Certificate of Proficiency in English Practice Tests 1

Teacher's Book

Contents

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Introduction

Past papers from the Certificate of Proficiency in English (CPE) examination are being published in collaboration with the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate in response to requests from teachers and language teaching institutions who have asked for additional examination practice material.

CPE Practice Tests provides an opportunity to familiarise students with the examination papers and provides candidates with practice in examination technique. It is also possible to conduct five-paper 'mock' examinations if desired. However, it should be noted that the assessment of candidates' results in a public examination with many thousands of entries involves complex statistical procedures and for this reason no published texts can provide the basis for a fully comparable assessment.

CPE Practice Tests contains five past examinations, based on the CPE examinations of June 1976 to June 1978. Each paper is presented as far as possible exactly as set in the CPE examination, except that the order of the Reading Comprehension and Composition papers has been reversed to follow current practice.

This accompanying Teacher's Book contains marking instructions and answer keys. The Student's Book contains sample answer sheets for Papers 1 and 4. The FCE/CPE Answer Pad, also published by Cambridge University Press, is available for recording answers to papers 1 and 4 in the form required by the examination.

Information about the performance of candidates may be found in the annual Survey of the Cambridge EFL Examinations available from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate, 17 Harvey Road, Cambridge CB1 2EU, England.

The Certificate of Proficiency Examination

Description

The examination has the following format:

	Time
Paper 1: Reading Comprehension	$1\frac{1}{4}$ hours
Paper 2: Composition	3 hours
Paper 3: Use of English	3 hours
Paper 4: Listening Comprehension	20-30 minutes
Paper 5: Interview	approx. 12 minutes

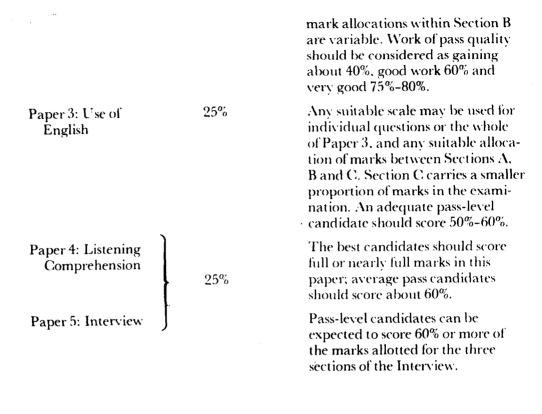
Papers 1 and 4 consist of multiple-choice questions and the answers are machine-scored. Papers 2 and 3 require written responses ranging from one word to a whole composition, and are examiner-marked. Papers 4 and 5 together carry 25% of the total marks for the examination; the other three papers each carry 25%.

Assessment

The final assessment of any candidate is arrived at only on the basis of total performance in the five papers, in which marks have been carefully adjusted to establish correct weightings and grading levels.

These procedures are clearly impracticable for the teacher working alone; however, the following guide provides a 'profile' of marks which will enable teachers to assess candidates appropriately.

Name of Paper	Percentage of total marks	Assessment
Paper 1: Reading Comprehension	25%	The average mark for pass candidates is about 60% with good candidates scoring 70%–80% and very good candidates 80%–100%.
Paper 2: Composition	25%	Teachers may use any suitable total mark for the paper and allot marks for Sections A and B either equally as in the examination, or equally for the two compositions and Section B separately. Detailed



Paper 1: Reading Comprehension

1.1 Practice notes

Paper 1 is in two sections, the first consisting of 40 multiple-choice items in the form of a sentence with a blank to be filled by one of five words or phrases given below, and the second consisting of 20 multiple-choice items based on passages of between 250 and 600 words.

Care should be taken not to practise this test to excess, but merely to accustom candidates to the requirements and tempo of tests of this type. Their length and character are dictated by the needs of effective testing and do not directly reflect a comparable emphasis on class time which may be unproductive.

1.2 Marking

The answers to be taken as correct for Paper 1 are given in The Proficiency Practice Tests section of this book. These can readily be transferred to a transparent overlay (e.g. an overhead projector transparency) to ensure ease and accuracy of marking.

The average score for pass candidates on Paper 1 is in the region of 60%, with good candidates scoring 70%-80% and very good candidates 80%-100%. With a total of 60 for the paper, this means pass candidates should score about 36.

Paper 2: Composition

2.1 Practice notes

In Section A, candidates are required to write two compositions, one on a descriptive or narrative topic and one on a discussion topic. Classroom practice should therefore concentrate on both types, both for general language development and for examination preparation.

No length specification is given at CPE level, and although a very rough average of 350 words can be kept in mind, it is more helpful to think of a composition as being as long as it needs to be in order to communicate a coherent series of arguments or impressions.

