



FCE Speaking Part 3 Collaborative task – teacher's notes

Description

Controlled discussion practice followed by a comparing activity and some practice with sample materials

Time required: 40–60 minutes

Additional materials required: ■ sample Part 3 materials (see pages 81 and 85 of the FCE handbook)

Aims: ■ This activity aims to give students an overview of Part 3 of Paper 5, by giving them an insight into the procedure and format of Part 3, along with a sample task

Procedure

1. Tell your students that you are going to be looking at Part 3 of the speaking test (Paper 5). Briefly elicit/tell them that this is known as the collaborative task. Ask them what they know about Part 3 of the Speaking test.
2. Put the students in pairs (**A** and **B**). **A** writes down the names of four common everyday objects which begin with letters from A to M, and **B** writes the names of four objects beginning with letters from N to Z. Thus they end up with a combined list of eight different objects. For example:
A's list: knife; mobile phone; keys; bag.
B's list: pen; radio; tissues; soap
3. Set the following situation: "You are going on a desert expedition. For each object on your list, discuss how useful it might be and say why. Then discuss any drawbacks or problems in taking that object." Give them 3 minutes to do this.
4. When the three minutes are up, set the next part of the task: "Now decide which three objects are the most useful to take, and say why." Give one minute. Tell them that they must make a decision within a minute or they will fail the task.
5. Stop them after one minute and check to see which pairs have made a decision. Feed back to whole class, or groups of about eight if your class is large. Ask each student to name one of the objects they have chosen and justify the choice to the rest of the class or group. The class must decide if they accept the choice or not. Tell the class that the task they have just completed is very similar to a Part 3 task in the exam.
6. Give the worksheet out. Ask students to read through the guidelines for Part 3 and underline/tick anything that is different to the task they have just done. They then write down, in their own words, the four differences at the bottom of the page.



7. Get some feedback and deal with any queries.
8. Now give students a copy of the sample task(s) from the FCE handbook. They attempt the task(s) either in pairs or in groups of four, taking turns to act as interlocutor, timekeeper, Candidate A and Candidate B respectively. If you have an odd number of students, one student could act as both interlocutor and timekeeper.
9. Get some feedback and deal with any queries.
10. Ask students to study the True/False questions. They should discuss these with another student.
11. Check answers in class, using the answer key as a basis for discussion if the students have any questions.

VARIATIONS: Using the same procedure as above, you can invent different tasks. Below are some suggestions:

item	list five adventure sports
situation	a local sports association wants to offer a wider variety of activities
task	– advantages and disadvantages of each sport – select the three most appropriate for the club to offer
item	list five jobs
situation	two careers officers are preparing to talk to young people about their future
task	– advantages and disadvantages of each job – which three should the careers officers suggest?
item	five facilities at a university
situation	a university advertisement aimed at attracting new students
task	– the importance of each facility – select three to include in an advert
item	five personal qualities and skills
situation	a TV reality show in which people are left on a tropical island/an isolated mountain plateau
task	– the usefulness/importance of each quality and skill for a participant – select three qualities/skills you would look for in the participants



item	five things to do on a Sunday/Saturday
situation	plan a family/school/work day trip
task	– how enjoyable/feasible is each suggestion? – select the three most appropriate



FCE Paper 5 Part 3 Collaborative task – answer keys

Key to Classroom Activity 1

The four differences are:

1. Candidates are given visual stimuli.
2. Instructions for both parts of the task are given at the beginning.
3. Candidates have 3 minutes for the task in the exam. Note: candidates in groups of three have 4 minutes to do this task.
4. Candidates will not lose marks if they fail to reach a decision.

