

NEW
EDITION

DUOLINGO 2026

ENGLISH TEST

EXPRESS GUIDE

By DETPRACTICE.COM

*Your 30-Minute DET Format & Strategy Guide ”
Fully Updated with New Question Types*



Duolingo English Test 2026 Express Guide

Your fast-track guide to mastering the DET. This handbook distills everything you need to know into clear, actionable tips — from time-saving strategies to scoring essentials.

Table of Contents

Duolingo English Test 2026 Express Guide	1
About the DET	3
Test Rules: Key Points	3
Environment Requirements	3
During the Test	3
ID Requirements	3
Score Structure	4
Overall Score	4
Subscores	4
Score Comparison (abridged)	4
Question Types Overview	5
Reading Tasks	5
Listening Tasks	5
Writing Tasks	5
Speaking Tasks	6
Reading Tasks	6
Read and Select	6
Key Strategies	7
Fill in the Blanks	7
Key Strategies	7
Read and Complete	8
Key Strategies	8
Interactive Reading	9
Sub-Questions:	9
Key Strategies	11

Listening Tasks	12
Listen and Type	12
Key Strategies	12
Interactive Listening	13
Part 1: Listen and Complete	13
Part 2: Listen and Respond	14
Part 3: Summarize the Conversation	14
Key Strategies	15
Writing Tasks	15
Write About the Photo	15
Key Strategies	16
Interactive Writing	16
Key Strategies	17
Writing Sample	17
Key Strategies	18
Speaking Tasks	18
Speak About the Photo	18
Key Strategies	19
Read, Then Speak	19
Key Strategies	20
Interactive Speaking	20
Key Strategies	21
Speaking Sample	21
Key Strategies	22
Scoring Criteria	23
Writing Criteria	23
Speaking Criteria	23
Practice Resources	24
DISCLAIMER	24

About the DET

The Duolingo English Test is an online English proficiency exam accepted by thousands of institutions worldwide. Take it anytime, anywhere. The test evaluates your listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills through adaptive technology — questions adjust in difficulty based on your performance.

Test Duration: Approximately 1 hour

Score Range: 10–160 (in 5-point increments)

Results: Certified within 48 hours

Test Rules: Key Points

Environment Requirements

- Quiet, private, well-lit room—you must be alone
- Stable internet connection (wired recommended)
- Computer/laptop with front-facing camera, microphone, and speakers
- Secondary smartphone camera to record your keyboard and screen, scan your ears, and the room

During the Test

- Keep your face, ears, and mouth visible at all times
- Do not wear headphones or earbuds
- Do not look away from the screen (except when typing)
- Do not use external assistance (software, dictionaries, other devices, or people)
- Do not take notes or record questions
- Stay in full-screen mode with the cursor inside the test window

ID Requirements

- Present physical ID only (no photocopies or digital images)

- **India:** Passport only
- **China:** Passport or government photo ID
- **Others:** Check accepted IDs at englishtest.duolingo.com/ids

Warning: Violating test rules may result in uncertified results, invalidation, or permanent ban.

Score Structure

Overall Score

Ranges from 10 to 160, aligned with the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference).

Subscores

Individual (4): Listening, Reading, Speaking, Writing

Integrated (4): Literacy (R+W), Conversation (S+L), Comprehension (R+L), Production (S+W)

Score Comparison (abridged)

DET	IELTS	TOEFL iBT
160	8.5–9	120
145	7.5	113–116
130	7	98–103
120	6.5	87–92
105	6	70–75
90	5	53–58

Question Types Overview

Reading Tasks

Task	Time	Frequency	Adaptive
Read and Select	5 sec/word	15–18 words	Yes
Fill in the Blanks	20 sec/sentence	6–9 sentences	Yes
Read and Complete	3 min/passage	3–6 passages	Yes
Interactive Reading	7–8 min/set	2 sets (6 questions each)	Yes

Listening Tasks

Task	Time	Frequency	Adaptive
Listen and Type	1 min/sentence	6–9 sentences	Yes
Interactive Listening	6:30 + 75 sec	2 sets	Yes

Writing Tasks

Task	Time	Frequency	Adaptive
Write About the Photo	1 min	3 photos	No
Interactive Writing	5 min + 3 min	1 set (2 parts)	No
Writing Sample	5 min (30 sec prep)	1	No

Speaking Tasks

Task	Time	Frequency	Adaptive
Speak About the Photo	90 sec (20 sec prep)	1	No
Read, Then Speak	90 sec (20 sec prep)	1	No
Interactive Speaking	35 sec/question	6 questions	Yes
Speaking Sample	3 min (30 sec prep)	1	No

Reading Tasks

Read and Select

Time: 5 seconds per word | Subscore: Reading

Determine whether each displayed word is a real English word. Click "Yes" or "No" for each word.