The purpose of Section B is to emphasise the place of extensive reading in the learner's acquisition of English and intensive practice on the passages given here should be only supplementary to this.

2.2 Marking

In marking essays, the quality of the language employed rather than subject matter as such is assessed, and range and appropriateness of vocabulary, sentence and paragraph structure, correctness of grammar, punctuation and spelling are taken into account. Marks are awarded on impression on the basis of the scale below, the pass mark being roughly in the region of 40%. Individual mistakes are not penalised, so there is no exact correlation between the number of errors and the mark given; freedom from gross error needs to be balanced against the naturalness and appropriateness of the language, and correctness against width of vocabulary. However, the underlining of specific mistakes as a guide to the general extent and character of language errors is recommended. Consistent decisions need to be taken regarding the candidate's intention and success in the way of treating a topic.

The candidate should be assessed for quality of language using the following scale:

90-100	Excellent	Free from errors, substantial length, well-constructed pattern, complete control over choice and arrangement
		of words and ideas.
75-90	Very good	Good length and structure, correct and ambitious and natural in style.
60-75	Good	Free from basic errors, theme maintained with some assurance and vocabulary resource.
40-60	Pass	Has used the English language to communicate a clear, connected sequence of ideas, with reasonably correct and natural syntax and vocabulary.

25-40	Weak	Near to pass level in general scope, but inadequate either because of numerous errors or too elementary an approach.
0-25	Very poor	Errors and narrowness of vocabulary prevent communication.

Point by point effective comprehension, and picking up of textual implications, is scored for Section B, without reference to the quality of expression shown in the answer. A suitable marking scheme, based on that used for each actual Examination, is given in each Practice Test. This gives each agreed textual interpretation, and an approximate mark allocation.

Paper 3: Use of English

3.1 Practice notes

This paper has three sections. The first contains exercises to test the candidate's active control of English usage and grammatical structure. The second consists of a number of tests of comprehension and skill in summarising, based on a passage. The third is a directed writing exercise where the candidate has to present given information in an appropriate form and style.

Practice can consist of whole papers or individual question types, though it should be noted that the modified cloze test which forms question 1 in all papers is of more value as a testing device than as an exercise to increase language awareness, and should, like multiple-choice tests, not be over-practised. Section C of Paper 3 functions as a further composition test, and need not be practised with the more analytical material.

3.2 Marking

Detailed marking schemes for Sections A and B are given in The Proficiency Practice Tests section, isolating each marking point. For practice purposes, any suitable modification may be made. Equal marks may be awarded, except where indicated, for each coherent and relevant answer, penalising for poor expression or quoting inappropriately and inelegantly from the text.

For Section C an overall impression mark is given, which takes into account the appropriateness of the language to the situation specified.

Marks can be awarded, either for effective transformation of selected elements in the original text, or by general impression following a detailed scale based on any convenient maximum mark.

Paper 4: Listening Comprehension

4.1 Practice notes

Like Paper 1, this test should not be over-practised, though it is important for students to become used to the conditions in which it is taken. (Note that in the examination the three passages are selected from four provided on each occasion.) The essential instructions to the person conducting the test may be summarised as follows:

- i) Candidates must be given a clear introduction to the test, and the procedure explained (two readings of each passage, answers on the sheet provided, and in pencil).
- ii) After a pause (about 1 minute) to look through the first group of questions, the first reading is announced.
- iii) Each first reading of a passage should take about $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes, ignoring the marked pauses.
- iv) Candidates are told that there will be a pause for selecting answers, and reminded that questions need not be answered in order and may be left until the second reading.
- v) Each second reading of a passage should contain a 5 second pause at each of the places marked, and be followed by a pause of about 1 minute.

4.2 Marking

The answers to be taken as correct are given in The Proficiency Practice Tests section. The candidates' answer sheets should be scored as explained for Paper 1. The best candidates should score full or nearly full marks in this paper, average pass candidates somewhere in the region of 60%.

Paper 5: Interview

5.1 Practice notes

Teachers will probably wish to give students experience of the whole Interview, conducted as in the examination and marked simultaneously. They should therefore familiarise themselves beforehand with the procedure and marking scales as given below. Each student should be given ten minutes to prepare the dialogue and topic beforehand.

Conversation based on a photograph (about 5 minutes)

The examiner's version of each photograph has sets of suggested questions and follow-up topics.

The candidate should be given an opportunity to study the photograph for a few seconds. The specific questions should then be asked, followed by a lead into the general topics. Not all the questions or topics suggested need be used for each candidate, and modifications may be made as thought necessary.

