



International Test of English Proficiency

iTEP Academic Orientation Guide



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iTEP Academic Orientation Guide

Welcome to iTEP

The International Test of English Proficiency was developed by Boston Educational Services to measure how well you communicate in English. We designed it to be an efficient test that accurately represents your English skill level. We hope you enjoy taking the test and that the results are useful to you.

I. Overview: iTEP Academic

iTEP Academic scores are used by colleges and universities for admission and placement, student and course progress assessment, and eligibility for scholarship and exchange programs. The test is specifically designed for the higher education environment, whereas our iTEP SLATE is used by middle and secondary schools, and iTEP Business is used by companies and organizations.

There are two versions of the iTEP Academic. The iTEP Academic-Core takes 50 minutes to complete. It tests reading, listening, and grammar skills through multiple-choice questions. The iTEP Academic-Plus exam takes 80 minutes to complete and tests reading, listening, grammar, writing, and speaking skills through multiple-choice questions and writing and speaking samples. Both exams allow 10 minutes for the iTEP administrator to provide pre-test instructions. Each section is presented in the order below.

SECTION	PART	FORMAT	NUMBER & TYPE OF QUESTIONS	TIME
Reading	Part 1	250 word passage	4 multiple-choice	20 minutes
	Part 2	400-450 word passage	6 multiple-choice	
Listening	Part 1	4 short conversations	4 multiple-choice	20 minutes
	Part 2	One 2-3 minute conversation	4 multiple-choice	
	Part 3	One 4 minute lecture	6 multiple-choice	
Grammar	Part 1	Complete the sentences	13 questions	10 minutes
	Part 2	Identify <u>incorrect</u> phrase or word	12 questions	
Writing	Part 1	Listen and respond to instructions	Write a response of 50-75 words	25 minutes
	Part 2	Listen to a topic and respond	Write 175-225 words to express and support an opinion on the topic	
Speaking	Part 1	Listen to and read a short question	Prepare and speak	5 minutes
	Part 2	Listen to two (2) sides of a topic	Prepare and speak an opinion	

Overview (continued)

A. What to Expect on Exam Day

Before the Exam:

- The night before the exam, relax and get a good night's sleep.
- Please arrive a few minutes before the scheduled exam time set by the test center.
- Bring your government-issued picture ID. You must present the same ID to the administrator that you provided on the registration form.
- Inform the test center if you are applying to a specific school(s).
- Reference materials, tools, dictionaries, mobile phones, audio recording devices, PDAs, notebooks, and other personal items are not permitted in the exam room.
- Smoking, eating, and drinking are not permitted during the exam.
- You will be seated at a computer, sometimes separated from others by partitions.

During the Exam:

- Once the exam begins, you may not ask questions about content or directions.
- You may alert the administrator of technical difficulties if they occur.
- The "Help" button allows you to look at the directions at any point during the exam.
- During the examination process, you may only have two items on the desk: a pen or pencil, and one sheet of paper for note-taking during the listening and speaking sections. All notepaper will be collected at the end of the exam and destroyed by the administrator. The notes will not be graded.
- During the exam, one or more test administrators will be in the room at all times.
- Each iTEP section begins with instructions. The questions for Part 1 of each section are less challenging than questions for Parts 2 and 3.
- Try to answer all questions to the best of your ability. There is no penalty for a wrong answer. Each question is worth the same number of points.
- During the reading, listening, and grammar sections, you will select one of four answer choices for each question.
- You may go back to review your answers in the reading and grammar sections by using the "Back" button, as long as there is time remaining. Time remaining is shown at the bottom of the screen.
- During the listening section, the selections play once, so review is not possible.
- During the writing section, you will type your writing samples directly into a text entry field. There are time limits for each part of the writing section, but you may go on to the next section before time expires.
- During the speaking section, speaking samples are recorded with a headset and microphone at your computer. There are time limits for each part of the speaking section.
- Stay calm. Have fun. The exam can be re-taken if needed.
- The iTEP administrator reserves the right to dismiss anyone from the exam or to void exam results if any of the above rules are broken or if the administrator's instructions are not followed.

B. Scoring

The exam will determine an overall English skill level from 0 (Beginner) to 6 (Advanced) as well as levels for each section of the test. Half-levels (2.5, 3.5, etc.) are possible.

