

Business English Advantage Series

Testing & Evaluation Guide

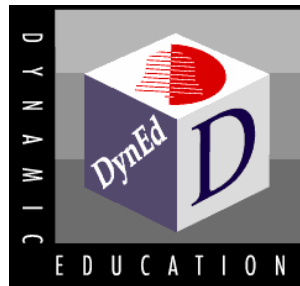


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Introduction

This guide has been prepared to facilitate the use of Mastery Tests to monitor and evaluate student progress within the core courses of DynEd's ***Business English Advantage Series***: *New Dynamic English*, *The Lost Secret*, *Dynamic Business English*, and *Functioning in Business*. Used together with the Placement Tests and Completion Percentage, the Mastery Tests help teachers determine the best pacing and level for each student, and to evaluate overall progress.

It is important to note that the Mastery Tests and DynEd Records Manager must be used together. Access to the Mastery Tests is controlled through the Records Manager which keeps study and test results for each student. Teachers must *unlock* the tests for each class or student. It is necessary to have a license and registration number to allow for the operation of the Records Manager, either onto a network, a personal computer, or on the Internet. Detailed instructions about how to use the Records Manager are in the Records Manager Guide which is in the Documents file that comes with every installation. Click on the Documents icon to access this file. The file is also accessible through the Help Menu in the program.

In addition to the Records Manager and the Mastery Tests, users are strongly recommended to refer to the Business English Advantage Series ***Instructor's Guide***, which includes useful suggestions about how best to use multimedia for language learning. The Instructor's Guide also includes the complete scope and sequence for the series. Instructor's Guides are also available (or soon will be) for each course in the series. These include transcripts, printable/copiable worksheets, listening task assignments, suggested homework, and follow-up and extension classroom activities.

We hope that these teaching tools will be useful and make your teaching experience with DynEd courseware even more successful. Any comments or suggestions from our customers are always welcome.

For further information on how to get a license for the DynEd Records Manager and/or Mastery Tests, please contact your DynEd distributor or <sales@dyned.com>.

Mastery Tests

DynEd's Mastery Tests are achievement tests designed to help teachers evaluate a student's progress and confirm student mastery of unit content. Access to the tests is controlled by the teacher through the Records Manager, where the teacher must 'unlock' a test before students can take it. Each test takes from six to twelve minutes, and consists of between 20 and 50 test items.



Test items are randomly selected from a database of relevant questions, not all of which are used in every test, to ensure variation for each student and from one test session to another. It is important to note that the question number shown for each test item in a test refers only to its place in the test sequence, and not to the question itself, which will be different for each student.

A student's test score is indicated at the bottom of the test screen, and is automatically recorded in the Student Study Records. The best possible score for each test is always 100. Generally, a score of 80 or more is an indication that a student has mastered the

target language of a unit sufficiently to move on to the next unit. For students who score less than 80, more study with the unit is advisable. Since all test items are taken directly from the lessons, students who have focused on all the lessons in a unit with any sustained effort should be able to score at least 80 within the allotted time, provided they have reasonable reading and motor skills. Generally the class average for a test should be 90 or greater. For grading purposes the scores might translate as follows:

96~100	= A or Excellent	90~95	= B or Good
85~89	= C or Satisfactory	80~84	= D or Unsatisfactory Pass
0~79	= F or Not Pass		

When to Take a Test

Generally, students should take a Mastery Test when they (or the teacher) feel they have sufficiently mastered the language in a unit. For most students this will generally be when they have a Completion Percentage of between 80~100 for each lesson in the unit. Of course, this varies according to the student's initial level and linguistic background, as noted in the section about Completion Percentages.

Once the teacher decides to have students take a Mastery Test, the teacher should use the Records Manager to unlock (grant access to) the particular test for the Unit to be tested. This will allow students to take the test. Once the test has been taken, teachers should not allow students to take the test again until enough time has elapsed to ensure that test items have not become memorized or overly familiar to the student to render the results useless for evaluative purposes. Generally, tests will automatically relock once they have been taken.

Test results for each student will be found in the Records Manager within each student's individual study records and within the Unit(s) tested. Students can also see their test scores in their own Student Records, which they can view at anytime when they are in the course.

