

# Teacher Support Pack

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*Guide to Using the CELPIP Practice Tests*

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# Introduction

The Guide to Using the CELPIP Practice Tests provides suggestions, strategies, and activities to help instructors in a range of teaching scenarios create lessons based on the practice tests.

The first section, **Common CELPIP Prep Scenarios**, discusses three common preparation course situations: a one-time workshop, an intensive course with lessons in rapid succession, and a longer course with twice-weekly sessions. Of course, every prep class is different, and yours may not align perfectly with any of the scenarios presented, but you are nonetheless sure to recognize challenges and strategies relevant to your specific situation as you read through these discussions.

In the **Lesson & Activity Suggestions** section, you will find a variety of suggested classroom activities focused on the use of one or more CELPIP practice tests. Through these supplementary activities, learners will develop strategies for approaching different types of test questions and making the most of their preparation and response time. They will have opportunities to practice using and understanding English, and to consider responses from a rater's point of view. Timed and untimed, solo and pair/group, and peer editing activities are included, and modifications and follow-up are suggested where applicable.

Finally, you may use the **Teacher Checklist**—a separate document accompanying this guide—to help you in your preparations for class. This is a convenient means of ensuring that you have given advance consideration to the most important aspects of your course.

**NOTE:** *During your preparation before the first class, determine when and how you will use each part of the practice test(s), then advise students to avoid completing this test content unless explicitly instructed to do so.*

## Practice Tests

The scenarios, schedules, and activities in this document are all framed around the in-class use of one (or multiple) CELPIP practice tests. See the **CELPIP Online Tests** section of the **Introduction** document in this package for specific information on accessing and navigating these tests.

In addition, please note that the activities outlined in this document assume the availability of a computer lab and the use of **online** practice tests. If you are using one of the two **paper** practice tests provided in this package, you will likely need to revise your activities and classroom management accordingly.

# Common CELPIP Prep Scenarios

## Scenario 1: One-Time Workshop

**Workshop length:** 4–5 hours

**Number of sessions:** 1

In this scenario, you are facilitating a workshop. Workshops shorter than four hours are not recommended as you will likely want to have the participants work through a full practice test, either all at once or in sections. For a CELPIP-General practice test, this will take roughly three hours. For a CELPIP-General LS practice test, this will take just over an hour and thus you will need to focus more on filling in the remaining workshop time.

Ensure that you prepare carefully in order to make the most of your activity and instruction time. A workshop of this length doesn't allow you to get into great detail about every topic, or to offer much (if any) one-on-one time to each participant. You will need to focus on ensuring that participants learn the most important information about the test and get a full sense of the skills they will need to develop while preparing for it. You may consider providing some information as handouts or electronically, rather than trying to fit it all into your workshop. You may have to be strict about time when it comes to activities, to ensure that you get through everything in your lesson plan.

### Things to Consider

→ Which practice test will you use?

- Determine whether you will be using a CELPIP-General (all four skills) or CELPIP-General LS (just Listening and Speaking) practice test.
- Go to the CELPIP online bookstore ([celPIP.ca/store](http://celPIP.ca/store)) and choose the practice test in advance.
- Make sure that everyone in the workshop (including yourself) has access to the test. Determine whether participants will need to purchase it separately or whether the test will be provided as part of the workshop registration.
- Familiarize yourself with the content: audio and text passages, transcripts, answer choices, and potential challenges in the passages and the questions.

→ Which supplementary discussion topics and activities will you choose?

- Choose the activities in advance.
- Decide on the order and timing of the activities.
- Make sure you can give clear step-by-step instructions for each.
- Collect/print/copy any necessary materials.

→ Will you give a pre-workshop assignment? If so, take the following steps.

- Contact the class in advance with clear assignment instructions.
- Consider how the assignment will be incorporated into the workshop. (Will participants exchange responses with a partner and give feedback? Will you facilitate an editing or error correction activity?)
- Decide what you will do if someone forgets their assignment.

→ If you decide to assign homework, take the following steps.

- Decide whether the homework will be optional or mandatory.
- Write clear instructions in advance.
- Decide when and how the homework will be submitted.
- Let the participants know when to expect their feedback.