- The reading, listening, and grammar sections are scored automatically by iTEP software.
- The writing and speaking samples are graded by native English speaking ESL-trained professionals, according to standardized scoring guidelines.
- Each exam section is weighted equally. There is no penalty in the multiple-choice sections for guessing or incorrect answers. In the writing and speaking sections, it is important that you try to use all the words and time available for each section.
- [The Score Report](#) presents an individual's scoring information. In the Skill Profile you can see a visual display of your strengths and weaknesses.
- [iTEP Ability Guide](#) shows how an individual of a certain skill level can usually communicate in the "real world."

C. The Seven Levels

The seven proficiency levels identified by the exam are:

- Level 0: Beginning
- Level 1: Elementary
- Level 2: Low-Intermediate
- Level 3: Intermediate
- Level 4: High-Intermediate
- Level 5: Low-Advanced
- Level 6: Advanced

II. Sample Test Materials

Now that you have a general idea of what to expect on the exam, take a look at some sample materials from the test.

A. Reading Exercises

Part 1 of the reading section will include a passage and questions like these.

Spiders

There are more than 37,000 species of spiders in the world. In general, spiders pose very little risk to humans. Only about 25 species are believed to have venom that can harm people. Their venom is used mostly to paralyze prey. Each spider eats an average of 2,000 insects per year. They use their ability to jump to hunt down prey, and then pounce on it. Some spiders can jump as much as 50 times their body length. If a human had similar ability, he could jump 90 meters.

Not only can spiders jump far, but they can also walk upside down on smooth surfaces. Their feet are covered with tiny hairs that enable them to hold 170 times their body weight before coming unstuck. That is equivalent to a children's superhero carrying 170 people from danger while clinging to the side of a building with his fingers and toes.

Spiders can also spin as many as seven different kinds of silk. Some of the silk is so strong that it rivals the strength of steel. Spiders use the silk for many different purposes, such as catching insects in webs and then wrapping them up so that they cannot escape. They also use silk to travel from place to place and to form egg sacs.

Spiders come in a wide variety of sizes. The largest known spider is the Goliath bird eater tarantula. This South American spider can be as big as a dinner plate. The smallest known spider is the mygalomorph spider from Borneo. Its body is the size of a pinhead.

The word pose as used in the passage means:

- A. accept
- B. endanger
- C. show
- D. present

Correct Answer = D

B. Listening Exercises

There are three parts to the listening section of the test. As with other sections, each part is more difficult than the one before.

Listening Part 1: In this section you will hear 4 short conversations, each followed by a question. You will have a total of 80 seconds to answer the 4 questions. Time remaining will be shown in the “Time Left” window. Click on “Confirm Answer” before moving to the next question. Once you confirm your answer, you cannot change it.

Listening Part 2: In this section, there will be a longer conversation, followed by 4 questions. You will hear each question once, and read it on the screen. You may write notes as you listen.

Below is an example of the type of question you will find in Part 2 of the listening section. [Click here](#) to hear the passage for the question.

What new fact about Einstein did Michael learn from Dr. Slinsky?

- A. *Einstein did not attend college at all, because his family did not have the money.*
- B. *Despite working in an office, Einstein was able to think in new ways about the basic principles of physics.*
- C. *Because of Einstein’s religion, he was not able to attend the best college for the study of mathematics and physics.*
- D. *Einstein did not use previous scientists’ and philosophers’ writings to propel his intellectual thinking.*

Correct Answer = B

Listening Part 3: You will listen to a lecture and then have 3 minutes to answer 6 questions. You will hear the lecture only once, and it will not appear on the screen. You may take notes while listening. No previous knowledge of the topic is required. All questions can be answered by using your listening skills.

C. Grammar Exercises

These are examples of the sort of questions you will find in this section of the test.

Select the answer that correctly completes the sentence.

The students _____ to visit a museum tomorrow.

- A. *is going*
- B. *are going*
- C. *will going*
- D. *will be go*

Correct Answer = B

Sample Test Materials (continued)

Select the word or phrase in the sentence that is not correct.

He is studying law at the university in order becoming an attorney.

- A. *is studying*
- B. *in order*
- C. *becoming*
- D. *an*

Correct Answer = C

D. Writing Exercises

These sections only appear on the iTEP Academic-Plus. You will write and speak your answers, which will be graded by trained professionals. Your score will be based on your ability to communicate a **clear, coherent, and relevant** message.

The skills that are evaluated in the writing section are: overall ability/fluency, grammar, vocabulary, cultural/stylistic appropriateness, and effort required by reader for understanding.

Writing Part 1: You will be asked to write a short (50–75 words) note or letter about a simple situation or topic. You will have 5 minutes to type your answer using the keyboard.