🕒 0:04 for this question

✕

Is this a real English word?

files

✓
Yes

✕
No



Key Strategies

- Click "Yes" if you recognize the word or have seen it before
- Click "No" if the word looks unfamiliar
- Sound out the word silently to help decide
- Watch for fake words that look similar to real ones
- Don't overthink—trust your initial instinct

Fill in the Blanks

Time: 20 seconds per sentence | Subscore: Reading

Complete a sentence by typing the missing letters of an unfinished word.

 0:19 for this question 

Complete the sentence with the correct word

To prevent them from spoiling, perishable goods must be transported from the production site to retail outlets.

CONTINUE

Key Strategies



- Read the entire sentence first to understand context
- Look for clues: synonyms, antonyms, or common phrases

- Consider the grammatical role (noun, verb, adjective, adverb)
- Spelling must be exact—double-check before submitting
- Use word roots and common patterns to guide your answer

Read and Complete

Time: 3 minutes per passage | Subscore: Reading

Complete multiple unfinished words within a paragraph by typing the missing letters.

 2:52 for this question 

Complete the text with the correct words

How to Form a Nonprofit Organization

In order to form a nonprofit organization, you must file articles of incorporation with the state where you live. The

a r t i of i n c o r p serve a a legal d o c u that

e s t a b the n a of y o organization, i purpose, a the

n u m of d i r e and o f f i it w i have. There i a filing

f , but i is t y p i minimal. Once the articles of incorporation are filed, your

organization is legally able to operate as a nonprofit in that state.

CONTINUE

Key Strategies

- Read the entire paragraph first, including title and complete sentences
- Start with the easiest words you can identify quickly
- Use surrounding context and grammatical clues
- Unfinished words are never adjacent or proper nouns
- Leave difficult words for last; return with fresh perspective

Interactive Reading

Time: 7–8 minutes for 6 questions | Subscore: Reading

Answer a series of questions about a single passage. The passage progressively reveals more content.

Sub-Questions:

1. Complete the Sentences

Select correct words from options to fill blanks in the first half of a text.

🕒 7:32 for 6 questions

×

PASSAGE

The rainforest is an exciting place, ¹ _____ of many diverse plants and animals. These tropical forests are usually located near the Earth's equator, where the climate is warm with high rainfall ² _____ the year.

Most rainforests are ³ _____ into four layers, and each layer houses unique types of insects, plants, and animals. The topmost layer is called the emergent layer, where trees as tall as skyscrapers ⁴ _____ for the sun. Beneath this is the canopy layer. This layer is basically a roof, ⁵ _____ by tree branches and leaves that grow closely to one another. This layer is home to most of the rainforest

Select the best option for each missing word

1 Select a word ^

dreaming

knowing

full

certain

proud

5 Select a word v

CONTINUE

2. Complete the Passage

Choose the best sentence to connect the first and second halves of the text.

⌚ 8:00 for 5 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies.

Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust

Select the best sentence to complete the passage

- ☐ The state machine describes how the system responds to each input and how it transitions from one state to another.
- ☐ PID, or Proportional-Integral-Derivative, is a commonly used control system in engineering to enhance system performance.
- ☐ Input-output equipment are essential parts of digital systems, and it is important to understand how they work.
- ☐ The greater the proportional gain, the stronger the control action will be for a given error.

CONTINUE

3. Highlight the Answer (×2)

Click and drag to highlight the text that answers a specific question.

⌚ 8:00 for 4 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies. Error reduction in control systems can be achieved through various methods, one of which is feedback control. Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust itself to correct this discrepancy. This adjustment can involve regulating factors such as temperature, pressure, or flow rate to bring the system back to the desired state. By continuously monitoring and adjusting, feedback

Highlight text in the passage to answer the question below

What are some factors that can be regulated in feedback control?

Click and drag to highlight text

CONTINUE

4. Identify the Idea

Select the main idea from multiple options.