Types of Test Questions

There are several types of questions in each Mastery Test, ranging from multiple choice, listening comprehension, sentence construction, to sentence ordering.

Lexical/Grammatical

This multiple choice type of question generally focuses on vocabulary or grammar points, such as which form of a verb to use. Students read a sentence and then indicate which of four choices correctly completes the sentence.

These questions are timed, and students have two chances to answer them. If students get the correct answer on their first try, they get a full score. If they get the correct answer on their second try, they get a partial score. The cumulative score is shown at the bottom of the test screen.

Genetic differences have helped us _____.

- ☐ to adapt
- ☐ to advise
- ☐ to cure
- ☐ to interfere

Listening Comprehension

A second type of question focuses on listening comprehension. For example, the student may hear a question or statement and have to answer or complete it with the correct choice.

In these types of questions, the student has only one chance to get the correct answer. If the answer is correct, the program will repeat the answer or give a rejoinder and go on. If the answer is incorrect, the program will indicate that it is wrong and then go on to the next question.

If a question times out, the question will be repeated once. If the question times out a second time, the program will move on to the next question.

- ☐ the development of vaccines.
- ☐ the adaptability of bacteria.
- ☐ the rapid spread of epidemics.

56

60

67

76

Number - 5/50 - Score 15 Time 07:03

Sentence Construction

In the third type of test item, students are asked to move a set of words into the correct places within a sentence. Though these tasks are difficult for someone who hasn't studied the lesson, in every case the sentences come directly from the lesson and will be familiar to students who have spent sufficient time in the unit. In fact, many of these questions come directly from the Focus Exercise lessons.

This _____ be _____
 _____ various substances into the body.

by can
 done injecting made

Number - 24/25 - Score 84 Time 03:19

In this type of test item, students have two chances to complete a sentence. If they are correct on their first attempt, they get full credit. If they are correct on their second attempt, they get partial credit. Students are also allowed to time out once before the program moves on to the next item.

Sentence Ordering

In New Dynamic English, Level 4, two of the Mastery Tests have sentence-ordering items. These come directly from the lessons, and should therefore be familiar to all students who have studied in depth the lessons from those units.

1 b → 2 → 3

a When injected into the body, the vaccine causes the immune system to create antibodies.

Some vaccines are made by using a weakened form of a virus.

c These antibodies will prevent or fight off infection.

In these items, students should read the sentences and then decide the order. In this example, sentence B comes first, followed by A and C.

These items test a student's ability to see how items within one sentence refer to items in other sentences.

Completion Percentage and Student Evaluation

The Completion Percentage is shown in the student records. It is a relative measure of the quality and depth of study in each unit of the course as compared to a baseline student with no prior English study at or above the placement level and whose native language is dissimilar to English. More importantly, the Completion Percentage score indicates how thoroughly a student has studied and practiced each lesson. Unlike most subjects, the study of language involves at least as much practice as study. Since language comprehension must be nearly instantaneous if oral communication is to take place, the learning of a second language should be approached as a skill to be acquired, and not merely an ‘understanding’ of grammar rules and vocabulary. Successful language learning therefore requires ‘overlearning’ and considerable focused practice.

To assist students in reaching the goal of communicative competence, the Completion Percentage score is an author-defined guideline which sets completion goals based on the following activities: sentence repetitions, sentence recording attempts, speech recognition attempts, use of the glossary, and the number of questions which are answered. The program counts each time a student listens to a sentence, uses the repeat button to repeat a sentence, uses the record button to record a sentence, consults the glossary, and answers a question. The accumulated data is analyzed and scored according to the length of the lesson, the number of sentences and questions in a lesson, and the kinds of activities which are appropriate in that lesson.

To reach the desired level of mastery of the materials provided within DynEd’s courses, and to attain an 80% or more Completion Percentage, students need to go through each part of each lesson several times in a variety of ways, as indicated in the Listening Focus tasks outlined in the Teacher’s Guide. These tasks direct students to preview each part of a lesson, to pay attention to different grammar and vocabulary areas, to consult the Glossary when needed, to practice saying the sentences, and to review each part of each lesson over a period of several study sessions. If this is done, the vocabulary and basic grammatical patterns will be successfully acquired (not just memorized short term), and the Completion Percentage will indicate that the student should be prepared to successfully take the Mastery Test for that lesson. A good score (85% or more) on the Mastery Tests confirms that the student is ready to move on.