## Scenario 2: Short Intensive Course

**Course length:** 20 hours (1 week) **Lesson length:** 4 hours (including break) **Lessons per week:** 5

In this scenario, you are teaching daily sessions of a CELPIP preparation course over a short stretch of time. Using the above times as a guide, you will likely choose to work through more than one practice test, though having the class complete a full one *each day* would probably be excessive. It would leave very little time for instruction, discussion of the answers to receptive skills questions, or opportunities to practice understanding and using English. It would also create the mistaken impression that completing practice tests is the best method of achieving one's desired results on the CELPIP Test, whereas, in fact, excessive focus on the content of practice tests is much more likely to have a detrimental effect on a test taker's performance.

### Things to Consider

→ Which practice test(s) will you use?

- Determine whether you will be using a CELPIP-General (all four skills) or CELPIP-General LS (just Listening and Speaking) practice test.
- Go the CELPIP online bookstore ([celPIP.ca/store](http://celPIP.ca/store)) and choose the practice test in advance.
- Make sure that everyone in the course (including yourself) has access to the test. Determine whether students will need to purchase it separately or whether the test will be provided as part of the course registration.
- Familiarize yourself with the content: audio and text passages, transcripts, answer choices, and potential challenges in the passages and the questions.

→ How will you structure your course? There are many possibilities; here are two examples:

- **EXAMPLE 1:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Overview and practice test	Focus: Listening	Focus: Reading	Focus: Writing	Focus: Speaking

- **EXAMPLE 2:**

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Complete first practice test	Review and activity day	Complete second practice test	Review and activity day	Complete third practice test and/or wrap-up

→ How will you facilitate one-on-one time with students? Students in an intensive course will expect this. **Remember to have them submit material (probably writing and/or speaking samples) in advance so you will have time to check it and make notes.**

- Decide how you will occupy the rest of the class during these sessions. The activity in which they are engaged needs to be one that allows for coming and going.
- Depending on the size of your class, it may make more sense to spread these one-on-one sessions over a few days.

→ How will you adapt to unexpected circumstances?

- You may want to leave some “free space” in your lesson plans to be filled in before each day’s lesson, rather than making full lesson plans further in advance.
- You may want to distinguish between definite and tentative parts of your lesson plans, to allow for adjustment as the course progresses.
- You may want to prepare more activities than you think you will need: this way, you will be able to fill any unexpected extra time, swap out activities if necessary, etc.

→ What will you assign for homework?

- Plan each day’s homework in advance.
- Give clear instructions and deadlines for all assignments.
- Ensure that the purpose of all homework is clear both to you and to the students. Will it be used in class in a follow-up activity? Will you be discussing it with the student one-on-one? What specific skills is it helping the student to develop? How is it related to the CELPIP Test?

## Scenario 3: Longer Course with Twice-Weekly Sessions

**Course length:** 20 hours (5 weeks)

**Lesson length:** 2 hours

**Lessons per week:** 2

In this scenario, you are teaching a course over a longer span of time. Using the above times as a guide, you will notice that while a course like this occupies roughly the same number of classroom hours as the intensive course considered in Scenario 2, it requires a different approach. In a month-long course, it will likely be necessary to provide students with a means of contacting you, and perhaps even schedule time for “office hours” outside of class. The longer a course is, the more logistical issues there are to consider in advance.

### Things to Consider

→ Which practice tests will you use? A longer course will likely involve the use of several practice tests.

- Determine whether you will be using a CELPIP-General (all four skills) or CELPIP-General LS (just Listening and Speaking) practice test.
- Go the CELPIP online bookstore ([celPIP.ca/store](http://celPIP.ca/store)) and choose the practice test in advance.
- Make sure that everyone in the course (including yourself) has access to the test. Determine whether students will need to purchase it separately or whether the test will be provided as part of the course registration.
- Familiarize yourself with the content: audio and text passages, transcripts, answer choices, and potential challenges in the passages and the questions.
- Keep in mind that with the shorter class time (2 hours), it won't be possible for students to complete a full practice test in one sitting. You will have to figure out how best to incorporate the content of the practice tests into shorter lessons.

→ How will you structure your course? There are many possibilities; here are two examples.