8:00 for 2 questions

PASSAGE

Control systems are an essential part of various applications, ranging from home appliances to industrial operations. These systems contain different components working together to manage, regulate, and maintain desired conditions in a process or environment. However, just like any other system, control systems are also subject to various types of errors. An error in a control system is the difference between the desired value and the actual value. Reducing errors in control systems is crucial for allowing the system to run efficiently and safely while ensuring that the desired conditions are met with minimal discrepancies. Error reduction in control systems can be achieved through various methods, one of which is feedback control. Feedback control is a technique where the system measures the actual value and compares it with the desired value. If there is a difference between these two values, an error signal is generated, prompting the system to adjust itself to correct this discrepancy. This adjustment can involve regulating factors such as temperature, pressure, or flow rate to bring the system back to the desired state. By continuously monitoring and adjusting, feedback

Select the idea that is expressed in the passage

☐ The controller can adjust the output as needed by using proportional, integral, and derivative parameters to maintain stability and precision of the system.

☐ Feedback control is a technique used to reduce errors in control systems by monitoring and adjusting factors to bring the system back to the desired state.

☐ Engineers must calculate the error, or the difference between the set point and actual temperature, and adjust the heating source accordingly.

☐ Control systems generally function without need for error

CONTINUE

5. Title the Passage

Choose the most suitable title for the entire text.

1:27 for this question ×

PASSAGE

Learning the local language when traveling to new places can have a profound impact on the overall experience. By demonstrating respect for local cultures and people, language use not only reflects a traveler's genuine interest in the country but also helps forge meaningful connections with the residents. In return, many residents appreciate the effort and welcome the traveler more openly, fostering cultural exchange that enriches both the traveler and the local community. Moreover, understanding local languages can make the traveler feel more comfortable. The ability to comprehend signs and public transportation messages contribute to a less stressful journey. One might argue that learning a local language is unnecessary, since other widely-spoken languages are prevalent in many destinations. However, this reliance on widely-spoken languages restricts the breadth of experiences available to travelers and may result in missed opportunities for deeper cultural connection. Additionally, while language learning may be perceived as time-

Select the best title for the passage

☐ Language Use across Age Groups

☐ Top Travel Destinations

☐ The Different Types of Translation Apps

☐ Enriching Experiences Through Language

☐ The Use of Public Transportation

CONTINUE

Key Strategies

- Each question reveals more about the passage—use accumulated knowledge

- **For Highlight the Answer, select only the relevant portion, not too much**
- **Main idea questions require understanding the whole text, not just details**
- **Manage time carefully—don't spend too long on any single question**
- **Read new sections more carefully than previously seen content**

Listening Tasks

Listen and Type


Time: 1 minute per sentence | Subscore: Listening

Listen to a sentence (up to 3 plays) and type exactly what you hear.

⌚ 0:40 for this question

×

Type what you hear



REPLAYS LEFT: 1

My artistic journey began when I was young.

CONTINUE

Key Strategies

- **First listen: capture main content words (nouns, verbs)**
- **Second/third listen: fill in function words and verify**

- Pay attention to punctuation and capitalization
- Watch for connected speech patterns (linking, reduction)
- Leave time to proofread spelling and punctuation

Interactive Listening

Time: 6:30 for Parts 1–2, 75 seconds for Part 3 | Subscore: Listening + Writing

Engage with an audio scenario through three connected tasks.

Part 1: Listen and Complete

Listen to a scenario introduction and fill in blanks about key information.

- Play audio as many times as needed
- Spelling doesn't need to be perfect, but meaning must be accurate
- Don't write too much or too little

🕒 4:43 for 9 questions



Who are you completing the research project with?

I'm completing it with my professor.

What are you unsure about?

I'm unsure about what to do.

Why don't you ask your professor for help?

