Speaking Assessment: Scoring

A scoring rubric has been provided (page 3) for use with any of the speaking tasks included in the *Speak Now Testing Program*. The rubric is the same for all four levels of Speak Now, as it measures how well students have mastered the specific language points at *each level* of instruction—not on measuring learners' general English spoken proficiency in comparison with a native or otherwise fluent speaker.

The scoring rubric is divided into four levels:

3 – good to outstanding level of mastery
2 – moderate to good level of mastery
1 – low to moderate level of mastery
0 – little to no mastery

Teachers should read through and become familiar with the scoring rubric descriptors and, if desired, practice scoring with other instructors, in teams, to try to build a common understanding of what may constitute a grade of '3' in one case, or '2' in another, for example. Most importantly, the scoring rubric should be consistently used to assess the language practiced in the class, and not necessarily to measure language outside of this range, as this may dilute the consistency and reliability of the assessment across classes or across levels.

Scoring Guidelines

Once a student has been assessed using one or more of the speaking assessment tools listed above, and the instructor has marked the student's performance with the scoring rubric, the scores may be converted to grades if desired. The following formula is recommended to ensure that pronunciation and intonation do not add an unfair advantage or disadvantage to overall score:

Write the learner's *average* score for each category in the first blank of each line:

Pronunciation and Intonation: _____ x .10 =   _____

Lexical Control: _____ x .30 =   _____

Grammatical Accuracy: _____ x .30 =   _____

Spoken Fluency: _____ x .30 =   _____

Average Rubric Score: _____

Multiply each score by the numbers above, and add the final number from each category together to produce an **average rubric score** for that student.

Converting Scores to Grades

If instructors wish to convert this average rubric score into a percentage grade, they may wish to use an equivalency chart such as this one:

Average Rubric Score	Letter Grade Conversion	Logical Percentage Equivalent
2.5–3.0	A	95%
2.2–2.4	B	85%
1.8–2.1	C	75%
1.4–1.8	D	65%
0–1.3	F	55%

Converting Scores from Multiple Assessments to Grades

If instructors wish to combine a speaking assessment score together with a score from the written/listening-based paper tests, simply add the two equivalent percentage scores together and divide by two to determine the average grade.

Example

Speaking assessment score: 75%

Paper-based test score: 90%

Average score: 82.5%

If instructors wish to combine a speaking assessment score together with a score from the written/listening-based paper tests, simply add the two equivalent percentage scores together and divide by two to determine the average grade.

Speak Now 1–4: Scoring Rubric

Rating	Pronunciation and Intonation	Lexical Control	Grammatical Accuracy	Spoken Fluency
3	Pronunciation is comprehensible with little to no strain on the listener to understand. Speaker consistently uses appropriate intonation.	Speaker uses a wide range of vocabulary, both in terms of individual words and lexical phrases. Lexis is used appropriately for the function and situation.	Speaker makes few to very few grammatical errors, and uses a wide range of structures appropriately. Speaker can self-correct with little effort.	Speech is smooth and clear. Speaker is able to connect and express ideas coherently and in a steady flow, with very little hesitation.
2	Pronunciation is mostly comprehensible, with little to moderate strain on the listener to understand. Speaker uses appropriate intonation at least half of the time.	Speaker uses a moderately wide range of vocabulary, both in terms of individual words and lexical phrases. Lexis is used appropriately for the function and situation at least half of the time.	Speaker sometimes makes grammatical errors, and uses a moderate range of structures appropriately at least half of the time. Speaker can sometimes self-correct.	Speech is moderately smooth and clear. Speaker is able to connect and express ideas coherently and in a steady flow at least half of the time, with little to moderate hesitation.
1	Pronunciation is somewhat comprehensible, but with a moderate to considerable amount of strain on the listener to understand. Speaker's intonation causes frequent problems in intelligibility.	Speaker uses a somewhat narrow range of vocabulary, both in terms of individual words and lexical phrases. Lexis is used appropriately for the function and situation less than half of the time.	Speaker often makes grammatical errors, and uses a limited range of structures appropriately less than half of the time. Speaker can occasionally self-correct.	Speech is somewhat smooth and clear. Speaker is able to connect and express ideas coherently and in a steady flow less than half of the time, with moderate to frequent hesitation.
0	Pronunciation is mostly incomprehensible, with a considerable amount of strain on the listener to understand. Speaker's intonation causes major problems in intelligibility.	Speaker demonstrates a command of very little vocabulary, both in terms of individual words and lexical phrases. Lexis is rarely used appropriately for the function and situation.	Speaker demonstrates little to no command of grammatical structures. Speaker can very rarely self-correct if at all.	Speech is not at all smooth and clear. Speaker is unable to connect and express ideas coherently and in a steady flow most of the time, with frequent hesitation.