

Delta mock examination 2 – Paper 2 | Key

Task 1

The text for this task is reproduced below. It is a part of a barrier test to select candidates who will follow an advanced course leading to a place at an English-medium university. The intention is to assess speaking ability.

Using your knowledge of relevant testing concepts, evaluate the effectiveness of the test for these learners in this situation.

Make a total of **six** points. You must include both **positive** and **negative** points.

Task 7 – Speaking

You have 15 minutes to prepare but you may not make or use any written notes.

You will be required to speak for 5 minutes, without interruption, on one of the following topics saying what or who you have chosen, describing the topic and giving three reasons for your choice. The options are:

1. A book or a film which changed my life.
2. An experience which changed my life.
3. A person who changed my life.

At the end of your presentation, the teacher will ask you 3 or 4 questions about what you have said.

Key:

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
<p>Topic matter is familiar to many learners at this level of maturity and may intrigue them.</p> <p>The learners are being asked to speak about something personal rather than abstract and theoretical which may enhance their performance.</p> <p>Because the three topics are parallel, they can be marked against the same set of criteria and this reduces the marking load and may increase reliability.</p>	<p>All three topics focus on the same kind of response so a learner who has little introspective ability may be disadvantaged.</p> <p>A wider choice of topic would be a fairer and more valid test.</p>
<p>The test has little content and predictive validity because it is not evident that the task is anything like one that the learners will be required to perform in their studies.</p>	<p>The task is subjectively marked and will need a careful set of criteria to produce reliable results. No mention is made of any criterion referencing.</p> <p>The learners may not be unacquainted with the criteria so won't know what is being assessed. This could reduce motivation and face validity.</p>
<p>This is a direct test of the ability to hold a long turn and that is something that participants in seminars and tutorials may well need to do.</p>	<p>The test requires careful handling of tense structures moving from past-tense narrative of the event, person or book to present perfect and present tense forms when considering current effects.</p> <p>If the test-takers are not alerted to this, the results may be unpredictable with only the strongest candidates conforming to the generic structures.</p>
<p>The rubric is clear and not too complicated but it is rather dense.</p> <p>It is obvious what skill is being tested and how.</p>	<p>The test is intimidating for many learners because speaking for five minutes about personal views to a stranger is not something with which some learners feel comfortable.</p>
<p>Some guidance is given concerning what and in what order to stage the talk. In this sense, the test is a</p>	<p>The prohibition of the use of any notes is a drawback because it advantages those with a good language</p>

<p>structured response item and can be marked on that criterion (among others).</p>	<p>memory and does not reflect speaking tasks in most university environments. For many, making notes is an aid to organising one's thought and the prohibition of that is inexplicable. Test-takers may become flustered if they lose the thread or may be intimidated by a perceived need to memorise what to say in 15 minutes.</p>
<p>The test is mostly concerned with one-way communication although the final interactive part will also provide some indication of interactional ability.</p>	<p>The vagueness about what the examiner may ask is slightly disconcerting. Disconcerted learners will not probably perform to their potential.</p>

Marking: 18 marks are available so award yourself:

2 marks for each positive or negative point you identified

1 mark for each time you have applied the point specifically to these learners

Task 2

The text for Tasks Two is reproduced on the following pages.

The extract is a free set of worksheets and a lesson plan published on the web. The stated topic, aims and target level are:

Topic: Climate change

Aims:

- To develop reading and speaking skills
- To introduce language to talk about the environment

Level: Intermediate and above

- a. Identify the purpose of the worksheets in relation to the purpose of the extract as a whole.
- b. Comment on the ways in which the worksheets combine.
- c. Identify a total of six key assumptions about language learning that are evident in the materials and explain why the author might consider these assumptions to be important for language learning. State which exercise, task or worksheet each assumption refers to.

Key:

(i)

Worksheet A:

This is a reading and sub-heading matching exercise. The task ensures a purpose for reading and the text itself needs no reordering.

The purposes are a) to raise awareness of the topic of the lesson (which is mostly maintained thereafter) and b) to introduce some key terms and vocabulary which can be explicated and practised by the teacher (or learners might be directed to a dictionary to encourage a modicum of autonomy). The terms introduced include:

climate change, greenhouse effect, global warming, weather change, international community

and other key terms are included in the text itself such as:

CO₂, sea levels, greenhouse gas emissions, methane, nitrous oxide etc.

Reading skills and, in particular the skill of skimming each paragraph for gist while reading the headings intensively to make the matches are being practised.

This is a process task focused on the lexis and whether or not the learners are correct in the matching activity is less important.

