

# EIKEN Grade 2 Speaking Test

## ★ Tips for Passing

### Sample Topic Card

At the interview, you will be given a topic card with a passage (in English) and an illustration printed on it. Let's look at an example:

#### Lack of Doctors and Nurses

These days, the lack of doctors and nurses is getting to be more and more serious in Japan. Because of this problem, some people cannot receive emergency medical care and even lose their lives, and many doctors and nurses are overworked and exhausted. Therefore, efforts are being made to help increase their number. For example, medical colleges are increasing the number of their students.

Your story should begin with this sentence: One day in the hospital, Mr. Yamamoto was talking with a nurse.



#### No. 1 Passage Question

According to the passage, why are medical colleges increasing the number of their students?

Example: (Because) they want to help increase the number of doctors and nurses.

#### No. 2 Illustration Question

Now, please look at the picture and describe the situation. You have 20 seconds to prepare. Your story should begin with the sentence on the card. <20 seconds> Please begin.

Example: One day in the hospital, Mr. Yamamoto was talking with a nurse. The nurse said to him, "Please push this button whenever you want to call me." A few hours later, Mr. Yamamoto pushed the button because he wanted to go to the bathroom. The nurse noticed the call for help. After a short time, the nurse brought a wheelchair. Another nurse helped Mr. Yamamoto into a wheelchair.

#### No. 3 Opinion Question

Some people say that doctors give too many types of medicine to their patients. What do you think about that?

Example: I agree. I think some kinds of medicine are unnecessary. We are paying money for something that we don't really need.

#### No. 4 Opinion Question

Today, some schools tell their students not to bring cellphones to school. Do you think it is a good idea?

Example: No. (Why?) Students need cell phones to contact their parents after school. Teachers just need to tell the students not to use a cell phone during class.

## Flow of the Interview

- 1. Entering the Room** After registering, wait in the waiting room. You will be given an "Interview Card," which you should fill out with your name and personal number. When you are escorted to the front of the interview room by a staff member, take all of your belongings with you. When it is your turn to enter the room, follow the instructions of the staff member and say "May I come in?"

### Point

You will be guided in Japanese from the reception desk to here. After knocking, open the door and say "Hello."

- 2. Interview Card** All communication with the interviewer will be conducted in English. You will be asked to hand over your "Interview Card," so say "Here you are."

### Point

The interviewer will say, "Can I have your card please?" Give them the card you filled out in the waiting room and say, "Here you are."

- 3. Taking a Seat** Sit down as instructed by the interviewer. Put your luggage next to your seat.

### Point

The interviewer will say, "Please sit down." When you are asked to sit down, reply "Thank you." If you sit down without saying anything, or if you remain slumped over and do not make eye contact, you will be seen as unwilling to communicate. If there is an empty chair next to you, place your baggage on it; if not, place it at your feet.

- 4. Name, Confirmation of Grade, and Greeting** The interviewer will ask for your name. Answer with, "My name is ...". You will be asked to confirm that you are testing for the Grade 2 test. A brief greeting will be exchanged.

### Point

The interviewer will ask for your name by saying, "What's your name, please?" They will also ask, "This is the Grade 2 test, OK?" to confirm the grade you are taking. You will be asked a simple greeting, such as "How are you?"

- 5. Topic Card** The interviewer will hand you a "question card" with passages and illustrations printed on them.

### Point

When the interviewer says, "Let's start the test." the greeting time is over. The interviewer will hand you a "question card" printed with a passage and illustrations and say "This is your card."

6. **Read the Passage Silently (20 Seconds)** Read the passage silently as instructed by the interviewer.

**Point**

The first task is to silently read the passage printed on the topic card for 20 seconds. The interviewer will say, "Please read the passage silently for 20 seconds."

There are about 60 words. You will run out of time if you worry about, "What is the meaning of this word?". Focus on the title first to get the gist of the passage, then read the main text. What is necessary at this time is to pay attention to the positions of periods and commas, filler words such as, "For example" and "However".

7. **Read the Passage Aloud** Follow the instructions of the interviewer and start reading the passage aloud. There is no time limit.

**Point**

The interviewer will say "Now please read the passage aloud." Respond with, "OK."

There is no time limit for reading aloud. So keep calm and put pauses after commas and periods. It sounds natural if you put pauses before conjunctions and prepositions and before and after adverbs. Intonation is also important. If you read aloud with emphasis on the parts that need to be emphasized and softly on the parts that do not, it will be easier to hear and convey the content. It is also important to read in a loud and clear voice so that the interviewer can hear you. Even if there are words you don't know, it's not a good idea to stop or skip. Let's read it confidently by analogizing the pronunciation from the spelling.

8. **Question About the Passage (No.1)** You will be asked about the content of the passage you read aloud. You can answer while looking at the topic card.

**Point**

Questions about the content of the passage often use "How" and "Why". So when the interviewer says "According to the passage..." listen carefully for the interrogative words that follows.

There is a trick to doing well here. Pay attention to the connecting words. When asked "How...?" you will see connecting words like "by doing so" or "in this way." When asked "Why...?" you will see connecting words like "therefore".

When you find the part that corresponds to the answer, create the correct answer in your head. You can answer No. 1 while looking at the "question card", so refer to the passage. If the answer starts with "How" answer with "By... -ing.". If the answer starts with "Why" answer with "Because~" and replace the subject with a pronoun.

9. **Question 2 Thinking Time (20 Seconds)** In No. 2, you will be asked to describe the contents of the illustration printed on the topic card. You are given 20 seconds to think.

