Splendid Speaking Grading Criteria

Use the following criteria to grade speaking performances. Whilst a Grade '2' shows evidence of very good language proficiency, a '3' grade indicates the speaker has exceptional communication skills and speaking strategies which have a very positive effect on the listener and make them a Splendid Speaker!

Grammar and Vocabulary

3 The speaker's language is entirely accurate, appropriate and may even show playful features of language (e.g. puns, idioms, metaphors and similes). The speaker gives the impression of excellent control of language and is able to express complex ideas clearly and in an interesting or captivating way.

2 The speaker is mostly accurate and appropriate and is able to express their ideas clearly. The listener has no problem understanding the speaker and has the impression that the speaker has good lexical and grammatical control.

1 The speaker makes a number of lexical or grammatical errors, and may depend too much on rehearsed phrases. The listener may feel on occasion that they would like to interrupt and help the speaker to find the correct word, expression or structure.

0 The speaker has difficulty expressing themselves in anything other than short sentences. There are frequent hesitations or pauses while the speaker searches for the language they need to express themselves. The listener will often feel communication is breaking down.

Fluency

3 The delivery is entirely natural and so fluent that the speaker is a pleasure to listen to. The listener is almost unaware of the speaker being a language learner, who comes across as almost 'native speaker' like.

2 Delivery is fairly fluent, apart from the odd occasion when the speaker may have forgotten a particular word, or has to think about a grammatical structure. The listener does not feel the need to hurry or prompt the speaker.

1 There is a degree of fluency but the speaker stops quite often to process what they are going to say next. The listener may feel they want to hurry the speaker along.

0 Delivery is stilted and faltering. The listener often feels the need to hurry the speaker along with prompts or interruptions.

Pronunciation

3 The speaker articulates sounds clearly and correctly, and speaks with appropriate word stress and intonation. The listener has no problems understanding what is being said. The listener will probably detect features of a 'foreign' accent but this will not detract from their understanding.

2 There is some influence of the first language on the speaker's articulation of sounds and/or word stress and intonation. Overall this does not detract from what the speaker is saying and poses no comprehension problems.

1 In general, the speaker can be understood, although pronunciation is influenced by the speaker's first language and the listener sometimes has to work hard to follow what is being said.

0 Pronunciation of words, word stress and/or intonation is strongly influenced by the first language and the listener has frequent problems recognising what the speaker is trying to say.

Extended Spoken Discourse Management

3 Uses sophisticated language and/or strategies to guide the listener through the talk. The listener is fully able to follow the thread of what the speaker is saying. The speaker goes beyond standard textbook language to signpost their talk.

2 The speaker uses standard textbook language well to guide the listener through the talk, which is well organised. It is always apparent to the listener where the speaker is in their presentation.

1 Uses some standard language but doesn't signpost all sections of presentation. The listener will be able to follow the direction of the talk but will sometimes have to interpret the flow of the talk and make assumptions about what the speaker is trying to say.

0 The speaker uses no language to signpost sections or the direction of the talk. The speaker places a very heavy burden on the listener to follow the thread of the presentation, which is disorganized and incoherent.

Content

3 The speaker brings in everyday examples, memorable stories or anecdotes, to make the relevant content more compelling and of real interest to the listener.

2 The speaker brings in relevant content to make the talk interesting for the listener.

1 The content expressed is predictable and expected - the listener may be fairly interested but is left feeling the speaker could have included more interesting subject matter.

0 Content is uninteresting and/or overly wordy and the listener feels the speaker has nothing new to say.

Interactive Spoken Discourse

3 Interacts extremely well, showing evidence of active listening techniques. The speaker frequently initiates conversation, responds to their partner's comments and is very sensitive to turn-taking. The listener thoroughly enjoys being part of the conversation.

2 Interacts with their partner well, the speaker is able to initiate conversation and responds to their partner's comments, avoiding hesitations or pauses.

1 Responds to partner's questions but fails to initiate conversation and awkwardness is evident thought frequent hesitations during conversation.

0 Interaction is very limited. Responses to questions are short and there is no evidence of conversation being initiated.