Worksheet B:

This is a quiz encouraging the activation of what the learners may already know about green behaviours and introducing a number they may never have thought of.

There are many examples of the phrases and lexemes to do with green issues which will be of later use in the lesson including, e.g.:

Save energy, greener (an unusual and specific comparative form), *polystyrene, polyester, environmentally friendly* and more.

The purpose is to introduce this topic-focused lexis in context.

This is an individual exercise, encouraging autonomy and developing the skill of noticing relevant lexis and phrases in the text, but some re-grouping into pairs to check responses might be expected.

The purpose does not include the outcomes (it makes little difference what one scores, providing the language has been encountered).

Worksheet C: This is a vocabulary activation exercise because learners have not encountered the names of many materials in the previous text so no reinforcement is possible. The purpose is to get the learners to compete to think of words in the 5 categories beginning with the same letter. It is rather difficult to do with any letter but impossible with some (such as Q or Z). The purpose is to activate the vocabulary of materials. It is a team game encouraging collaboration and the sharing of ideas.

Worksheet D: This is a reading, thinking and writing exercise purportedly from a web-based messaging site. Its purpose is to encourage intensive reading, comprehension of viewpoint and noticing of the ways in which personal opinion (exposition) is couched in terms of modality (*must* etc.), prefabricated language chunks (*I'm in favour*), imperative forms (*just think*) and so on.

Worksheet E: This presents some topics for discussion. Its purpose is to help the learners to decide on a topic to discuss rather than inventing one from scratch (rarely a successful enterprise). Not all of the eight topics lead naturally to a discussion. The purpose of the discussion which follows is summative to allow the learners to deploy the language and phrases they have encountered to carry out an exchange of views. It could easily be extended to an essay-writing task done at home or in a subsequent lesson.

(ii) Combining. You should find 6 things to say. Here are 8:

Worksheet A leads into the rest of the lesson insofar as the topic is clearly identified (and remains constant throughout). If done individually with learners then exchanging outcomes and views the exercise will also allow for the spoken production (and teacher shaping and correction) of many of the lexemes and phrases common to the topic for later use.

Worksheet B continues the theme and reinforces the lexis and language in Worksheet A setting it in a slightly different context (a quiz rather than an explanatory text) and focuses on personal reactions to the climate crisis.

Worksheet C is only tangentially connected to the rest of the lesson because it has no immediately obvious connection (although it does concern the materials which may be recycled). The outcomes of the task are not obviously used in the rest of the materials but may be connected to speaking activity to follow or to one the teacher designs to encourage the use of the lexis.

Worksheet D continues the topic but moves on from identifying green habits to expressing views about climate change and global heating. It may consolidate the messages in Worksheet B if learners are encouraged to surmise the recycling and energy-saving habits of the people whose views are expressed. Gonzalo, Tanya, Oliver and Mark are unlikely, for example, to be very concerned about green habits but the others may be.

Worksheet E is summative and links all the preceding language work (except that in Worksheet C) allowing the learners to practise what they have learned (or acquired) from the previous exercises.

(iii) You are asked to identify six assumptions only. Here are 16 to choose from:

Assumption 1: the writers believe that language, particularly the lexical content of the lesson must be presented and practised with a clear co-text. Context is assumed and no effort has been made to express it via, for example, the use of diagrams, maps or images.

Assumption 2: the writer believes that the topic will be of concern to many learners and that they will be motivated to learn how to speak, write and read about global climate issues.

Assumption 3: the writer believes that language may be acquired rather than consciously learned providing the input is rich enough relevant and has a clear communicative purpose. There is no explicit focus on the language in the texts and none on getting learners to notice salient features.

Assumption 4: the writer believes that a rising level of challenge (from reading and matching, Worksheet A, through reading and responding, Worksheet B, to reading and writing from a set of models, Worksheet D, to the final piecing of things together in a discussion task, Worksheet E) is an effective way of supporting learners in acquiring the language.

Assumption 5: the writer believes that learners will be supported by the teacher even without specific language-focus exercises because that is what teachers do.

Assumption 6: the writers believe that the ability correctly to deploy the language will grow out of noticing how it is used in context and that no further noticing techniques, other than the use of questions about habits is needed.

Assumption 7: the writers believe that personalising the language progressively through a) the use of a quiz (Worksheet B), b) an exercise which requires them to read and respond to the views of others, c) a requirement to write their own view briefly (both Worksheet D) and d) defend their point of view in a discussion (Worksheet E) is an aid to learning.