- **EXAMPLE 1:**

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Lessons 1 & 2	Lessons 3 & 4	Lessons 5 & 6	Lessons 7 & 8	Lessons 9 & 10
Overview and practice test	Focus: Listening	Focus: Reading	Focus: Writing	Focus: Speaking

- **EXAMPLE 2:**

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
Lessons 1 & 2	Lessons 3 & 4	Lessons 5 & 6	Lessons 7 & 8	Lessons 9 & 10
Overview and practice test	Instructor's choice of skill focus	Instructor's choice of skill focus	Instructor's choice of skill focus	Instructor's choice of skill focus



→ Will you provide a course syllabus to the students? If so, you may wish to include the following:

- your contact information
- class rules and policies: lateness/absence, English-only rule (if applicable), break times, participation, completion of homework, items not allowed in the computer lab, etc.
- a schedule that includes the date and topic of each class
- dates and times of office hours (if applicable)
- due dates for assignments
- links to sources for further study: for example, the CELPIP website, places to find authentic sources, language learning sites, etc.

→ How will you facilitate one-on-one time with students? Students in a long course will be expecting individual feedback, in particular on their productive skills (writing and speaking).

- Decide how many one-on-one meetings each student will receive, and what skill(s) you will focus on in each.
- Remember to have students submit material (likely writing and/or speaking samples) far enough in advance that you will have time to check it and make notes before meeting with them.
- Decide how long each meeting will be, and how you will occupy the rest of the class while these meetings are taking place. The activity in which they are engaged needs to be one that allows for coming and going.
- Depending on the size of your class, you may wish to spread the meetings over multiple classes, rather than doing them all on one day.

→ How available will you be outside of class?

- Let students know how frequently you will check and respond to emails.
- Let students know if you will be available before or after class to meet with them, and, if so, for how long.
- If you will be holding office hours, let the class know when and where.

→ What will you assign for homework?

- Write instructions for any major or detailed homework assignments.
- Give longer/more involved assignments toward the end of the week so that students will have more days to complete them.
- Be clear about due dates and expectations: will there be consequences for not completing homework, or for doing sloppy work?

# Test Familiarity: Topics for Discussion

The following are aspects of the CELPIP Test that many students will have questions about and students ought to be informed about. Depending on the timing of your class session(s), this information could be provided through handouts, in person, or a combination of both. There is also information on many of these topics available on the CELPIP website; links have been provided. The following list of frequently asked questions may also prove helpful both to you and to your students: [celPIP.ca/faqs](http://celPIP.ca/faqs).

## Test Day

Give your class a quick overview of what to expect on test day, including when to show up, what to bring, and what technology and resources they will receive. Assure them that there will be an invigilator on hand to address any technical problems they may experience. Inform them of the policies relating to materials and actions prohibited in the test centre. The following link provides detailed information on these and other test day matters: [celPIP.ca/test-day-information](http://celPIP.ca/test-day-information).

## Test Integrity

All students should be informed that they must not use any memorized content in the Writing and Speaking components of the test. Importantly, this includes “templates” for structuring Writing and Speaking responses, generic introductory/concluding paragraphs for Writing responses, and generic opening/closing sentences for Speaking responses.

Memorized content has a negative impact on scores: raters recognize it very quickly and easily, and it cannot be rated, as it is not the test taker’s work. Using memorized content in Writing or Speaking responses is a form of cheating. It subjects the test taker to the possibility of being investigated and having his/her scores cancelled, and it also occupies time that the test taker should be investing into demonstrating his/her English comprehension and fluency. The use of memorized content is of absolutely no advantage to CELPIP test takers, and it should never be encouraged or facilitated in your course. Access this link for a YouTube video summarizing this topic: <https://youtu.be/ARYYmwUNijA>.

## Scoring

Students always want to know how the CELPIP Test is scored. They are especially interested in assessment of the productive skills (Writing and Speaking). Familiarize yourself thoroughly with [celPIP.ca/test-scoring](http://celPIP.ca/test-scoring). This page includes extensive information on wait times, score reports, the rating process, rater training, and other related topics that you are likely to be asked about during your course.

You should provide your class with the Writing and Speaking Performance Standards, which are available via the above link and are also included in this package for easy reference and printing.

## Sample Responses

Many students spend a great deal of time scrutinizing sample responses, and this *can* be helpful. For example, it can help students to understand the scoring process. It can show them strategies for approaching particular tasks. It can also help them to identify strengths and weaknesses in the responses of others, and to apply that insight to their own work.

