

0305-1



**Confederation in Oregon
For Language Teaching**

**OREGON ORAL ASSESSMENT
PRACTICE KIT**

**MANUAL
FOR
BENCHMARK IV
ORAL ASSESSMENT**

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THE BENCHMARK IV ORAL ASSESSMENT

The Benchmark IV Oral Assessment was developed through the collaboration of the Oregon University System Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS) Project and the Confederation in Oregon for Language Teaching (COFLT) with the support of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE). It is a scripted oral interview that determines a student's speaking proficiency at Benchmark Level IV of the State Content Standards and the Proficiency-based Admissions Standards System (PASS). The benchmarks are based on the ACTFL Proficiency Descriptors.

This oral assessment shows what a student can do with the language. It measures if a student reaches the Benchmark IV criteria but does not indicate how far above or below the standard a student is. The assessment's effectiveness depends on three conditions:

- that the speech sample is long and varied enough to show what a student can do: **It is sufficient.**
- that the assessors apply the same criteria and conditions to every student: **They are consistent.**
- that the student demonstrates oral competency and skills according to a performance standard: **S/he is proficient.**

BENCHMARK IV ORAL ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

To pass the Benchmark IV Oral Assessment the student must successfully perform at least two of a possible three situations at the Benchmark IV level. To pass a situation the student must perform two tasks in addition to the question task for a total of three of four tasks.

Benchmark IV Performance Descriptors

Level	Content of Conversation (Content and Function)	Use of Language (Text Type)	Comprehensible Speech (Accuracy and Delivery)	Conversational Interaction (Responses & Questions)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Conveys simple information, ideas and feelings. *Stays with topic or logically extends. *Recombines learned material to create original sentences on situation topic and performs the function inherent in the prompt * Performs two tasks in addition to the question task for a total of three of the four tasks per situation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Primarily uses extended sentences in response to open-ended questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Controls basic structures and vocabulary in the present time frame with some errors and/or self-correction. *Speech is comprehensible to the sympathetic listener. * Speech may have pauses if these pauses lead to extending the conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Maintains conversation. *Responds but may need one repetition to indicate understanding of the question or prompt. *Asks 2 or 3 conversation-extending questions per situation for a minimum of five per interview.

Content of Conversation (Content and Function)

Content:

- Conveys simple information, ideas and feelings on topic
- Stays within the topic or logically extends

Example: Q. How does your house compare to your friend's house?

On-topic: A. My house is big. My friend lives in an apartment.
When I grow up I want to live in a condo.

Off-topic: A. I like my family. I have three brothers and sisters.

Function:

- Recombines learned material to create original sentences on situation topic and performs the function inherent in the prompt
(See list of functions on page 24.)
- Performs two tasks in addition to the question task for a total of three of the four tasks per situation.

Use of Language (Text Type)

Text Type:

- Primarily uses extended sentences in response to open-ended questions.

May use some phrases where appropriate:

Example: Q. When is the dance?

A. Next Friday.

Extended sentences include modifying phrases telling when and/or where

Example: "In the winter we ski at Mount Bachelor."

Instead of: "We ski."

Do not penalize a student if he or she fails to use accurate structures in an attempt at a more complex response.

Example: Q. How does your family share household chores?

A. I wash the dishes; my mother who does the cooking, my sister lazy sleeping.

Comprehensible Speech (Accuracy and Delivery)

Accuracy:

- Controls basic structures and vocabulary in the present time frame with some errors and/or self-correction.

Explains who is doing what, where and when.

Note: Basic structures may vary by language. In French, German, and Spanish the student should generally be in control of subject/verb agreement with an occasional error. Using the subject pronoun with the infinitive of the verb is not at the Benchmark IV level.

- Speech is comprehensible to the sympathetic listener
Errors that do not interfere with comprehensibility although they may be bothersome or annoying

Example: Rately I have been study English.