Assumption 7: the writers believe teamwork and a collaborate game-like exercise (Worksheet C) is an effective motivator and that this alone is reason enough for its inclusion.

Assumption 8: the writers believe that discussion exercises are an effective way to improve speaking skills and encourage the ability to take longer turns and respond to the initiations and views of others.

Assumption 9: the writers believe that language must be recycled often to aid memorisation (the Worksheets mostly cover the same ground and require the use of the same lexical resource).

Assumption 10: the writers believe that a variety of interaction patterns (individual work, pair work, reports back to the whole class, discussions, short written responses etc.) will maintain motivation and engagement levels.

Assumption 12: the writer believes that exercises which encourage the activation of mostly decontextualised single items (Worksheet C) are an effective way of recycling known lexis.

Assumption 13: the writer believes that they may be some truth in the assertion that one way we remember lexis is by the association of the first letters of the words we know (Worksheet C). Hence, tip-of-the-tongue effects when an item may be stimulated by knowing its first sound.

Assumption 14: the writers believe in integrating some (not all) skills. The first exercise requires two types of reading subskill (skimming and intensive reading), the second worksheet combines reading with making a personal response, Worksheet D requires intensive reading and writing and the final discussion exercise combines what has been learned in an oral context.

Assumption 15: the writer does not believe in the importance of presenting language and tasks in a colourful, engaging manner. The pages are monochrome and lack any images or graphics.

Assumption 16: the writer believes that controlled reading practice should precede writing or speaking exercises so Worksheet A has clear and checkable, right/wrong outcomes but later tasks are more open ended and personalised with few 'right' answers.

Marking: 42 marks are available so award yourself:

2 marks for each exercise purpose you identified

2 marks for each way you suggested the exercises combine

1 mark for each assumption you identified

1 mark for each time you explained what the assumption means (i.e., why they think this)

1 mark for each time you referred explicitly to the exercise which demonstrates the belief

Climate change

Worksheet A - Climate change – the evidence

Match the questions to the answers about climate change.

1. What is climate change?
2. What is the 'greenhouse effect'?
3. What is the evidence of global warming?
4. How will the weather change?
5. What is the international community doing?

- A. Sea levels have risen by 10 – 20 cm. This is due to the expansion of warming oceans. Temperature records show that the average temperature has increased by about 0.6°C in the 20th century.
- B. The Kyoto Protocol (1997) commits industrialised countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. It suffered a huge set back in 2001 when the USA, responsible for a quarter of global emissions, pulled out.
- C. The planet's climate is constantly changing but now scientists believe that the extreme changes taking place today are a result of human activity. The changes we see today may affect the stability of the climate on which much life on the planet depends.
- D. The term refers to the role played by the layer of gases, including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, which trap the heat from the sun in the earth's atmosphere. We need the layer to keep in some of the heat but now the concentration of gases, especially CO₂ is increasing and retaining more heat.
- E. It is difficult to predict, but we can expect more extreme weather conditions like floods, storms and heat waves. Scientists believe there will be more rain but also a higher risk of drought in inland areas

Worksheet B – How green are you?

Do the following quiz to find out how 'green' you are. Check the answers with your teacher afterwards. One point for every correct answer.

- 1) You are busy in your house tidying up going from room to room spending 5 to 10 minutes in each. Which is the best way to save energy?
 - a) Switch the lights on and off every time you move from room to room
 - b) Keep the lights on as you move about the house
- 2) You are hungry and want to bake a potato. Which method is 'greener'?
 - a) Put it in an electric oven for an hour
 - b) Quickly zap it in the microwave
- 3) You are thirsty so you go to a café to buy a drink. What do you choose?
 - a) A bottle of mineral water
 - b) A cup of coffee in a polystyrene cup
- 4) You need a new shirt / blouse and there are two that you like in the shop. You look at the label and see that one is made of 100% pure natural cotton and the other is 50% polyester. You want to be as environmentally friendly as you can. Which one do you choose?
 - a) The 100% cotton shirt
 - b) The 50% polyester shirt
- 5) Do you leave the tap on when you brush your teeth?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
- 6) As well as putting their health and the health of those around them in danger, smokers also put the environment in danger.
 - a) True
 - b) False
- 7) Which is the 'greenest' way to wash your clothes?
 - a) Machine wash in cold water
 - b) Hand wash in hot water
- 8) Which form of transport is better for the environment?
 - a) Driving by car
 - b) Flying by plane
- 9) When you go to the supermarket how do you take your shopping home?
 - a) In plastic carrier bags from the supermarket
 - b) In your own bag or basket
- 10) If you have the choice, how do you prefer to buy a cold drink in a café?
 - a) In a can
 - b) In a glass bottle

How many did you get right?