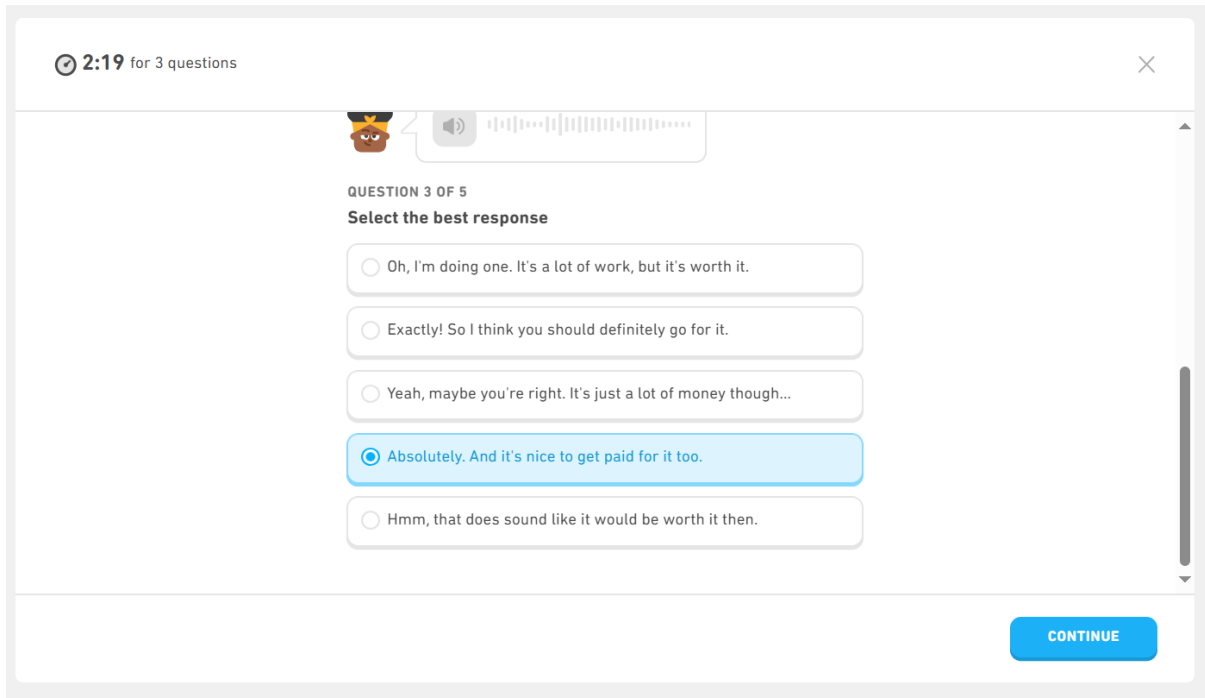
Because I'm not sure they will be able to help.

Who do you ask for advice?

Part 2: Listen and Respond

Select the best responses in a conversation with another speaker.

- Choose responses matching the scenario and conversation flow
- Wrong answers show corrections—use them for next responses
- Topics include: asking for help, giving advice, planning, making requests



The screenshot shows a digital interface for a listening comprehension exercise. At the top left, a clock icon indicates a time limit of 2:19 for 3 questions. A close button (X) is in the top right. Below the timer, there is a speaker icon and a progress bar. The main content area displays 'QUESTION 3 OF 5' and the instruction 'Select the best response'. Five radio button options are listed: 'Oh, I'm doing one. It's a lot of work, but it's worth it.', 'Exactly! So I think you should definitely go for it.', 'Yeah, maybe you're right. It's just a lot of money though...', 'Absolutely. And it's nice to get paid for it too.' (which is selected with a blue highlight), and 'Hmm, that does sound like it would be worth it then.' A 'CONTINUE' button is located at the bottom right of the question area.

Part 3: Summarize the Conversation

Write a brief summary of the conversation from Part 2.

- Include: main topic, your role, key problem/question, and outcome
- Use full sentences (not bullet points)
- Can write in first person ("I...") or third person ("Two students...")

⌚ 1:13 to write

×

Write a summary of the conversation you just had

Your response

CONTINUE

Key Strategies

- Listen carefully to the scenario—it sets context for everything
- Save enough time in Parts 1–2 to write a quality summary
- Use information from earlier questions to help with later ones
- For the summary, explain situation, main ideas, and conclusion

Writing Tasks

Write About the Photo

Time: 1 minute per photo | Subscore: Writing

Describe what you see in a photo displayed on screen.

🕒 1:00 for this question



Write a description of the image below for 1 minute



Your response

CONTINUE

Key Strategies

- Go beyond simple labeling—describe details, actions, atmosphere
- Avoid long, generic introductions
- Write in complete sentences with proper grammar and punctuation
- Use descriptive vocabulary (adjectives, adverbs)
- If unsure about objects, describe their appearance or function

Interactive Writing

Time: 5 minutes (Part 1) + 3 minutes (Part 2) | Prep: 30 seconds | Subscore: Writing

Write a response to a prompt, then answer a follow-up question on the same topic.

3:00 to write

Write about the topic below for 5 minutes

Describe the last time you did something that challenged you. What did you do? What did you learn from the experience?

