



PET Speaking

Back to school full speaking exam

CAMBRIDGE B1



BEFORE YOU START — QUICK TIPS

- ✓ If you don't understand a question, ask the examiner to repeat it.
- ✓ Listen to your partner — Parts 3 and 4 are a conversation, not two monologues.
- ✓ It's okay to make small mistakes — examiners care more about communication than perfection.

PART 1 — INTERVIEW (2–3 minutes)

What happens:	What examiners are listening for:	Common mistake:
The examiner asks you and your partner questions about yourselves — home, family, work/study, daily routine, free time, and future plans.	• Can you give personal information clearly and confidently? • Do you use a range of simple structures correctly (not just yes/no answers)?	Giving very short answers. Always add one extra detail or reason. <i>Example: Instead of "I like music," try "I like music, especially pop, because it helps me relax."</i>

Write down an answer: *What do you usually do at the weekend?*



Try to use at least three of these expressions: because / last weekend / for example / my friends / family / next weekend



Practice prompts:

1. Tell me about your typical school day.
2. What subject do you like the most?
3. What are your goals for this school year?
4. Who is your favourite teacher?

PART 2 — INDIVIDUAL LONG TURN (about 1 minute each)

What happens:	What examiners are listening for:	Useful language:
You're given a photo and asked to describe it and give your opinion. Your partner listens, then answers a short follow-up question about your photo.	● Range of vocabulary — can you describe people, places, and actions? ● Can you speculate about the photo (not just list what's in it)? ● Do you keep talking for close to the full minute?	● "In this picture, I can see..." ● "It looks like they are..." ● "They might be... / I think... because..." ● "In the background/foreground, there's..."



<i>Write some ideas about these students:</i> Where are they? What are they talking about? How are they feeling? What do they study?	Your ideas:	 Now try to speak for one minute. Use connectors!
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INDIVIDUAL LONG TURN - PICTURE TWO (Describe what you can see in the photo)



PART 3 — COLLABORATIVE TASK (2–3 minutes)

What happens:	Useful language:	Common mistake:
You and your partner discuss a task with visual prompts, then reach a decision together.	• "What do you think about...?" • "I agree, but I also think..." • "How about we choose...?"	Reaching a decision too quickly without real discussion.

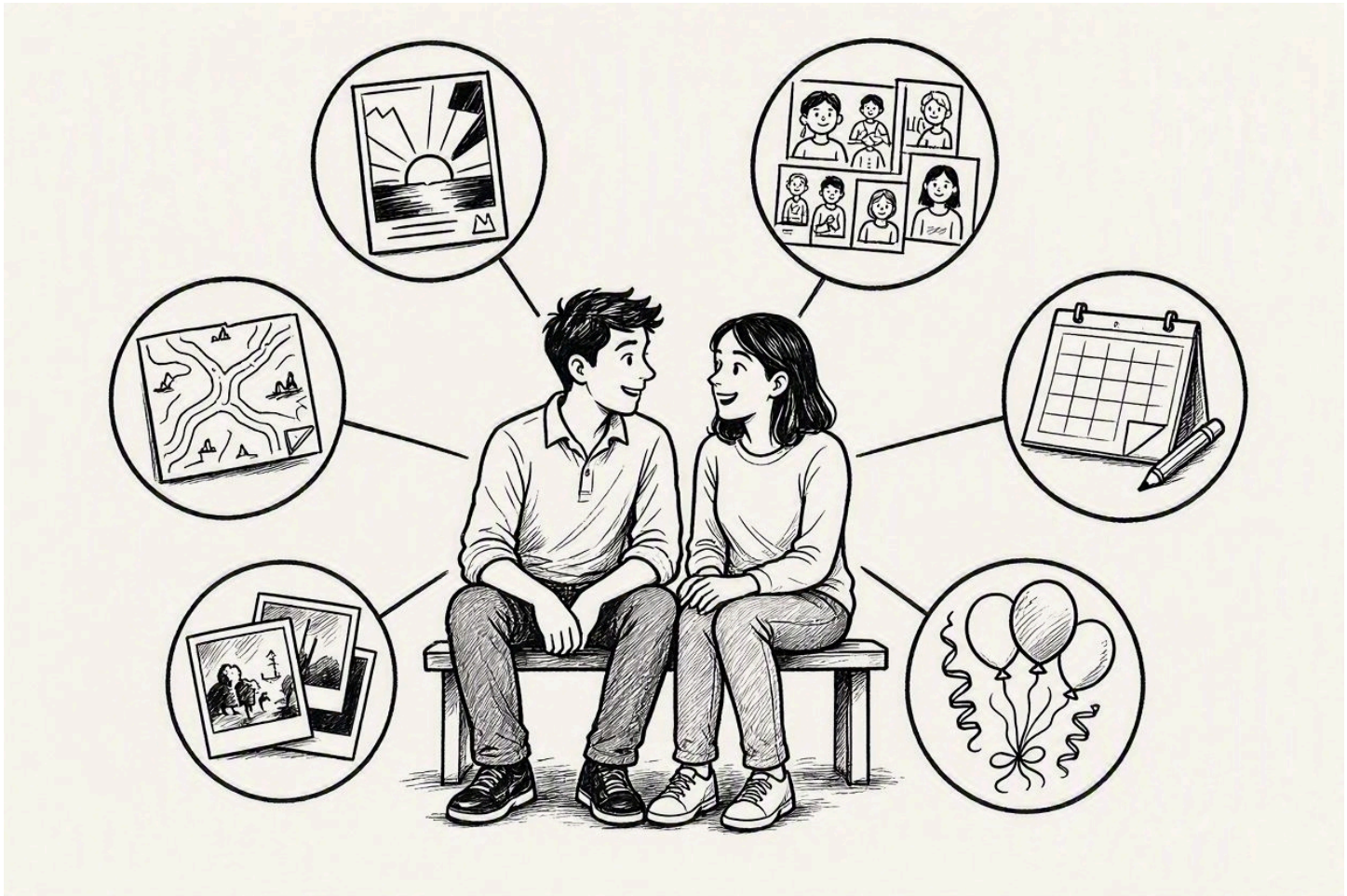
Write some ideas for interaction:

