



## **Ascentis Anglia Language Examinations**

**Ascentis Level 2 Certificate in ESOL International  
(Ofqual Accreditation No. 500/4064/9)**

**Proficiency Level (C1)  
(AcCEPT and General English)**

**Speaking Test**

**Paper A 2010**

### **Instructions for Students**

- **The test will take 20 minutes.**
- **You will take the test with another student.**
- **The test will be recorded for moderation purposes.**

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## **Procedure**

The Ascentis Anglia Proficiency Speaking Test consists of three tasks and should take *approximately* 20 minutes to complete. There are two candidates at each session. The examination is recorded onto a cassette tape, CD or MP3. Recordings are sent to Chichester College for moderation.

AFTER the examination, you must not return to the area where candidates yet to take the test are still waiting.

## **Preparation**

Choose either of the topics 'Technology' or 'The Media' and be prepared to talk about any of the statements in that group for up to three minutes. The examiner will tell you during the examination which statement you must talk about.

Think about your future plans and be prepared to talk about them and answer questions about them. Be prepared to ask the other student questions about his/her future plans, as well.

### **Task One: *up to 4 minutes***

The examiner will ask you to talk about yourself and why you are taking the examination.

### **Task Two: *up to 8 minutes***

The examiner will ask you to talk briefly about the article you have prepared and then you must be prepared to discuss it.

### **Task Three: *up to 8 minutes***

The examiner will indicate to you which of the statements in your chosen group you should talk about. You will be given your three minutes to talk alone and then you must be prepared to engage in discussion about the topic.

## PROFICIENCY SPEAKING EXAMINATION, PAPER A, 2010

### Task Two: Readings for Discussion

#### READING ONE: LET THE PANDA DIE OUT!

The BBC wildlife expert Chris Packham has questioned the millions of pounds spent trying to save the giant panda from extinction and has suggested that the bamboo-eating bear should be allowed to die out "with a degree of dignity". The zoologist risked criticism from wildlife conservationists in an interview in which he describes the giant panda as a "T-shirt animal" on which too much conservation money is wasted. "Here is a species that, of its own accord, has gone down an evolutionary cul-de-sac. It's not a strong species," he said. "Unfortunately, it's big and cute and a symbol of the World Wide Fund for Nature. We pour millions of pounds into panda conservation. The species is restricted to 20 or so patches of forest in China in a region densely populated by its only major enemy – humans. It also needs to eat huge amounts of bamboo to survive. We should let them go, with a degree of dignity."

Packham's comments made peoples very angry, at the WWF, which has used the giant panda as its symbol since its foundation in 1961 and is active in panda conservation in the Chinese forest reserves, where the animal still survives. Dr Mark Wright, chief scientific adviser at WWF UK, dismissed Packham's assertion that the giant panda was at an evolutionary dead-end

because it relied on bamboo. "It's like saying the blue whale is in an evolutionary cul-de-sac because it lives in the ocean," he said. He added: "Chris has taken an irresponsible position. Pandas face extinction because of poaching and human pressures on their habitat. They have adapted to the area in which they live and if left alone, they function perfectly well.

"However, he is right in his assertion that we must secure habitat in order to protect endangered species. This is exactly what we work to achieve in the case of the giant panda. Importantly, in protecting those mountain areas where pandas live, we are also retaining vital habitat and resources for thousands of other species (many also endangered) and helping the human communities that depend on this landscape."

It's not only pandas that need worry, however. When asked which animal he would not mind becoming extinct, Chris Packham replied, "Human beings. No question. That's the only one."

SEPTEMBER 22 2009 Adapted from article - [www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk)

#### **Points to consider:**

- **Do you think we should keep endangered species only in zoos?**
- **Should we spend money trying to save a species?**
- **What can be done to raise awareness of the environment?**
- **Do you agree that damage to the environment is a natural result of human progress?**
- **Is it wrong to interfere with nature?**

## PROFICIENCY SPEAKING EXAMINATION, PAPER A, 2010

### Task Two: Readings for Discussion

#### READING TWO: HELICOPTER PARENTS - HOVERING, NOT HELPING

Several decades ago, parental complaints in school were rare. Teachers taught and disciplined their students as they saw necessary, with little interference from the parents. Teachers saw the parents occasionally to report on academic progress. Twenty years on, our world could not be more different. In schools, teachers hide from the 'helicopter parents'.

So what are helicopter parents? They are the ones who pay such close attention to their children that they rush forward to try to prevent anything bad ever happening to them. Of course, it is natural for a parent to be concerned, and to contact the school when necessary, but the helicopter parent is simply not ready to allow their children to learn from mistakes.

A girl in year 9 is seen smoking by two members of staff. It is a clear case that she has broken school rules. However, the helicopter parent phones the principal to say that his "little girl" was only "holding the cigarette" for a friend. The principal is sceptical, but goes back to the two members of staff. They are certain that the girl was actually

smoking the cigarette. The school returns to the helicopter parent with the update and – surprise, surprise – they tell you that the two members of staff are "mistaken" because "my daughter has never told me a lie in her life". From there, of course, the results are predictable. The school insists the child must be punished; the helicopter parent will not "support" it; there is a formal complaint; and the helicopter parent's grudge against the school grows, meaning that it will be even harder to discipline the girl in the future.

Unfortunately, helicopter parenting doesn't stop when the child leaves school. Helicopter parents oversee their child's first graduate job application, prep them for tests and interviews – and have even tried to renegotiate starting salaries. Paul Redmond, head of careers at Liverpool University, said that many parents were present at careers fairs last year, and that some students had been pushed aside. "In future we will have to be more open and say it doesn't look particularly impressive to have your parents with you at a fair."

JULY 12 2009 Adapted from article - [www.timesonline.co.uk](http://www.timesonline.co.uk)

#### **Points to consider:**

- **Is it possible for parents to be *too* involved in their child's education?**
- **Do children depend on their parents too much?**
- **Do parents believe their children too much?**
- **At what age should a child leave home to be independent?**

**PROFICIENCY SPEAKING EXAMINATION, PAPER A, 2010**

**Task Three: Topics**

**GROUP ONE: TECHNOLOGY**

1. Life was better when technology was simpler.
2. Computers can translate into many different languages so there is no need to learn a foreign language.
3. Students shouldn't use the internet when they do their homework.
4. Technology cannot continue to develop at the same rate for long.
5. There is no need for a child to have a mobile phone.

**GROUP TWO: THE MEDIA**

1. Famous people are treated unfairly by the media.
2. People want to read bad news in the newspapers.
3. Printed newspapers will soon cease to exist.
4. TV advertising is more effective than any other medium.
5. Newspapers should not be allowed to make a profit.