

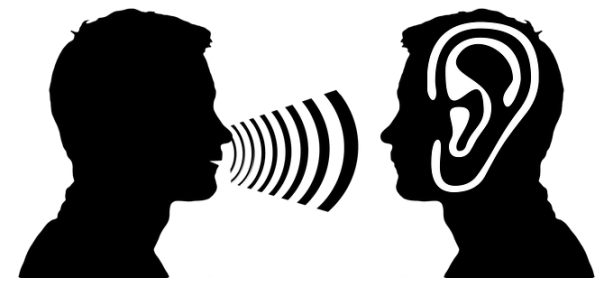
Unit 12. Speaking and Listening skills



NEW ERA
International school

Introduction

Speaking and Listening are an integral part of your English lessons, and being able to speak in English and understand what is said to you in reply are hugely important skills.



1. What is tested and how?



The background of the slide features a close-up, slightly blurred image of a clock face and a pen. The clock face is visible in the lower half, showing numbers like 15, 20, 25, and 30. A pen is positioned diagonally across the upper left portion of the image. The overall tone is dark and professional.

Speaking and listening skills will be assessed by your teachers and their marks will be externally moderated.

The test lasts about ten minutes, broken down into:

- Part 1: Presentation of an individual talk /3-4 minutes/
- Part 2: Conversation /6-7 minutes/

How is the test marked?



The individual talk and conversation (Part 1 and 2 of the test) are recorded and the recording is sent to a **moderator** who is appointed by the examination board. The moderator receives a number of recordings and compares them with the standards that have been set.

He/ she will decide whether you have been assessed at the right standard. If he/she agrees with your teacher's marks, the results will simply be sent to the examining board; if the moderator doesn't quite agree with your teacher then he/she might adjust your marks slightly.

