

Top Tips – FCE Speaking- Whole paper

Tip 1 Students have to answer the actual question that is asked! If they don't understand, they should say so (as many times as necessary).

Tip 2 Students must listen to their partner(s). They can show they are doing so by reacting to/ commenting on what they say.

Tip 3 Occasionally, three students have to do the speaking exam together instead of two. Each student will still have exactly the same amount of time to show what they can do, so the test takes more like 20 minutes rather than the usual 14.

Tip 4 Body language is an important part of communication. Students should keep eye contact (i.e. look at the people, not the pieces of paper) and feel free to use their hands. They should not fidget (as it can distract from what they are saying), so if they generally play with their pen/ earrings/ bracelet when they are nervous, they should leave them at home. Similarly, avoid chewing gum, hats and dark glasses.

Tip 5 Grammatical accuracy is only one small part of your mark- fluency is just as important. So unless students think that they haven't been understood, there is no need for them to correct themselves.

Tip 6 On the day(s) before the exam, students should speak and listen to as much English as possible. It will probably be too late to do much exam practice, so just chatting with friends or watching an English film is just as useful.

Tip 7 Finally, students should be confident and act natural. Most people find this the easiest part of the exam. If students talk just like they talk to their classmates during pair work, they will have no problem. Many teachers consider this part of the exam to be a whole level easier than other parts such as the Use of English.

Tip 8 If there is time to cover vocabulary or topic-based work in class or for homework, it is best to cover the topics that often come up in this part of the exam (see Worksheet for list of topics).