Write a follow-up response for 3 minutes

Discuss how this challenging experience required you to develop or use problem-solving skills. Describe the strategies you used and how they helped you approach this task.

Your response

CONTINUE



Key Strategies

- Use the 30-second prep time to plan your main points
- Part 2 asks about something different from Part 1—don't repeat yourself
- Both parts are scored together for overall quality
- Demonstrate range: use varied vocabulary and sentence structures
- Proofread for spelling and grammar before time runs out

Writing Sample

Time: 5 minutes | Prep: 30 seconds | Subscore: Writing

Write about a topic asking for your personal experience or opinion. *Shared with institutions.*

 **4:58** to write 

Write about the topic below for 5 minutes

Due to the invention of cell phones, people can communicate via text messages. Describe the ways texting has changed how we communicate.

Your response

CONTINUE

Key Strategies


- **Remember: university admissions officers will read this**
- **Structure your response: introduction, body, conclusion**
- **Support opinions with specific examples or reasoning**
- **Use the 30 seconds to outline key points**
- **Save time at the end to check spelling, grammar, and punctuation**


Speaking Tasks

Speak About the Photo

Time: 90 seconds | Prep: 20 seconds | Subscore: Speaking


Describe a photo displayed on screen. Photos show real people, animals, or scenes (not AI-generated).


 **0:19** to prepare



Prepare to speak about the image below

You will have 90 seconds to speak



 **RECORD NOW**


Key Strategies

- **During prep: identify main subject, setting, and action**
- **Start with a general overview, then add specific details**
- **Use the full 90 seconds—the more you say, the more you demonstrate**
- **If you don't know a word, describe what it looks like or does**
- **Include logical inferences about context or mood**

Read, Then Speak

Time: 90 seconds | Prep: 20 seconds | Subscore: Speaking

Read a written prompt asking about personal experiences or opinions, then speak your response.


 **0:19** to prepare ×

Prepare to speak about the topic below

You will have 90 seconds to speak

Describe a time you worked with other people on something.

- What did you collaborate on?
- Who did you collaborate with?
- Do you enjoy collaborating with others?
- Why or why not?