Adjusting the Completion Percentage

The weightings for the Completion Percentage scores may be adjusted up or down by a teacher through the Records Manager if the target levels seem too high or low for the class average, or for students who have placed significantly higher than the average but are required to study at the same level.

For example, students who are false beginners with a considerable knowledge of English, but with limited listening practice, will be able to move through the course much faster than true beginners with little knowledge of the language. With such false beginners, teachers may find it advantageous to have the Completion Percentage rise more quickly than the baseline case. Similarly, for students whose native language background is close to English, they may be able to master the material more quickly than students whose language background is Japanese or Arabic. In addition, students who are taking part in frequent classes with other students in an intensive atmosphere may also move through the lessons at a faster pace than reflected in our default settings.

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The Completion Percentage figures, therefore, need to be interpreted and adjusted according to the circumstances. Once set, however, the Completion Percentage, together with the Mastery Test scores, will help to indicate which students are using their time effectively and which students are skimming through the material with little or no focus. These students may benefit from individual coaching and/or additional study materials.

The following guidelines may be useful in adjusting the Completion Percentage for your class:

Students with little or no prior English study at or above the placement level, from a language background dissimilar to English: 100%. This is the baseline setting.

Students with little or no prior English study at or above the placement level, from a language background similar to English: 70~80%. Adjust the initial setting to 75%. Then readjust the setting after one or two units have been completed and tested.

False beginners with a language background dissimilar to English: Adjust the initial setting to 60~70%. Then readjust as warranted.

False beginners with a language background similar to English: 50~60%. Adjust the initial setting to 50~60%. Then readjust as warranted.

Shuffler Level

Also shown in the student records, the Level refers to DynEd's proprietary 'shuffler' mechanism which operates to open or shut paths within a lesson. As a student answers questions, the Level is adjusted up or down, depending on the success rate of the student. The maximum Level is 3.0. When the level is in the range of 0-1, or 1-2, a lesson is only partially open, restricting a student's access to various questions and paths within the lesson. This initial restriction helps avoid overloading students with too much information or with tasks beyond their ability. As students become comfortable with the initial material and begin responding successfully, the Level automatically rises, and additional material, generally with more difficult grammar and vocabulary, is opened up to the students. Once the shuffler level reaches the range of 2-3, the lesson is fully open so long as the student stays within that range. Should the student begin to have trouble at a higher level, the Level will automatically fall, allowing students to focus on a limited selection of the material before opening up the rest of the lesson.

Please note that when students are studying at a higher shuffler level, their Completion Percentage score will increase at a slightly faster rate.

Summary

In response to requests from our users, the testing and monitoring tools described in this guide have been designed to assist with the evaluation of student progress.

The Mastery Tests help confirm that students have gone beyond a general understanding of the target language and short-term memorization to the next level of understanding and acquisition. By taking the Mastery Tests, students also gain valuable practice in taking timed language tests, which will help prepare them for standardized tests such as TOEFL, TOEIC and/or FCE exams.

The Completion Percentage is a relative measure of the quality and depth of study in each unit of the course as compared to a baseline student with no prior English study and whose native language is dissimilar to English. This baseline can be adjusted by the teacher to fit the circumstances of the class. The Completion Percentage allows the teacher to determine which students have applied themselves in each lesson, and is analogous to determining whether or not the student has done their 'homework' or completed their 'practice' as directed in the Teacher's Guide.

Used together with the Completion Percentage scores, the Mastery Test scores provide an indication of student progress and whether or not a student is ready to move ahead in the course or would benefit from further review. Any ranking of overall student performance should, however, take into account a variety of factors, such as classroom performance, written homework, and other forms of teacher evaluation. Language learning is accomplished by a variety of means, with DynEd's courseware being only one part of the overall learning environment.

True mastery of a language, at any level, is greatly affected by the level of opportunity students have to practice, particularly with other speakers. Sessions during which students are guided to personalize and extend the core language of the courses they have been studying -- whether one on one, or in classrooms, or in small group situations (perhaps even over the Internet through chat rooms or video conferencing), can significantly increase the efficiency and depth of student language acquisition.