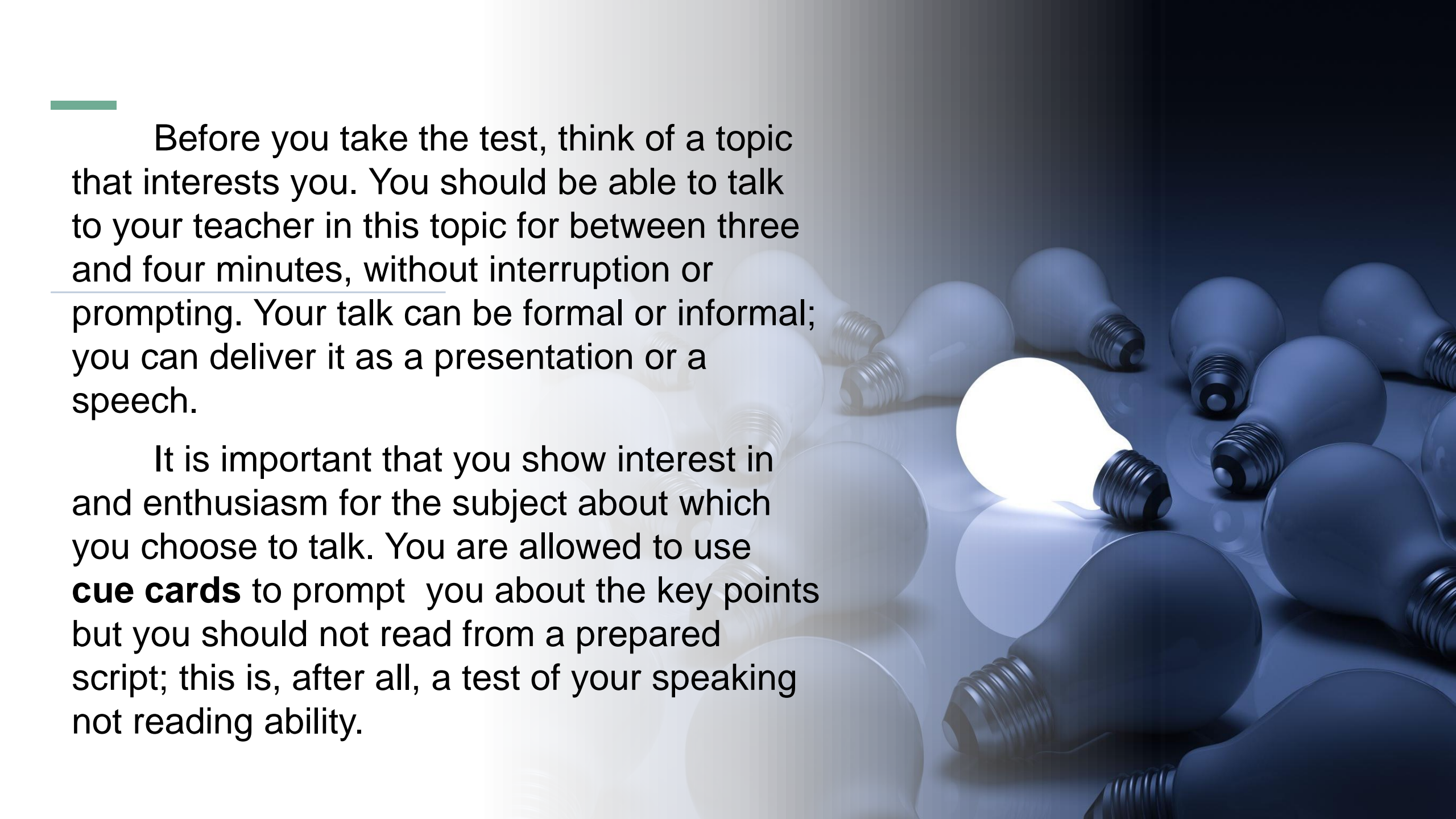
Key term



Moderator: An external examiner who oversees teachers' marking of the speaking and listening test or coursework.

2. The individual talk





Before you take the test, think of a topic that interests you. You should be able to talk to your teacher in this topic for between three and four minutes, without interruption or prompting. Your talk can be formal or informal; you can deliver it as a presentation or a speech.

It is important that you show interest in and enthusiasm for the subject about which you choose to talk. You are allowed to use **cue cards** to prompt you about the key points but you should not read from a prepared script; this is, after all, a test of your speaking not reading ability.

Key term

Cue cards: Brief notes written on postcards to remind you of points you intend to make in your talk.





You may also, if you wish, use a limited range of visual aids to support your talk but remember that you have only a limited time and too many such aids can inhibit what you have to say.