However, looking at sample responses is not in itself a sufficient or appropriate way to prepare for the test. The purpose of the CELPIP Test is to assess the test taker’s English proficiency, not his/her familiarity with sample responses. Time spent absorbing every detail of other people’s responses is time *not* spent developing one’s own language skills. Time spent memorizing the details of one specific response to one specific test question—a question the test taker definitely won’t see on the test!—is time *not* spent developing the ability to communicate about a wide range of topics.

## Canadian Content

Many students are concerned about the Canadian elements of the CELPIP Test. Let your class know that no test question will require them to know facts about Canada or write/speak about Canada. The CELPIP Test is Canadian in the sense that it is developed and rated in Canada. In the Listening passages, all of the speakers have Canadian accents, and in the Reading passages, Canadian spelling is used. The Speaking and Writing questions pertain to ideas and issues that could arise in Canada—but they could just as easily arise in virtually any other country. The test is designed to be accessible to everyone, regardless of nationality or culture.

# Lesson & Activity Suggestions

<b>Listening</b>	<b>Activity</b>	Making Predictions from Pre-listening Statements
	<b>Objective:</b>	To learn how to predict audio content using the text (and photos, when applicable) of pre-listening statements
	<b>Timing:</b>	~15 minutes, can be expanded

## Procedure:

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NOTE: The pre-listening statement is the text (and photo, in Listening Part 1) that introduces the audio. For example, "You will hear a conversation between a man and a woman. The conversation takes place in an office."

- Before the class starts, choose any Listening part from a CELPIP practice test. Use previously unseen content for this activity, and keep in mind that the audio tracks increase in difficulty from Part 1 to Part 6: choose accordingly. Using Part 1 may be ideal for the first round, since it includes a photo.
- Before class, carefully consider the pre-listening statement for that part of the test. What context clues does it provide about the upcoming audio track(s)?
- Remind the class that every part of the Listening Test begins with a pre-listening statement about the audio track(s). It may be just one sentence, but it contains important context.
- Have students access the pre-listening statement for the chosen Listening part on their computers. *Make sure that they stay on this screen and do not click **Next**.*
- Ask them: what clues does this statement give about what they will hear in the audio? If it's a conversation, where is it happening? If it's a monologue, what will the story be about? What tone and kind of language are students likely to hear? What moods do they think the speaker(s) will be in? What words and phrases might they hear in a story/conversation about this topic? Elicit ideas and write them on the board.
- Play the audio track and compare the content to the ideas on the board. Did the pre-listening statement generate any useful predictions?
  - Students can listen to the audio by clicking **Next** on the pre-listening statement screen, but it may be more efficient if you play this for the entire class through external speakers.
- **Optional expansion:** further pre-listening statements can be discussed in pairs/groups, or as a class.

# Listening

**Activity:** Taking Notes While Listening

**Objective:** To develop the strategy of note-taking while listening to audio tracks and questions

**Timing:** ~30 minutes, depending on the number of Listening parts and strategies discussed

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose ~3 parts from a previously unseen Listening Test. Familiarize yourself thoroughly with the audio, questions, transcript, and correct answers for each.
- Remind students that they will receive a pen and paper on test day. Elicit feedback on whether they plan to use it, and on which parts of the test it will be most helpful.
- Ask the class if they have a habit of taking notes while listening, and if they have any useful note-taking strategies/ideas to share: discuss organization, abbreviation, key words, etc. Supplement these with your own ideas as necessary.
- Elicit note-taking strategies for each part of the Listening Test: what would be an effective way to take notes for a dialogue, a video, a news story, an account of different opinions on an issue, etc. Provide suggestions and feedback as needed, introducing different ways to organize notes: by speaker, by opinion, by problem/suggested solutions, 5 Ws chart.
- For each chosen Listening part of the practice test, play the audio and have students take notes while listening. Then have them complete the questions for that part, just as they would on the test. After each, ask them what strategy they used, how effective it was, and whether their notes helped them to answer the questions. You may wish to supplement the discussion of each Listening part with some example notes, in case students struggle with note-taking.