1-3	4-6	7-10
You have a lot of changes to make if you want to be greener.	Not bad! You know about how you can help the planet. You are quite green.	Well done! You have a very green head on your shoulders!

Worksheet C – Recycling Race

Work in teams to think of things to put in the recycling columns. The words must all begin with the letter your teacher gives you.

	Paper / Wood	Plastic	Metal	Glass	Organic
B	Book	Bin	Bicycle	Bulb	Banana

Global warming message board

- The idea for this activity was from a real message board on a website about the weather. Most of the views are adaptations of what real people think. This activity offers the students a look at the other side of the coin; some of the potential advantages of global warming! It should be used to provoke students' own ideas and thoughts on the subject and may trigger some strong reactions.
Give each student a copy of **Worksheet D**.

Worksheet D – Global warming message board

A message board on a weather website asked its readers to write in with their views on global warming and climate change. Here is a selection of their messages.

Gonzalo – I'm all in favour of global warming. I grow tropical plants so for me the warmer the weather is the better!

Tanya – In 20 years time the traditional British weather will be a thing of the past. We'll have a climate like the south of France. People will be healthier as they'll spend more time outdoors. Just think, dining al fresco in the summer months. It'll be great!

Luis – no one can tell me that global warming isn't happening. We've just had the hottest year on record! My sister lives in the north of Spain and she said that it is beach weather there and it's November. I mean it's not normal is it?

Kevin – When I was a boy we used to have heavy snow most years. Since the early 90s all we've had is a light dusting of snow. It must be due to global warming.

Ruth – You only have to switch on the news to see the crazy things the weather is doing. There are so many floods, hurricanes and droughts. It's the extreme weather conditions caused by global warming.

Oliver – There's no such thing as global warming. It's all media hype to brainwash people. If they told us the moon was made of cheese often enough people would believe it!

Mark – The world will never be the same again, but that's how it has always been. It changes constantly and nature and man can adapt to these changes. If we couldn't, human life on the planet would have finished years ago.

- Who do you agree with most?
- Who do you disagree with?
- What would you write to the message board? Put your message here.

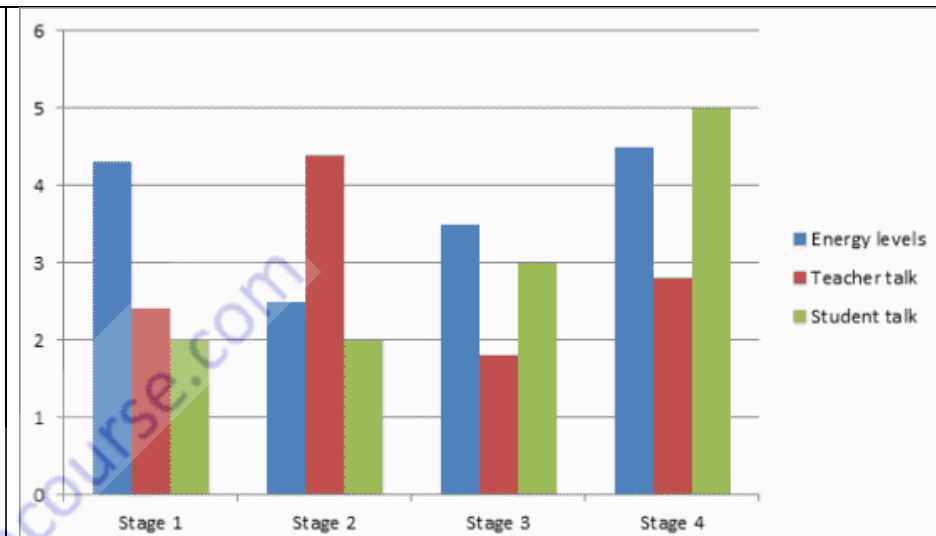
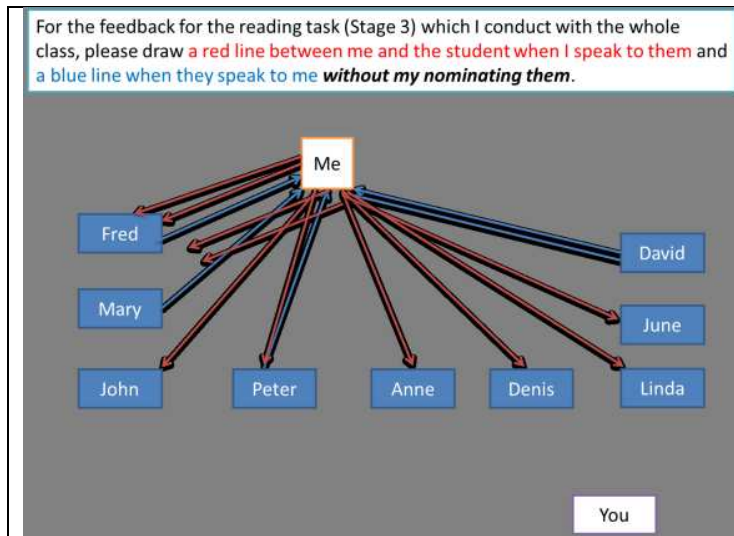
Worksheet E – Climate Change – Discussion Statements