The candidate should be encouraged to demonstrate his overall fluency and

the examiner should aim to provide reasonable openings so that the candidate is encouraged to take the initiative and speak a number of connected sentences without interruption. It should be made clear to the candidates that factual knowledge and accurate interpretation of the picture are not being tested.

Dialogue (about 2 minutes)

Candidates are allowed about 15 minutes to prepare this and the topic.

The candidate should be given a few seconds to glance over the dialogue again before being asked to read his part aloud. The examiner should assist the candidate by reading his own part with some freshness and conviction.

Prepared topic (about 2 minutes)

Candidates are allowed to make notes for the topic of their choice, but warned that they will not be allowed to write out and read aloud a complete speech. To conduct this part of the test, the candidate should be asked which topic he has chosen, invited to speak, and allowed to continue uninterrupted unless he either 'dries up' seriously or goes on too long.

Situations (about 3 minutes)

The candidate is required to respond to three situations chosen by the examiner from the list given. The examiner reads the situation aloud while the candidate follows on his own copy. This should be sufficient for the candidate to realise what is required, but a simple general explanation may be added at the examiner's discretion.

5.2 Marking

Each sub-test involves a separate impression mark for particular aspects of oral performance, with passing candidates gaining in the region of 50% of the available marks in each, as indicated in the marking scales below. To assist in forming an impression of the standards applied in the examination, sample recordings are available from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate at the address given on p.1.

In the picture-based Conversation the following scales, based on overall ability to communicate and vocabulary, should be used:

A. O	verall communica	tion
9-10 8 7	Excellent Very good } Good }	Near-native. Foreign but fluent and precise.
5-6	Satisfactory	Able to cope with an English-medium academic course of instruction.
4	Not quite adequate	Equipped for everyday conversation, but not for serious discussion.

2-3	Weak	Below standard necessary for expressing ideas or absorbing information accurately.			
0-1	Very weak	Roughly adequate on straightforward topics only.			
B. Voca	ıbulary				
9-10	Excellent	Corresponds to educated native speaker.			
8 7	Very good Good }	Wide and appropriate vocabulary on most topics.			
5-6	Satisfactory	Sufficient, if not very wide or precise.			
4	Not quite adequate	Too many gaps to absorb information or contribute to class discussion etc. effectively.			
2-3	Weak	Adequate for everyday situations only.			
0-1	Very weak	Insufficient word-stock for effective communication.			
For the l	Dialogue, use	the following scale:			
C. Pro	nunciation				
9-10	Excellent	Mostly near-native.			
8 7	Very good Good	Foreign but clear and controlled.			
5-6	Satisfactory	Most sounds correct, adequate intonation and stress. Sense of rhythm and catenation.			
4	Not quite adequate	Intelligent, but inability to make significant distinction between sounds, or to control phrasing, hampers			
2-3	Weak	communication. Consistent mispronunciations, uncertain rhythm and			
0-1	Very weak	Distinctly foreign, faltering and varyingly intelligible.			
For the	For the Topic, use the following scales:				
A. Ove	rall communica ve.	tion			
D. Gra	ımmar and struc	cture			
9-10	Excellent	Fully equipped for communication of ideas.			
8	Very good)				
7	Good	varied selections.			
5-6	Satisfactory	Conveys ideas with force and fluency.			
4	Not quite adequate	Range and content too limited for demands of complex topics.			
2-3	Weak	Errors, and structures too limited for more than everyday topics.			

0-1 Very weak Gross errors impairing intelligibility.

For each Situation, use the following scale:

- 3 Acceptable and adequate responses.
- 2 Good with minor errors.
- 1 Correct but too brief. —fully but poorly expressed.
- 0 Misses point completely, or answer too short and poorly expressed.

The Proficiency Practice Tests

This section contains a marking key or list of answers for each paper as relevant, and the parts of the examination needed only by the teacher (e.g. listening comprehension passages for each Paper 4). The answers are laid out in exactly the same order as the Student's Book, paper by paper.

Practice Test 1 (based on June 1976 examination)

Paper 1: Reading Comprehension

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Paper 2: Composition

Section A See p.4.

Section B

a) Remarks (direct or reported speech) showing mixture of: dishelief (1), pride (1), confirmation of own opinion, (1)

- b) Creates/heightens suspense (1); reader/author identification (1); dramatises mother's gradual awakening (2), Jack's laconic scheming (2), Richard's dreamy non-awareness. (2)
- c) Don't blame me...

Don't start one of your fusses. . .

Don't spoil your mother's pleasure... etc.