# Listening

**Activity:** Identifying Indirect Speech

**Objective:** To learn strategies for identifying indirect speech in audio passages (particularly Listening Part 6)

**Timing:** ~20–30 minutes; could be expanded to a broader lesson on indirect speech

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose an audio track from Listening Part 6 of a practice test. You could do this activity with previously heard content (less challenging), or with new content (more challenging).
- In class, review the format/content of Listening Part 6: one speaker reporting on the opinions of multiple people. Ask students what they should listen for to determine what opinions are expressed and whose opinions they are.
- Introduce indirect speech. You could do this by writing, projecting, or reading aloud several example sentences. Explain the language and grammar used by one speaker to report what another speaker has said. In particular, students should listen for:
  - verbs that signal an opinion or statement, such as *claim, believe, think, observe, report, feel, say, add, point out, argue, etc.*
  - phrases like *According to [name], In [name]’s view, etc.*
- Play the chosen audio passage for the class if possible; if not, have each student listen to it at his/her computer station. Instruct students to focus on these questions as they listen: (1) How many different people’s opinions are presented, and (2) What reported speech signal words/phrases are heard in the passage?
- Have students briefly compare their answers to these two questions with the person next to them and try to reach consensus. Do not provide correct answers yet.
- Distribute the transcripts and play the audio again. Have students listen while following along with the transcript, focusing again on the two questions and underlining any relevant content in the transcript.
- As a class, discuss the answers to the questions. Are there signal words, or clues in the speaker’s voice, that indicate the introduction of a new opinion? How many instances of reported speech are there? Were they able to hear all of them during the first listen?
- If the students want to hear the audio again, play it once more and have the class listen without reading along with the transcripts, so that they can hear the context clues just discussed. Although transcripts can be helpful in certain contexts, students must learn not to rely on them for listening activities.
- Close the activity by fielding any questions from students about new vocabulary, grammar, etc. found in the passage.

# Reading

**Activity:** Think-Alouds

**Objective:** To learn to use the process of elimination as a Reading Test strategy, to build the skill of articulating why answer choices in multiple choice questions are wrong

**Timing:** Depends on the number of questions discussed; ~5 minutes per question

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose a text passage and questions from Reading Part 1, 2, or 4 of a CELPIP practice test. You could do this activity with previously seen content (less challenging), or with new content (more challenging).
- If the students have not yet read the passage or answered the questions, have them do so individually at their computer workstations. Give them a time limit similar to what they will experience on test day.
- Group the students into 2s or 3s. If this is their first encounter with the questions, have them compare their answers and try to reach consensus about the correct answers. They should NOT look at the answer key.
- For each question, have the pairs/groups discuss (a) how they arrived at the correct answer, and (b) how they eliminated each of the other choices. Where in the reading passage did they find (or not find) information that allowed them to eliminate each incorrect answer choice? They may wish to note down some key words or phrases about each question during this discussion, as it isn't possible to make notes on the practice test screens.
- Lead a whole-class discussion of what the correct answers are, and how the groups determined the correct answers and eliminated the incorrect options. Try to ensure that every group, preferably every student, has a chance to contribute.
- NOTE: With some modifications to the process, think-alouds can also be a useful strategy/activity for the Listening Test.

# Reading

**Activity:** Identifying Question Types

**Objective:** To learn to identify specific detail, general meaning, and inference questions on the Reading Test

**Timing:** ~30 minutes; depends on the number of questions discussed

## Procedure:

- Before class, select a number of questions from Reading Part 1, Part 2, or Part 4 of a CELPIP practice test. You could do this activity with content that the students have already seen (less challenging), or with new content (more challenging). NOTE: Avoid choosing questions that involve filling in the gaps in a text, such as the first set of questions in Part 2 or the second set of questions in Part 4. Questions of that type are not applicable to this activity.
- Read the relevant passage(s) and familiarize yourself with the questions and correct answers.
- Begin the activity by teaching the class that they will see three types of multiple choice questions on the Reading Test. Explain the types, provide a strong example of each, and discuss ways to figure out which type a given question is. E.g.,
  - **Specific detail** questions focus on one particular fact, detail, or statement.
  - **General meaning** questions tend to be about larger topics and require the reader to put together more than one piece of information.
  - **Inference** questions require an educated guess and always contain some language of uncertainty, such as “probably” or “likely.”
- Have the class read the chosen passage and answer the questions individually if they have not already done so. Give them a time limit similar to what they will experience on test day.
- Group the students into 2s or 3s. If this is their first encounter with the questions, have them compare their answers and try to reach consensus about the correct answers. They should NOT look at the answer key.
- Instruct the groups to go through each question and determine which of the three types it is, and why they think so. They should NOT look at the answer key during this discussion.
- Discuss together: for each question, what is the correct answer? Could it be determined from information in one specific phrase or sentence in the text, or did they have to combine many pieces of information to arrive at the answer? Could the answer be found in the text, or did they have to guess at something probable or likely? etc.
- NOTE: Specific detail, general meaning, and inference questions are also the three main question types on the Listening Test. With modifications, an activity on this topic can also be done using Listening questions.