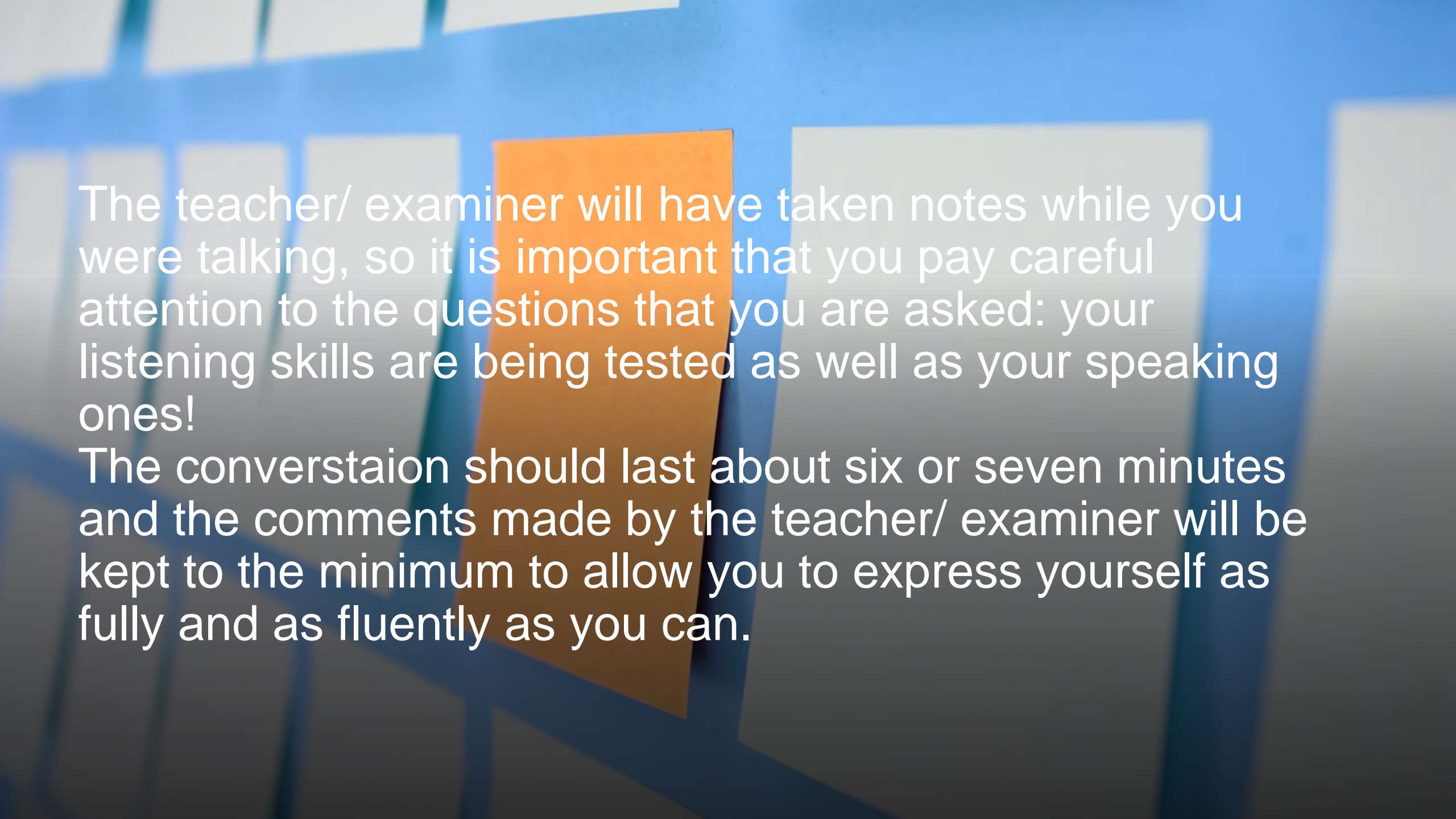
3. The discussion



The discussion will take the form of a conversation with the teacher/examiner about issues arising from your talk on your chosen topic. Teacher/examiner will not take a confrontational or argumentative approach but will encourage you to expand positively on what you have said.

In order to make the best impression, it is important that you have prepared your topic thoroughly. Some of the questions you are asked may well require you to refer to factual information additional to that included in your talk and also to develop or defend your point of view.




The background features a blue field with several overlapping rectangular shapes in shades of orange and grey. The text is white and positioned over these shapes.

The teacher/ examiner will have taken notes while you were talking, so it is important that you pay careful attention to the questions that you are asked: your listening skills are being tested as well as your speaking ones!

The conversation should last about six or seven minutes and the comments made by the teacher/ examiner will be kept to the minimum to allow you to express yourself as fully and as fluently as you can.

4. Choosing a topic





It is up to you to choose a topic that you want to introduce and discuss in the test. The only restriction on the choice is that your teacher/ examiner must be happy to discuss the topic with you.

Make sure you choose a topic that you know something about and are able to discuss.



You might consider these possibilities:

- Do you have a hobby?
- Do travel much?
- What do you want to do as a career?
- Are you passionate about a particular issue?
- Is your family interesting?
- Have you been fascinated by a book you have read, or a play or film you have seen?





The following section gives some suggestions about ways of approaching a selection of topics.



Do you have a hobby?

You might collect stamps; you might have thousands of Twitter followers; you might be a martial arts black belt; you might design and make your own clothes; you might write songs. The point about a hobby is that it is something you enjoy and find interesting.

By way of preparation, ask yourself the following questions:

- Why did I start this hobby?
- When did I start?
- How much time do I spend on my hobby?
- Why do I enjoy it?
- Is there anything I can take with me to help me introduce the topic?
- How else might I make my hobby interesting for the teacher/ examiner?

Then you can plan your introduction. You might do it in such a way that there are some obvious questions for the teacher/ examiner to ask in the discussion.





Best of luck!