 **RECORD NOW**

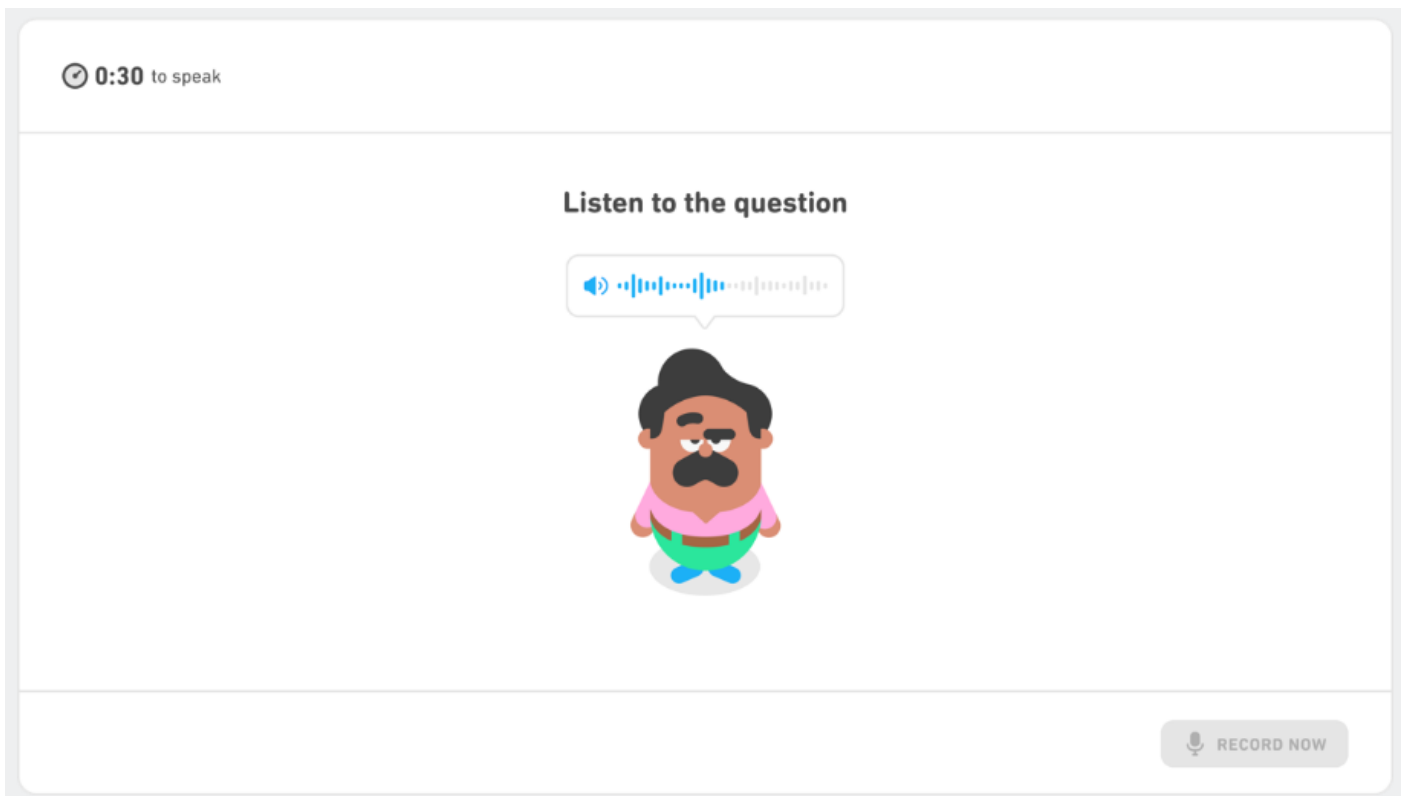
Key Strategies

- Use prep time to identify key points you want to address
- Follow any bullet points provided in the prompt
- Speak naturally—don't force complex vocabulary unnaturally
- Maintain steady pace; brief pauses to think are acceptable
- The prompt stays visible during recording

Interactive Speaking

Time: 35 seconds per question | 6 questions total | Subscore: Speaking

Have a spoken conversation with a Duolingo character who asks questions on two topics (3 questions each).



Key Strategies

- Listen carefully—you can only hear each question once
- Questions adapt based on your performance
- Click "Record Now" before speaking
- If you don't understand fully, say something relevant to the topic
- Speak confidently even if answers aren't perfect
- Use the full time to demonstrate your speaking ability

Speaking Sample

Time: 3 minutes | Prep: 30 seconds | Subscore: Speaking

Speak about a personal experience or opinion topic. *Video shared with institutions.*

🕒 0:29 to prepare

**Prepare to speak about the topic below**

You will have 3 minutes to speak

Imagine that your supervisor has offered you a choice between two positions. One consists of tasks that you do really well, while the other would be more challenging and involve learning new skills. Which do you prefer? Why? Give specific reasons for your answer.

 RECORD NOW

Key Strategies

- **This is your longest speaking task—pace yourself**
- **Plan main points during the 30-second prep**
- **Speak as long as you have relevant things to say**
- **The prompt stays on screen—reference it if needed**
- **Remember: admissions officers will watch this video**
- **Maintain natural tone and eye contact with the camera**

Scoring Criteria

Writing Criteria

Criterion	What It Measures
Content	Relevance, completeness, appropriate style, development of ideas
Discourse Coherence	Clarity, cohesion, logical progression, structure (intro/conclusion, paragraphs)
Grammar	Range of structures, accuracy, punctuation
Lexis	Vocabulary diversity, sophistication, accuracy, spelling

Speaking Criteria

Criterion	What It Measures
Content	Relevance, completeness, appropriate style, development
Discourse Coherence	Clarity, cohesion, logical progression
Fluency	Speed, natural pauses, minimal fillers/repetition
Grammar	Range and accuracy of structures
Lexis	Vocabulary diversity, sophistication, appropriate word choice
Pronunciation	Intelligibility, individual sounds, word/sentence stress, intonation

Practice Resources

Comprehensive Question Bank: 18,000+ practice questions

→ www.detpractice.com/practice

Full-Length Mock Tests: Authentic exam conditions with instant analysis

→ www.detpractice.com/mock-exam

AI-Powered Assessment: Instant feedback with personalized strategies

→ www.detpractice.com/correction

DISCLAIMER

All demo questions and sample materials in this handbook are independently developed for illustrative and practice purposes only. These materials are not actual test items from the Duolingo English Test and have no affiliation with Duolingo or the official Duolingo English Test. Any similarity to actual test questions is purely coincidental. Duolingo and Duolingo English Test are registered trademarks of their respective owners.

Copyright © 2026 DETPractice.Com All Rights Reserved.