# Reading

**Activity:** Identifying Key Words

**Objective:** To learn to identify key words on the Reading Test and use them as a tool for finding responses in the text

**Timing:** ~30 minutes; depends on the number of questions discussed

## Procedure:

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- Before class, select a number of questions from any Reading part of a CELPIP practice test that the students have not yet encountered. Read the passage(s) and familiarize yourself with the questions and answers.
- Create an answer key for yourself by identifying key words in each question.
- Have students access this test part at their individual workstations. They should read all the questions but NOT complete them yet. Once everyone is finished, lead a whole-class discussion of key words. Go question by question. Write the students' key word suggestions on the board, and try to reach a consensus of the one or two most important key words from each question.
- Now, have the students read the passage and answer the questions.
- As a class, go through the answers to the questions and elicit how foreknowledge of key words might have made answering the questions easier/more efficient.
- NOTE: With some modifications, identifying key words can also be a useful strategy/activity on the Listening Test.

# Writing

**Activity:** Structuring Emails

**Objective:** To learn a standard structure for Writing Task 1: Writing an Email

**Timing:** ~20 minutes; more with optional follow-up

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose a Writing question and a high-level response to that question from a practice test. (One test in each set of two—typically the first test—includes sample Writing responses; click on the **CELPIP 10–12 Response** button for the highest rated response.) Make copies of the sample response if desired.
- Begin by asking the class what they know about structuring an email. What elements would they include, and in what order?
- Distribute or direct students to the chosen sample response. Use it as a point of reference for a discussion of the elements of an email. Explain that their emails on the CELPIP Test should generally consist of the following elements, in this order. Explain each element, having students find each in the sample response, and eliciting further suggestions and examples when appropriate.
  - (1) greeting
  - (2) opening/purpose statement
  - (3) body paragraph(s), where they should complete the 3–4 tasks in the question
  - (4) concluding statement
  - (5) sign-off and signature
  - Note that test takers do NOT need to include “From,” “To,” or subject lines: it is not necessary to replicate the appearance of an email on the test.
  - Note that the third element, body paragraphs, doesn’t appear on the Task 1 Checklist. However, the content of the body paragraphs is covered implicitly throughout the checklist.
- Have students write a timed response to the Writing question using this structure.
- **Optional expansion:** this can be followed up with peer review and/or editing.

# Writing

**Activity:** Brainstorming and Organizing Ideas for Survey Responses

**Objective:** To learn strategies for developing and organizing ideas for Writing Task 2: Responding to Survey Questions

**Timing:** ~30 minutes; more with optional follow-up

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose 3–4 unseen Writing Task 2 questions from practice tests, or write some questions yourself (in the latter case, do not present them as official test questions: inform the class that you created them for the purpose of this exercise). Include both the background information (e.g., “You work in a small office”) and the survey options.
- Obtain chart paper if desired.
- If there is no projector in the classroom, make a handout containing the 3–4 questions and make enough copies for everyone.
- Project or hand out the Task 2 questions. Ask the students what they know about Writing Task 2. Explain or elicit that these survey questions are related to community or workplace issues, that they are opinion questions, and that there are advantages and disadvantages to both choices. The student is asked to give *reasons* to support his/her chosen option.
- Group the class into 2s or 3s. Assign each group a different question from the projection/handout. Give them 5–7 minutes to brainstorm reasons to support each of the two options in their question. Instruct them to be as specific as possible: realistic, vivid details have a positive impact on test scores. Instruct them to write their ideas in point form and to focus on content, not grammar, spelling, etc.
- Give the groups 5–7 minutes to choose option A or B, plus 2–3 main ideas and 1–2 supporting details for each main idea from their lists. If they need to write some new ideas during this process or elaborate on the brainstormed content, that’s fine. Optionally, have the groups write their main ideas and supporting details on a piece of chart paper that can be posted or held up.
- Have each group share their main ideas and supporting details with the class. See if the class has any thoughts: additional reasons to share, ways to make the ideas and details stronger, etc.
- **Optional expansion:** have each group come up with a strong opening sentence (not copied from the question) for a response to their survey question.
- **Optional expansion:** have each group work together to write a survey response using the main ideas and details they have decided on. These could be written on chart paper and posted, or projected.

