



iTEP SLATE Exam Overview

The primary function of iTEP SLATE is to assess the English language proficiency of middle school and high school students whose first language is not English.

iTEP SLATE is commonly used by high schools, academies, and language institutes for:

- Making high school admissions decisions
- Placing students within language programs
- Guiding course instruction and curriculum development
- Evaluating pre- and post-course progress
- Assessing proficiency of English language teachers
- Determining eligibility for exchange programs

There are two versions of iTEP SLATE:

- **iTEP SLATE-Core** assesses reading, listening, and grammar and is 50 minutes in length, with an additional 10 minutes for pre-test preparation
- **iTEP SLATE-Plus** assesses reading, listening, grammar, writing, and speaking and is 80 minutes in length, with an additional 10 minutes for pre-test preparation

Test Content

In each section, examinees will encounter content and questions targeted at varying levels of proficiency.

A. Reading – 20 minutes/3 parts

Part 1: Two low intermediate-level passages of approximately 50 words in length, followed by 2 multiple-choice questions

Part 2: One intermediate-level passage of approximately 200 words in length, followed by 4 multiple-choice questions

Part 3: One low advanced passage of approximately 500 words in length, followed by 6 multiple-choice questions

B. Listening – 20 minutes/3 parts

Part 1: Four short high-beginning to low-intermediate-level conversational exchanges of 2-3 sentences, each followed by 1 multiple-choice question

Part 2: One 2- to 3-minute intermediate-level conversational exchange, followed by 4 multiple-choice questions

Part 3: One 4-minute low-advanced-level lecture, followed by 6 multiple-choice questions

C. Grammar (Structure) – 10 minutes/1 part

This section is comprised of twenty-five multiple-choice questions, each of which tests the examinee's familiarity with a key feature of English structure. This section includes a range of content from simple to more complex, as well as both beginning and advanced vocabulary. Each type of question is preceded by an on-screen example.

D. Writing – 25 minutes/2 parts

Part 1: Examinee is given five minutes to write a 50-75 word note, geared at the low-intermediate level, on a supplied topic

Part 2: Examinee is given 20 minutes to write a 175-225 word piece expressing and supporting his or her opinion on an upper-level written topic

E. Speaking – 5 minutes/2 parts

Part 1: Examinee hears and reads a short question geared at the low-intermediate level, then has 30 seconds to prepare a spoken response, and 45 seconds to speak

Part 2: Examinee hears a brief upper-level statement presenting two sides of an issue, then is asked to express his or her thoughts on the topic, with 45 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to speak

(Continued on Reverse)

Test Structure:

Prior to the start of the test, there is a short preliminary section which guides the examinee through a series of steps to ensure technical compatibility and examinee readiness. This includes the complete technical checklist of the software required for test administration, as well as examinee identification items such as log in and registration. The preliminary section is included in the 90 minute total length of the test.

Delivery Method:

All iTEP exams are delivered via the Internet and must be administered at a secure location or a Certified iTEP Test Center. The examinee completes the test in the following manner:

- During the reading, listening, and grammar sections, the examinee clicks on one of four answer choices for each question
- Writing samples are keyboarded directly into a text entry field
- Speaking samples are recorded with a headset and microphone at the examinee's computer

Timing Mechanism:

Each section has a fixed time allotted to it. If an examinee completes a section with time left, he or she may advance to the next section.

- Reading and grammar sections: examinees are free to use any extra time to review, and if they wish, revise their answers
- Listening section: the selections play only once, so review is not possible
- Writing section: there are fixed time limits for each part, but examinees may advance to the next section before time expires
- Speaking section: there are fixed time limits for each part

The directions for each section are displayed for a set amount of time. This amount varies according to the amount of text to be read and should be adequate for most examinees. If an examinee needs more time to read a particular section's directions, he or she can always access them by clicking the help button, which displays a complete menu of directions for all test sections.

Transition Screens:

Following each section of the test, examinees see a screen that reads, "Beginning Next Section..." These "transition screens" provide a 15-second break between sections, and display completed test sections and remaining test sections. After the last section is completed, examinees see a final screen, which tells them to wait for further directions from the administrator.

Scoring/Grading:

The test will determine an overall proficiency level from 0 (Beginner) to 6 (Advanced), as well as individual proficiency levels from 0 to 6 for each of the skills tested. For greater accuracy, scores are also expressed in tenth-levels (2.1, 2.2, etc.). The test is graded as follows:

- The reading, listening, and grammar sections are scored automatically by the computer
- The writing and speaking samples are evaluated by native English-speaking, ESL-trained professionals, according to a standardized scoring rubric
- The Official Score Report presents an individual's scoring information in both tabular and graphical formats - the graphical format, or skill profile, is particularly useful for displaying an examinee's strengths and weaknesses in each of the skills evaluated by the test.

Levels:

The five proficiency levels identified by the test may be expressed briefly as follows:

- A. Level 0.0 – 2.4: Beginner
- B. Level 2.5 – 3.9: Elementary
- C. Level 4.0 – 4.9: Intermediate
- D. Level 5.0 – 5.9: Upper Intermediate
- E. Level 6.0: Advanced