**Point**

For question 2 you will explain the illustration printed on the topic card. Illustrations usually have three frames that are related to the passage. You must say the sentence printed on the topic at the beginning of the explanation. You are given 20 seconds to think. The interviewer say, "Now, please look at the picture and describe the situation. You have 20 seconds to prepare. Your story should begin with the sentence on the card."

First, quickly read through the one sentence designated to read aloud at the beginning to understand the character's name and the topic of the illustration. Then, look at the 3 frames of the illustration and grasp the contents. Between the frames are arrow-shaped balloons with phrases that express the passage of time and places. Pay particular attention to this expression, as it not only helps you understand the content, but it should also be used when explaining the illustrations.

You have 20 seconds to think, so you don't have time to compose every word in English in your head. Focus on building the structure of your explanation.

10. **Illustration Explanation (No. 2)** The interviewer will say, "Please begin."

**Point**

In most cases, the first sentence specified is in the past tense. Therefore, the entire description should also be in the past tense.

You should describe each frame in two sentences. If you explain the situation of the person being drawn in the first sentence, and explain the psychological state of the person or quote a line in the second sentence, you will be able to explain the main point just. Between the panels are arrow-shaped balloons that express the passage of time. The first sentence in the second and third frames should be started with this time expression.

11. **Turn Over the Topic Card** After answering question No. 2, the interviewer will say, "Please turn the card over." Follow their directions and place it on your desk.

- 12. Opinion Question (No. 3)** You will be asked a question that asks for your own opinion on a subject related to the "question card" topic.

**Point**

In No. 3, candidates are asked to give their own opinion on content related to the topic of the 'question card'. In most cases, it is a pattern of introducing an opinion, such as, "Some people say that..." You cannot look at the topic card so be sure to look the interviewer in the eye when answering.

The trick to answering is to first clearly state whether you agree or disagree with the opinion presented by saying "I agree." or "I disagree." You can also use the <... > part of "Some people say that...". After that, it would be good to explain why you agree/disagree in two sentences or so. A good format is to give one reason and add a supporting sentence or two reasons.

It doesn't matter if your answer is yes or no. Answer in the way that is most convenient for you.

- 13. Opinion Question (No. 4)** This questions asks for your opinion on a topic and is usually not related to the topic card.

**Point**

No. 4 also asks for the candidate's own opinion. However, there are many cases where the questions are completely unrelated to the topic of the topic card, so don't have any preconceived notions and concentrate on listening.

Interviewers usually start by explaining a current social phenomena using expressions such as "Today," / "These days," and so on. After that , the general pattern is to ask the examinee for his/her own opinion, such as "Do you think ... ?" The trick is to make your point clear by answering "Yes" or "No" first. Then the interviewer will ask "Why?" / "Why not?" or "Tell me more." It is useful to know expressions such as "We should" / "We shouldn't" or "would rather do (than ... )" or "I've heard that ...".

- 14. Returning the Topic Card** The interviewer will ask you to return the topic card.

**Point**

The exam is over when the interviewer says, "This is the end of the test. May I have your card back, please?"

- 15. Exiting the Room** Say goodbye and leave the room. After leaving the room, you cannot talk to other examinees or return to the waiting room.

**Point**

There interviewer will say, "You may go now." You should say, "Thank you. Goodbye." and leave the room.

Be careful not to forget anything when you leave the room. After leaving the room, you cannot talk to other candidates or return to the waiting room

## Attitude

Attitude is also evaluated in the Eiken Grade 3 secondary exam. Specifically, it means that clarity of vocalization, naturalness of reaction, aggressiveness, etc. will be scored. So show your willingness to communicate and speak loudly and clearly so that the other person can easily hear you. Your attitude will be evaluated from the time you enter the room to the time you leave, so be careful not to silently sit down without permission or mumble answers without looking into their eyes.

The worst thing you can do is keep quiet. Even if your English speaking skills are inexperienced, if you have a willingness to use the words and grammar you know to convey your thoughts, you will receive a positive evaluation in Attitude. Even if you make a mistake in grammar, you can simply say "excuse me". In any case, what you want to avoid is giving up and saying, "I failed..." or mumbling in an attempt to cover up your poor pronunciation or feeling that you are not good at it.

## Useful Expressions

### ★ Pardon? (何ですって?)

If you didn't understand what the interviewer said, it's okay to ask again. Say "Pardon?" or "Pardon me?" and have them say it again. You can also say "Excuse me?" or "Sorry?" These expressions should be used immediately after the other person speaks, so if you don't understand what the other person is saying, say this immediately. After a pause, "Pardon?" sounds unnatural and is subject to deduction.

Don't ask too many questions. It may be judged that "this examinee's listening ability is low" and the interviewer will move on to the next question.

### ★ Well... (ええと...)

If you want to think for a moment before answering, say "Well, ..." and let them know you are thinking about it. You can also use "Let's see." and "Let me see." You can also say "Hmm." or slowly repeat the keyword in the question. Avoid thinking silently.

### ★ Could you say that again? (もう一度言っていただけますか?)

If you don't understand the interviewer's question, the first thing you should do is ask the interviewer to repeat the question. In addition to the aforementioned "Pardon?" and "Excuse me?", you can also use the expression "Could you say that again?" However, if you ask them what the word in your question means or ask them to translate it into another word, they won't give you an answer. So, if you really can't understand, try to guess the meaning from the range of words you can hear, and answer in a dignified manner.

It is not good to say, "I don't know." If you accidentally said something, immediately say "No, sorry."

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