- d) Varying interpretations, e.g.
 - by picking out some common elements e.g. reticence, apparent indifference (3);
 - by discussing them in the order they have appeared in the passage (2);
 - 'very well, effectively', etc. (0);
 - by recalling their separate characteristics (2 each):

(Jack's temperamental reticence); (Mother's deep, warm but rather puzzled and therefore unreliable feelings); (Father's imperceptive heartiness); (Richard's analytical approach).

- e) i) The magazine (1)
 - $ii) \ \ Richard/the\ author\ (1)$
 - iii) Father (1)
 - iv) The venture/the sending off/ publication of the story (2)
- f) Sudden and deliberate use of (2) figurative poetic/poetical language (2) (bonus 2 for nautical flavour).

Showing heightened adolescent emotion (2) of the writer, stressing its importance in his life. (2)

- g) i) Moustache and egg routine. (2)
 - ii) Banal repetitious phrases. (2)

Paper 3: Use of English

Section A

Question 1 (Whole or half-mark for each correct single word, or deduct incorrect items from agreed smaller total 5, 15 etc. as wished.) 1. where (not when) 2. to 3. day (not days, day's, etc.) 4. to 6. of/in 7. to 8. which/that 10. to (not the 9. is/remains 12. that 13. of 14. it/water for) ll. as 15. done 16. him/man 17. his 18. to 19. of 20. own (not present)

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Question 2 (Whole or half-mark for each portion correctly placed and spelt. Ignore rest of sentence.)

- 1. ... his friend/him to try to/and jump (not try jumping)...
- 2. ... rather sleep than work.
 - ... prefer to sleep rather than (to) work.
- 3. ... to resign/in resigning (not when you resigned).
- 4. Inversion with any correct continuation
- 5. ... of the accident was ...
- 6. ... the detective (no qualifier when/at which etc., no immediately) ...
- 7. ... been in/to London since 1972.
 - ... visited/seen ...
- 8. ... Wednesday that the representative finished ...
- 9. ... that Willy (should) move/moved/had to move ...
 - ... OR ... on Willy('s) moving ...
- 10. She promised to work for us as long as we paid/she was paid (correct tense sequence)...

Question 3 (One or more marks as appropriate for each correct addition.)

- 1. ... I had/I'd been ...
- 2. If/Should you (should) see/meet/run into etc. (correct verb form) . . .
- 3. ... were ...
- 4. ... being/going to be done/repaired (no present perfect) ...
- 5. ... to have been ...
- 6. ... like/likes ...
- 7. ... had been ...
- 8. Will/Would you be so good/kind...
- 9. ... stopped/gave up etc. (correctly spelt past tense) ...
- 10. ... have (already) seen (in correct position) ...

Question 4 (One or more marks for each grammatical, natural approximation to original.)

- 1. We have run out of sugar.
- 2. Mr McDermett stood in for Mr Mills.
- 3. The customs official made us open our bags (accept correct passive forms).
- 4. We can't afford a holiday/to go on holiday this year.
- 5. There was no precedent for his action (noun use essential).
- 6. Joe has difficulty/ies in expressing himself (correct present plus 'in expressing') OR Joe expresses himself with difficulty.
- 7. According to/under the terms of your contract you are expected ...
- 8. Despite (not of, etc.) ...

Section B

Question 5 (This section is designed to test the candidate's ability to understand, interpret and summarise. Equal marks can be fairly awarded to questions 1 to 16, except where indicated, for each coherent and relevant answer, penalising for poor expression or quoting inappropriately and inelegantly from the text.)

- 1. Because once lost, wild life gone for ever; also a major resource for food and tourism.
- 2. Newspapers devote much space to printing the words of politicians after they have been spoken ('echo' idea essential).
- 3. Special meaning. In what way different (negative, pejorative).
- 4. As threatened with extinction.
- 5. That the world will necessarily prefer to wonder at the riches of nature rather than exploit them.
- 6. No.
- 7. Issue (or synonym).
- 8. The wild life issue; the question of the survival of wild life.
- 9. Sea/ocean/maritime.
- 10. No; 'working'.
- 11. To tell the exact truth; to be precise.
- 12. The belief that few or no animals will survive.
- 13. Preservation means protecting from danger; conservation means helping to keep alive as a species.
- 14. The scientific study of wild life and ecology.
- 15. The world in general, the whole world (not the rest of the world).
- 16. More meat can be obtained by shooting wild animals than by raising and feeding domesticated stock (paraphrase of game and cattle necessary for full mark).
- 17. Well-expressed paragraphs giving the three areas of change, as follows:
 - Move from preservation to conservation,
 OR wild life now seen as more important than political issues.
 - Scientific value realised for Africa and whole world (meat).
 - Economic value to Africa (tourism).