Below is an example of the type of topic you may encounter in this section:

Think of your favorite book. Write a note to the author telling him or her that you are a big fan.

Here is a sample response:

Dear Andrew McCall-Smith,

*I am a big fan of your book *The Number One Ladies Detective Agency*. The character of *Mma Ramotswe* and the details about her daily life have given me a sense of what it would be like to live in Botswana. I especially enjoyed learning that she has the same feelings about her country, her life, and her family that I do. Thank you for such a wonderful lesson about human nature.*

Sincerely,

James Myers

Sample Test Materials (continued)

Writing Part 2: You will be asked to write an essay of 175–225 words (maximum 250 words) expressing an opinion on a topic. You must give reasons and examples to support your opinion. You will have 20 minutes to type your answer using the keyboard.

This is an example of the type of topic you may find in this section.

Some companies offer students internships to help them gain work experience. Others argue that this takes valuable time away from the student's education. What do you think? Give reasons and examples to support your opinion.

Here is a sample response:

I think that internships are a good way for students, especially college students, to gain valuable on-the-job experience. My experience as a waitress taught me that I am well-suited for a career in restaurant management, which is what I intend to major in at college. Without this on-the-job experience, I wouldn't know how much I enjoyed the atmosphere of a restaurant, or meeting and serving many different people every day. I have some friends who have also decided on their careers because of their summer jobs. One of my friends worked at a newspaper and is now studying journalism at college.

I do believe that it's necessary for the intern to have a level of maturity and some theoretical knowledge if one is to perform well in an internship position and still be a good student. It's difficult to mix work and study, but many students do it successfully. In addition, an internship should not take away from class time, but rather offer the student the opportunity to apply what is learned in class. The value of gaining this type of practical knowledge is recognized by many schools and colleges, since they frequently offer course credits for internship work.

In conclusion, internships can be very beneficial as long as they do not replace classroom experience, but offer the student a way to apply his or her knowledge and learn whether such a career is the right choice.

Sample Test Materials (continued)

E. Speaking Exercises

Your score in the speaking section is based on your overall ability/fluency, grammar, vocabulary, cultural/stylistic appropriateness, and pronunciation.

Here is an example of what you will see on the screen during Part 1 of this section.

iTEP Speaking - Part 1

You will both hear and read a short question. Answer the question giving specific reasons and examples that support your answer. After you hear the question, you will have 30 seconds to prepare your answer, and 45 seconds to speak.

Help

Prepare Speak

30 SECONDS 45 SECONDS

1/1 QUESTION

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Think of ONE person from history whom you would like to meet. Who is that one person and what would you ask him or her?

Here is a sample response:

Ghandi was always an important historical figure that I wanted to meet. If I could meet him, I would ask him what he wanted to see changed. I would want to know if he had traveled to other countries, and which countries he enjoyed visiting. I would like to know which place is his favorite for visiting and why. I would just be happy to meet him.

Here is an example of what you will see on-screen during Part 2 of this section.

iTEP Speaking - Part 2

Listen to a short topic statement. Then express your thoughts on the topic, giving specific reasons and examples to support your opinion.

You will only hear the topic statement -- it will not appear on your screen. After you hear the statement, you will have 45 seconds to prepare, and 60 seconds to speak. Remember, you may take notes.

Statement

Prepare 45 SECONDS Speak 60 SECONDS

1/1 QUESTION
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Below is an example of the type of opinion statement you will hear in this section. You will not see this statement on your screen. You may take notes as you listen.

When a reporter writes a story, sometimes the reporter must interview people confidentially, with the understanding that the reporter will hide their identity. Once the stories have been published, readers may ask that the sources be revealed, in order to better understand and evaluate the stories. Should reporters be allowed to protect the identities of their sources, or should they be forced to reveal them when the public wants to know? Why?

After hearing the statement, you will have 45 seconds to prepare, and 60 seconds to speak your answer. Here is a sample response:

When reporters use confidential sources in order to get a story, they should be able to keep the sources' identities secret. Many important news stories could not be reported if the source of the story fears that their identity will be revealed. For example, someone who reports that his or her company is involved in illegal activity, or the famous "Deep Throat," who gave us the Watergate story, would never come forward if they thought people would find out who they were.

Also, if a reporter makes a promise to a source that he will keep their identity a secret, the reporter must keep that promise. Otherwise, the reporter would never be trusted by sources in the future. Then the public would never hear about much of the corruption and injustice that goes on. And criminals would get away with their crimes. I think we are all better off, since we get to learn what's happening behind the scenes, only if reporters are able to keep their sources secret.



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