Climate change is the most serious threat to our planet at the moment.
All countries should be forced to apply serious regulations to reduce carbon emissions.
Normal people can't do much to stop global warming.
Everybody should do whatever they can to save energy.
I am worried about climate change.
Climate change isn't as serious as people say. People like to worry about something!
There are simply too many people living on planet earth!
We are going to lose many animal species and areas of low land in the very near future because of global warming.

Task 3:

The following are illustrations from eltconcourse.com exemplifying two forms of observer feedback and one of learner feedback to a teacher.

Look at them carefully and answer the questions:



What we did	Enjoyment	I learned
I introduced the lesson with my own story	Loved it <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Hated it	Lots <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing
You worked together telling each other stories	Loved it <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Hated it	Lots <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing
We looked at the language of story telling (time and place markers)	Loved it <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Hated it	Lots <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing
You worked alone on your own story	Loved it <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Hated it	Lots <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing
You told your story three times to someone else	Loved it <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Hated it	Lots <input type="checkbox"/> _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Nothing

The following is purely suggestive but you should have identified **some** of the same points, albeit differently expressed.

Question 1:

What information is gathered by the three forms of feedback?

Key:

The first provides data on interaction patterns and individual involvement intended to alert the teacher to issues of equitable engagement of all learners.

The second is a subjective record how three factors (Energy levels, Teacher talk and Student talk are related. It is intended to alert the teacher to what the relationship is and how the teacher's behaviours and the task types as well as interaction patterns may affect motivation and commitment.

The third provides some information for the teacher from the learners, taking each of the particular lesson stages (it is closely applicable to one lesson only) and asking for two sets of data: how they responded emotionally to the material and how useful they thought it was.

The outcome may allow a judgement to be made about whether learners considered enjoyable activities to be the most useful or *vice versa* and could feed into the design of future lessons for these learners.

Question 2:

How reliable and useful would the data be?

The first chart is reasonable objective although identifying who is talking to whom in a busy classroom is not always easy. It does not, however, include any data on student-student interactions so is incomplete. The instruction to ignore nominated responses may be successful in identifying learners who may be dominating or silent.

The second chart depends on a number of very subjective factors and is not particularly reliable. It will provide some impressionistic data, however. How an observer **measures** energy levels is particularly problematic. It can do no more than provide speculative data.

The student-feedback form provides some data but is dependent on how the respondents choose to interpret the quantifiers: 'lots' for one learner may be little for another.

It also depends on how the learners interpret learning. For some, that may mean encountering, for others it may mean acquiring the ability to use an item.

Such a chart is difficult and time consuming (but not impossible) to convert to numeric data and they may reveal class-wide patterns of response that will help with planning.

Finally, learners may not respond entirely honestly to surveys, preferring to err on the positive side and say that they both enjoyed and learned a lot from the lesson. Some cultures will be more powerful than others in provoking this behaviour.

Question 3:

What are the essential reasons for getting either sort of feedback?

1. To investigate one's own teaching behaviour in an effort to identify weaknesses and develop greater mastery of teaching skills. Almost all teacher behaviour can be investigated by having a skilled and well-informed observer.
2. To investigate the effects that certain task types and interaction patterns can have on class energy levels, commitment and engagement. This is a materials and activity focused procedure rather than one focusing on the teacher's action.
3. To tailor activity types and materials to the preferences of the learners in a group. Although no groups are homogenous, knowing the general inclinations of the people in the room allow for more targeted, more successful and more enjoyable experiences.

Marking: 40 marks are available so award yourself:

2 marks for each correct point you made

A mark out of 5 (which you then double) for your view of how deep and complete your answer is. This is a subjective mark so try to be hard but fair on yourself