Section C

Question 6 (Award marks separately for the following elements of the original article convincingly and accurately conveyed, plus a style mark for quality and suitability of language. Penalise inclusion of counter-arguments from the letter. All answers to be in letter form, and all answers written as if following, not preceding, the letter.)

Title

Introductory matter

Main points:

- big classes
- quick and kind
- superiority
- home is worse

Conclusion

Paper 4: Listening Comprehension

Passage for Questions 1 to 5

It was dark and I was almost numb. I had crashed from the top of a cliff into a patch of marsh, soft but deep. I had been pushed, but my attackers had somehow bungled it, for I had only grazed the sharp rocks that had awaited me below. Now I determined to move off before the search party came to look for their victim.

I had more time than I thought. They hadn't any intention of finding my body until it was stiff and there were independent witnesses with them. The unfortunate brother sportsman would be accidentally discovered with his corpse undisturbed, and the whole history of his fate perfectly plain on the nasty sloping rock where he had slipped.

I managed to drag myself about half a mile, towards some larches where the earth was soft and free from undergrowth. I had brushed past one tree whose sweet-smelling sooty branches, as close together as the rungs of a ladder. I now meant to climb. ——Until I was some way up. I didn't dare rest boots on branch; they would have left caked prints no one could miss. Later I could let my feet bear my weight and pause before each hoist. — When at last I climbed into the narrow cone where the boughs grew smaller and greener. I relaxed, jammed between the little branches of that prolific tree. Then suddenly I fainted.

When I came round, the tree was swaying, but I felt deliciously secure. The sun was behind me and there was no risk of my face being spotted among the green feathers which I pushed aside to watch the slope to the north. Any search party working its way down would have their eyes dazzled the moment they looked in my direction. As far as I could tell, the only signs of my presence would be the barely visible stains from the blood that might have fallen on the boughs in the dimly-lit centre of the tree.

Passage for Questions 6 to 10

Next morning as usual I heard Mrs. Harper opening up the pawnshop. She dealt expertly with the customers, some of whom were already waiting on the doorstep. Once the first rush was over. business generally became easier as the day progressed. But for half an hour the bell tinkled incessantly as men from the troop ships arrived, anxious to deposit cameras, cigarette cases. watches, suits of clothes and other things. They were supposed to be only the security for a loan but would never be redeemed. Mrs. Harper would examine the proffered article for about three minutes. The examination would be conducted with the utmost intensity, seeming to have its sensitive point, its assessing faculty, in her long nose. She would not smell the thing, actually, but it would appear to be her nose which calculated and finally judged. Then she would sharply name her figure. If this evoked a protest, she would become really eloquent, though never unreasonable at this stage. A list of the object's defects would proceed like ticker tape from her mouth; its depreciating market value was known to her; this suit of clothes would never fit another man, that ring was not worth the melting. Usually the pawners accepted her offer after she ceased. If not, the pawnbroker's wife turned to the next customer without further comment. Should the first-comer still linger, hesitant, perplexed, it was then that Mrs. Harper became unreasonable "Haven't you made up your mind yet"? She would demand. "What are you waiting for, what are you waiting for"? The effect of this shock treatment was either the swift disappearance of the customer, or his swift clinching of the bargain.

Passage for Questions 11 to 15

One of my first commissions was for a large painting for Sir John Beale's country house in Suffolk. The dimensions of the canvas were to be eight feet by five feet, and I was considerably alarmed at the prospect. It was more than four times larger in a rea than any picture I had ever painted before. For a long time I was frightened of starting it, but Sir John Beale was not a man to be fobbed off with excuses or postponements. A deadline therefore was agreed, and Sir John said that he was coming to see the picture on a certain day the following week. "As it is already half-finished,"

Practice Test 1

he said, "I'd like to see how it looks. Perhaps it won't be too late to make small alterations...". My untouched canvas was hastily taken from the wall against which it had been standing for so long. It was plain and white and vaguely terrifying. But I had in my mind the sort of thing that I meant to do, so with my biggest brushes I started to slosh on the sky. By the end of that day there was also a bed of rushes, some water and the outlines of the birds. I still had two days in hand and if I worked very hard I might paint up the birds and still get in the tall reeds which were to fill the foreground of the picture. Towards the end of the third day, after the initial background had been given time to dry, it was evident that I was not going to get the reeds done. The only answer was to ask my mother to help. She set to work on the reeds on the left hand side of the picture while I plodded on with those on the right. When Sir John came the picture was practically finished and he gave it his unqualified approval.

11 12 13

Answers

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