# Writing

**Activity:** Peer Response Analysis Using Checklists

**Objective:** To recognize strengths and weaknesses in Writing responses and gain insight into Writing Test scoring

**Timing:** 30+ minutes

## Procedure:

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- Prior to this activity, have students complete a Writing Task 1 or 2 question according to the timing of the official test, either for homework or in class. Note that this activity requires hard copies, preferably typed.
- Before class, make a copy of the appropriate Writing Checklist for each student.
- Explain or review the checklist content, perhaps using a sample Writing response from a practice test as a point of reference.
- Pair students up and have them exchange responses. Give everyone 10–15 minutes to assess their partner’s response according to the checklist. They should look for specific examples in the response to support their choices on the checklist. However, they should NOT write comments or correct errors on the response.
- Time permitting, you could have them return each other’s responses and assess their own response according to the checklists. In this case, you will need double the amount of checklist copies for the beginning of class.
- Have pairs discuss their assessments with each other, citing examples from the responses.
- **Optional expansion:** in class or for homework, have students edit their responses according to the checklist feedback they received.

# Speaking

**Activity:** Brainstorming

**Objective:** To learn effective techniques for brainstorming during CELPIP Speaking tasks

**Timing:** 20+ minutes, depending on the number of tasks

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose some Speaking tasks from a CELPIP practice test. Preferably these tasks will be new to the students, but this activity will also work with previously seen material. To cover the variety of task types on the Speaking Test, choose a couple tasks with text instructions, and a couple tasks with images and text.
- Briefly discuss the concept of brainstorming, and remind students that they will be given notepaper and a pen for this on test day. Elicit methods/strategies from students (e.g., mind maps, lists, charts, free form, etc.; write these on the board.
- Explain that students will now practice brainstorming with some CELPIP Speaking tasks, and have them access the appropriate practice test at their workstation.
- Have students choose one method of brainstorming (preferably one they haven't tried before).
  - For the first few tasks, you may wish to give the students longer than usual to brainstorm ideas. Remind them that they will have limited preparation time on the actual test.
  - Then, once students are comfortable with the concept, limit their time to the official preparation time for each task.
  - In either case, you may wish to have students complete their brainstorming using the practice test timers at their workstations, or all at once using a class timer (e.g., a stopwatch or phone).
  - As students move through the tasks, they may try different brainstorming methods.
- After the class has gone through all the chosen tasks, debrief together. Did students have any favourite (or least favourite) methods of brainstorming? Did they find that certain styles were particularly useful for certain Speaking tasks? What did students find most easy/challenging?
- If time, elicit ideas from the class for each task, and/or have students actually respond to one or more tasks.
- NOTE: As an alternate activity, you may wish to write your own questions for students to practice brainstorming with. However, it is **vital** that you inform them that these additional questions are not official test content and are only to encourage the practice of brainstorming.