Key to Classroom Activity 2: True/False discussion questions

- a) **False** – Many candidates start talking in this part of the test without having fully taken in the task. If they do, the language they use will be inappropriate and they will lose marks. No marks are deducted for asking for instructions to be repeated, and it is better that students are sure that they know what they are being asked to do and perform to the best of their ability. Teachers can give their students the language that will help them to do this, as well as the practice, in order to give them confidence.
- b) **True** – This is a discussion between the candidates and they should not try to involve the interlocutor at all. Obviously they can ask for repetition of the instructions if they did not understand them clearly. It may help some candidates physically to turn towards their partner, so that they can turn-take, move the conversation forward, initiate and listen and respond to their partner. This is all important for Interactive Communication.
- c) **True** – They should try and use up all the time available, as in Part 2. To do this they must carry out the task as directed by the interlocutor; if they reach their decisions too quickly, they may run out of things to say. They should try to continue talking until the interlocutor interrupts them, which will probably mean they have filled the allotted time. Teachers should give their students as much practice as possible discussing in pairs and small groups, both timed and free.
- d) **False** – The students don't have to agree, but they should give a reason if they disagree. Students need strategies and appropriate language for disagreeing in a friendly way. Strong disagreement may undermine a candidate's confidence; an overbearing candidate may also lose marks for not taking turns appropriately.
- e) **True** – Candidates should take a full and interactive part here, making use of the range of visual stimuli available, expressing their own views clearly, listening to their partner and, where appropriate, developing their partner's comments. They also need to invite their partner to respond and make sure that both candidates take an equal part in the development of the interaction. Classroom activities which focus on turn-taking can help students to prepare for this, as well as learning the appropriate language. Students need to be taught and have practice in the following skills: turn-taking; negotiation; making suggestions; exchanging ideas and opinions; justifying opinions; ranking; evaluating; selecting.



- f) **True** – Candidates are asked to “first talk about... and then decide...”. Those who perform less well are those who make their decision very early on in the interaction and, as a result, run out of things to say. Candidates should take care to consider and discuss as fully as possible the range of suggestions presented in the visual stimuli before they reach a decision. Candidates should listen carefully to the interlocutor setting the task and internalise what has been set.
- g) **False** – The aim of this part of the test is for students to have an opportunity to negotiate and demonstrate their skills of interaction. There is no right or wrong answer and as long as the candidates have interacted well, working towards an outcome, and whether they complete the task or not is not important.
- h) **True** – As with other parts of the Speaking test, candidates should not worry if the interlocutor interrupts them as it is simply to ensure that the test is completed within the time frame.

Additional information

The interlocutor will only repeat, not rephrase instructions. The interlocutor will also look down to avoid eye contact during the task so as to encourage the candidates to talk to each other. As much as possible, try to do this in class when practising Part 3.



FCE Paper 5 Part 3 Activity 1 – Student’s Worksheet

1. How much do you know about Part 3 of the Speaking test? Read through the information below. As you read, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this the same as the task I have just done?
- How is it different?

What is this task?

This is the **collaborative task** section. The interlocutor gives you and your partner several photographs or pieces of artwork. The interlocutor then asks you to discuss the visuals and to make a specific decision.

What is the interaction?

You are expected to discuss each visual, expressing and justifying your opinions so that you can talk together to negotiate an agreement.

Do you have to reach an agreement?

You won’t be penalised if you fail to reach an agreement, as long as you demonstrate to the interlocutor that you are attempting to complete the task.

How long does it last?

3 minutes

What skill is being assessed?

You are tested on your ability to express opinions and invite and respond appropriately to the opinions and ideas of your partner. This task gives you the opportunity to show your range of language.

There are four main differences between the task you have just done and the exam task. Write them here:

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4



FCE Paper 5 Part 3 Activity 2 – Student's Worksheet

2. Now read these statements and decide if they are True or False:

In Part 3...

- | | |
|---|------------|
| a) you will lose marks if you ask for instructions to be repeated | T/F |
| b) you should talk to each other and not to the interlocutor | T/F |
| c) you should keep talking until the interlocutor stops you | T/F |
| d) you must agree with your partner | T/F |
| e) it's very important for you to listen to your partner in this section as well as speak | T/F |
| f) you should talk about the picture prompts before coming to a conclusion | T/F |
| g) it's important that you and your partner complete the task you are set | T/F |
| h) it's okay if the interlocutor interrupts you | T/F |