, I suppose one of the most effective ways to advertise jobs is in the national press. You can reach a greater number of people, so you might get a better choice of applicants.'
- whether they thought it was a good idea to employ someone without interviewing them first, e.g. 'Not at all. You definitely need to interview someone before giving them a job – even if it's just a telephone interview. Anyone can give the impression on paper that they can do a job but you need to be able to get on well with the person you're going to employ.'
- how important it is to have opportunities for promotion in a job, e.g. 'Well, if you're not a very ambitious person, it probably doesn't matter. But most people would like to think there was an opportunity to progress in their job in some way, so I think it is actually quite important.'
- what they thought about the statement 'Some people say that nowadays no job is for life', e.g. 'I would definitely agree with that. Nowadays we can't really expect to be in the same job all our lives. I think that in the past that did happen but things are much more uncertain today. Nobody can count on having a job for life.'
- how employees can be encouraged to work well together, e.g. 'I think they have to feel that they are part of a team. It's important to try and encourage employees to take part in group activities that make them feel that they're an important member of that team. That way everyone feels appreciated.'

Most candidates were asked at least four of the five questions.

● RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CANDIDATE PREPARATION

Candidates should be aware that Oral Examiners can only base their assessment on what they hear, and that candidates who fail to take up opportunities to show what they are capable of will underperform.

Candidates should not feel disadvantaged because they cannot remember or do not know the occasional word. Credit is given for paraphrasing and substituting vocabulary, especially if it is communicatively effective.

Candidates should be advised to avoid strategies which prevent them from producing an extended sample of language,

e.g. Examiner: 'What do you think is the best way for a company to advertise jobs?'
Candidate A: 'In a newspaper.'

They should also avoid merely repeating what they have already said, or echoing what their partner has said, particularly with short responses,

e.g. Examiner (to Candidate B): 'Do you agree?'
Candidate B: 'Yes, a newspaper.'

Repetition, followed by supporting comments, is, however, possible,

e.g. Candidate B: 'Yes, a newspaper because a newspaper can reach people in a much wider area so it might encourage far more people to apply for the jobs.'

Candidates should be encouraged to respond to the visual stimuli and express their own personal reactions to them.

Candidates should be trained to listen carefully to the instructions they are given and try to remember what they have to do. Describing visuals is always only a part of a task and candidates should not neglect the more speculative elements of the task. Simply describing visuals will not give candidates the opportunity to show their linguistic capabilities.

Candidates should be aware that long silences and frequent pauses, particularly in Part 2, will reduce their opportunities to perform well. Even if candidates have few ideas, they should be prepared to comment on what the interlocutor has asked them or what their partner has said, where appropriate, and 'think aloud' rather than say nothing or very little.

Students should be encouraged to practise a variety of paired or group activities in class. Familiarity with the format of the Speaking test usually helps candidates give a more effective performance.

Candidates must be made aware that attempts to dominate the test, e.g. by not giving their partner an opportunity to speak in Part 3, will be penalised; this will not be regarded by Oral Examiners as advanced spoken proficiency. Candidates should respond appropriately to each other's utterances, not cut across what their partner is saying, interrupt impolitely, or indulge in long monologues during the collaborative task.

Candidates who find themselves paired with reticent partners are advised to try to draw out their partners by trying to include them in the conversation and by creating opportunities for them to speak,

e.g. 'What's your view?' / 'Do you agree?' / 'Maybe you have a different opinion?'

Candidates should be made aware that over-rising intonation can sometimes sound rather aggressive and interrogating. Candidates would benefit from practising appropriate intonation patterns.

Candidates should also be advised to speak clearly and loudly enough for the Oral Examiners to hear them, especially when looking at the visual stimuli in Part 2, and during the collaborative task in Part 3. Examiners cannot assess candidates they cannot hear.

Candidates are assessed on their own individual performance according to the established criteria and are not assessed in relation to each other. Candidates are never penalised because they have difficulty in understanding their partner. It is, however, important that candidates do not interrupt their partner to ask for clarification in Part 2, the 'long turn', where interruption would deprive their partner of the chance to speak for one minute.

Finally, candidates should not be afraid to ask for repetition if they have not heard what the interlocutor has said. However, candidates should not need to ask the interlocutor to repeat the tasks in Part 2 and Part 3 as the task is written above the pictures on the visuals sheet. Candidates should make every effort to follow the interlocutor's instructions as they are being given. Furthermore, candidates should be aware that they should not ask interlocutors to rephrase or simplify instructions in an attempt to explain their meaning.

• **DOs and DON'Ts for CAE PAPER 5 – SPEAKING**

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| DO | try to forget that you are feeling nervous and smile at the examiners as you enter the examination room and sit down. This will help you to relax. |
| DO | take up every opportunity during the test to show what you can do. |
| DO | carry out the tasks according to what you are asked to do. |
| DO | speak clearly and loudly enough for both examiners to hear you throughout the test. |
| DO | refer to the written questions on the visuals sheet in Part 2 and Part 3 if you have forgotten what you have to talk about. |
| DO | try to use a wide range of grammatical forms and vocabulary throughout the test. |
| DO | try to expand on your answers in the second section of Part 1. |
| DO | take advantage of the opportunity to speak on your own in the long turn by keeping talking until the examiner says 'Thank you'. |
| DO | allow your partner opportunities to speak in Part 3. If necessary, invite your partner to make a comment. |
| DO | extend all your responses in Part 4, rather than just give short or one-word answers. |
| DON'T | begin your Part 2 long turn by saying: 'I'm going to choose this picture and this picture.' This wastes precious time and prevents you changing your mind should you wish to do so. Just start to do the task and it will become obvious which pictures you are talking about, or point to the picture you are describing and say 'In this picture', etc. |
| DON'T | talk about all the pictures in Part 2. Talking about all the pictures instead of only two will not give you enough time to do the more speculative parts of the task properly. |
| DON'T | pause too long before saying something. 'Think aloud' if necessary. |
| DON'T | reach a decision too early in Part 3. Do the first part of the task and evaluate all the visuals before making your final decision. |
| DON'T | ask the Oral Examiners how you have performed in the test. Examiners are not allowed to make any comment on candidate performance. |

FEEDBACK FORM

CAE Examination Report – December 2008 (0150)

We are interested in hearing your views on how useful this report has been.

We would be most grateful if you could briefly answer the following questions and return a photocopy of this page to the following address:

University of Cambridge
ESOL Examinations
Reports Co-ordinator
1 Hills Road
Cambridge
CB1 2EU

Fax: ++44 (0)1223 460278

1. Please describe your situation (e.g. EFL/ESOL teacher, Director of Studies, Examinations Officer, Centre Exams Manager):

2. Have you prepared candidates for CAE? YES/NO

3. Do you plan to prepare candidates for CAE in the future? YES/NO

4. How have you used this report (e.g. to provide feedback to other teachers, for examination practice, etc.)?

5. Which parts of this report did you find most useful?

6. Which parts are not so useful?

7. What extra information would you like to see included in this report?

8. (Optional) Your name
- Centre/School

Thank you.