# Speaking

**Activity:** Timed Practice

**Objective:** To learn effective time management during the Speaking tasks in CELPIP

**Timing:** 30+ minutes, depending on the number of tasks

## Procedure:

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- NOTE: This activity assumes student familiarity with brainstorming, as outlined in the prior activity.
- Before class, choose at least six Speaking tasks (two of each type) from a CELPIP practice test. For example, you might choose Tasks 2, 4, and 6 from Tests 1 and 2 in a set of practice tests. Previously unseen material is preferable, but familiar material will also work.
- Introduce the importance of time management in timed test environments. It's important for students to be aware of—and comfortable with!—the limits of the preparation and recording time for each Speaking task.
  - **Optional expansion:** Review preparation and recording times for all eight Speaking tasks in CELPIP.
- Arrange students into pairs at computer workstations, and direct them to the appropriate Speaking tasks in the test. Inform them that they will have two rounds of Speaking practice: the first round will have shortened times, and the second round will use actual test times.
- Ensure that each pair of students has a timing device (phone, stopwatch, etc.). Write the shortened times for each task on the board (at your discretion—e.g., for Task 2, perhaps 20 seconds to prepare and 45 seconds to speak).
- Let each partner take turns timing each other using the time intervals you write on the board.
- Between each task, have partners share with each other what they found challenging (or easy) about working under these time constraints.
- After all students have had a chance to complete each of the three tasks, direct them to the second set of tasks. They will now complete these using the official test times, following the procedure above.
- Once everyone has finished the second set, regroup as a class. What challenges did students find while brainstorming and speaking under these time limits? Did they find the second set of tasks any easier? Did any pairs of students find that they used similar (or different) strategies to cope under the time constraints?

# Speaking

**Activity:** Peer Review

**Objective:** To determine strengths and weaknesses in your own speech via reviewing others' responses

**Timing:** 40+ minutes for a full Speaking Test; flexible depending on the number of tasks chosen

## Procedure:

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- Before class, choose 4 to 8 Speaking tasks from a CELPIP practice test. Choose at least two text-based and two image-based tasks. Previously unseen material is preferable.
- Print out and distribute Speaking Checklists to the class, and review content if necessary.
- Arrange students into groups of 2–3. Explain that they will practice responding to Speaking tasks and providing feedback to each other using these checklists.
- Have each group gather around one computer workstation and begin at the first chosen task. Have Partner A respond to the question, while Partner B fills in the checklist. After Partner A is finished, Partner B will provide (constructive) feedback as per their notes. Modify accordingly for groups of three.
  - Alternatively, instruct groups to ignore the onscreen timers and instead use a class-wide timer (phone alarm, stopwatch, etc.) to time each task.
- Have partners switch roles, repeating this procedure throughout the rest of the Speaking tasks.
- Meanwhile, circulate through the classroom monitoring students' feedback and noting down any additional strengths/weaknesses that you notice.
- After everyone has had a turn at each task, debrief as a class. What strengths and weaknesses did students discover in their own speech? Were there any challenges that everyone shared? What strategies might they use to work on areas they are struggling with?

# Homework Suggestions

The type and amount of homework you assign will depend on the length of your course, the level of the students, and the technology available both to the students and to you. Regardless of these or other factors, however, homework should always come with clear instructions and a clear purpose. For a shorter course, it can be a great way to have students complete less interactive tasks (writing practice, reading, etc.) so that there will be more class time free to spend on more interactive work (peer editing, discussion and practice of new vocabulary, etc.).

- **Record a response to one or more Speaking tasks from a practice test.** Prerecorded responses can be used in class for peer review using the Checklist, or submitted to the instructor for assessment prior to a one-on-one session.
- **Write a response to a Writing task from a practice test.** For an authentic experience, students should set a timer for 26 minutes (Task 1) or 27 minutes (Task 2) and follow all instructions. Prewritten responses can be used in class for peer review using the Checklist, or submitted to the instructor for assessment prior to a one-on-one session.
- **Write a transcript of a recorded speaking response.** Listening very carefully to a response and transcribing every word of it (including the interjections, self-corrections, etc.!) is a way for students to gain awareness of what they've done well and what they may be struggling with. It's also a way to gain insight into the scoring process. Students could assess their response, or the response of a classmate, using the recording, the transcript, and the Checklist.
- **Revise a writing response according to feedback provided by the instructor or classmates.** Revision is a crucial part of writing. Language learners benefit greatly from the ability to read their own work critically, detect errors, and improve their structure, grammar, and syntax.
- **Read or listen to an authentic source of their choice and record 3–5 new words from that source in their vocabulary journal.** It is important that students' English practice extend beyond CELPIP-based material. Homework is a way to have them engage with other material while maintaining the CELPIP focus in your classroom. This type of assignment can be given repeatedly, as students can choose a different authentic source and learn new words each time. You can narrow the focus of each assignment by specifying the length of the material and/or the type of material (news article, magazine story, fiction, email correspondence, radio story, video, audiobook, podcast, etc.).
- **At the end of the course, complete one full CELPIP Test at home.** This is an opportunity for students to reflect on how they think they've improved, what they still struggle with, and what strategies they will use to overcome their weaknesses.