1 Question:

2 ways to politely disagree with your partner:

3 ways to agree with your partner:

Practice prompt: At your school, every class makes a welcome wall for students at the beginning of the year. This year, you and your partner are planning decorations for your classroom's "back-to-school" welcome wall. Look at these ideas and decide together which two to use.



Which two ideas did you choose? Why?

PART 4 — DISCUSSION (3–4 minutes)

What happens:	Useful language:	Common mistake:
A broader discussion with the examiner, connected to Part 3's topic.	• "In my opinion..." • "I'd say... because..." • "That's a good point, but on the other hand..."	One-sentence opinions with no explanation.

Practice prompts:



1. Does your school decorate for the first week of school?
2. Do you think the first week back at school should be easier, with less homework? Why/why not?
3. Is it better to see friends at school or online during the holidays? Why?
4. If you could change one thing about your school, what would it be?

SELF-CHECK: HOW DID I DO?

Part	Confidence (1–5)	One thing to improve
Part 1 — Interview		
Part 2 — Long turn		
Part 3 — Collaborative task		
Part 4 — Discussion		

TEACHER'S GUIDE

Speaking Exam Practice — B1 Preliminary, Back-to-School Edition

Purpose: This worksheet gives students structured, low-pressure practice for all 4 parts of the B1 Preliminary Speaking test, using familiar back-to-school topics so students can focus on exam technique rather than unfamiliar vocabulary.

SETUP & PAIRING

- Pair students of similar ability where possible — mismatched pairs can mean stronger students dominate Parts 3–4.
- If you have an odd number, run one group of three and have the extra student rotate in as a second "examiner" for Part 1 (good listening/assessment practice for them too).
- Recommended timing: 15–20 minutes total per pair if run as a full mock exam; can be split across 2 lessons if focusing on 2 parts at a time.

RUNNING IT AS A MOCK EXAM

1. Explain that this mirrors the real exam format — 4 parts, done with a partner, examiner-led.
2. You can either run it as a genuine mock (you play examiner, one pair at a time, rest of class works quietly on the Self-Check reflection or a related task) or as **paired practice** (all pairs work simultaneously, you circulate and listen in).
3. For first attempts, paired practice is usually better — it lowers pressure and lets every student get speaking time, rather than a few pairs "performing" while others wait.
4. Save a formal one-pair-at-a-time mock for closer to the actual exam date.

PART-BY-PART ASSESSMENT NOTES

Part 1 — Interview: Listen for range (not just correctness) — are they using varied structures, or repeating "I like..." for everything? Short, correct answers still lose marks for range.

Part 2 — Individual long turn: Time this part strictly (aim for ~1 minute) so students get used to the real pacing. Note if students stop early — that's the most common issue at this level, and it's a fluency/strategy gap, not a language gap. Encourage them to keep going by speculating rather than stating facts only.

Part 3 — Collaborative task: This is the easiest part to under-practice, since it needs a partner. Watch specifically for interaction — students who give good individual opinions but don't respond to their partner's points are the most common gap here.

Part 4 — Discussion: Listen for justified opinions vs. flat statements. A student who says "I think travelling with family is better" and stops needs prompting to add "because...". Model this if needed.

COMMON CROSS-PART ISSUES TO WATCH FOR

- **Silence when unsure:** Encourage students to describe around a word they don't know, rather than stopping. This is a strategy, not just a language skill — worth explicitly teaching.
- **Translating in their head:** Students who pause for a long time before every answer may be translating. Encourage them to practice thinking directly in simple English, even if less precise.
- **Not listening to their partner:** Especially in Parts 3–4, some students prepare what they'll say next

instead of actually responding. Point this out gently — it's an easy, fixable habit.

USING THE SELF-CHECK TABLE

Have students complete this individually right after their practice round, before you give feedback — this builds self-assessment skills and often means their honest weak spots match what you noticed. Compare their self-ratings to your own observations as a quick discussion starter with each pair.

FOLLOW-UP IDEAS

- Repeat Parts 3–4 with a new partner the following week to compare interaction styles.
- Record (audio only) a practice round if students are comfortable, so they can listen back and self-correct.
- Use the "common mistake" boxes on the student sheet as a checklist you both watch for in the next round.