Here the common pronunciation error of mistaking the "r" and "l" does not prevent the interviewer from understanding "lately". Similarly, failure to add "ing" to study does not prevent the sympathetic listener from understanding this more complicated structure.

Delivery:

- Speech may have pauses if these pauses lead to extending the conversation.

A halting pace and/or unnatural pauses that interfere with communication are not at Benchmark IV.

Conversational Interaction (Responses and Questions)

Responses: The student...

- Maintains the conversation
- May need one rephrasing to indicate understanding of the question or prompt
- Indicates that the question was understood and provides the information expected

Example: Q. Tell me about your social studies class.

Correct: A. I take US History from Mr. Jones. I have to read a lot every night. The class is hard but I like it.

Incorrect: A. I study at night, sometimes on weekends.

- Indicate that the prompt or question was understood with no more than one repetition

Example: Question (prompt) - What things do you do with your family?

Reply - Can you repeat the question?

Prompt rephrase - What activities do you do with your family?

Answer - Oh, activities. We get together sometimes and go to the movies.

Questions:

- Asks two or three conversation-extending questions per situation for a minimum of five per interview

Example: Who does the dishes at your house?

What other chores do you have?

What is your least favorite chore?

When do you have time to clean the house?

- Must fill the information gap and move the conversation forward

Example: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Who is the oldest?

How many are males and females?

- Must not be repeats of the interviewer's questions

Structure of the Interview

The BIVOA presents the student with a series of 4 tasks designed to get him/her to perform at the Benchmark IV level. After the student has read the situation card, the interviewer begins with the 4.1 prompt to encourage the student to **expound with a series of 5 or 6 sentences on the topic**. The 4.2 prompt is a follow-up to elicit even more. Usually the task 4.3 prompt (shaded in gray) prompts the student to ask questions of the interviewer. (This could at times be the 4.1 task.) The 4.4 task is (1) another opportunity for the student to speak further on the topic in case the interviewer doesn't feel that there is enough of a sample or (2) a wind-down to close the situation when the interviewer feels there is already a sufficient sample.

If the student is having difficulty with the Benchmark IV prompts, the script offers a Benchmark III prompt more simply phrased to (1) allow the interviewer to maintain the conversation and (2) to move the student back to the Benchmark IV level performance, if possible. The Question Task at the Benchmark III level often feeds a question and prompts for more, thus attempting to move the student back to the Benchmark IV level. The 3.4 task offers a graceful exit to the situation when it is obvious that the student cannot perform at a higher level.

BENCHMARK LEVEL IV ORAL ASSESSMENT

0305-7

Situation:

(General open-ended prompt written to student)

Benchmark 3 Tasks	Benchmark 4 Tasks
START HERE	
<p>Task 3.1 = Direct question that could lead back to 4.2</p>	<p>Task 4.1 = "EXPOUND"</p>
<p>Task 3.2 = Direct question similar to 4.2 information but posed more simply.</p>	<p>Task 4.2 = Follow-up question about 4.1</p>
<p>Task 3.3 = directly feed them a potential question, then prompt more questions. Ask me, _____? What other questions do you have for me?</p>	<p>Task 4.3 = Prompt for student to ask questions (Try for 3 'conversation extender' questions) note: give short, not very informational answers</p>
<p>Task 3.4 = Close conversation at a level comfortable to the student regardless of his/her proficiency level.</p>	<p>Task 4.4 = Wind down question to close situation</p>

RECIPE

Situation:

(General open-ended prompt written to student)

You and the Interviewer are going to be talking about friends

Benchmark 3 Tasks

Benchmark 4 Tasks

START HERE

<p>Task 3.1 = Direct question that could lead back to 4.2</p> <p>"What is your best friend's name?...What's s/he like?"</p> <p>Task 3.2 = Direct question similar to 4.2 information but posed more simply.</p> <p>What does your friend like to do? Where does s/he do this?</p> <p>Task 3.3 = directly feed them a potential question, then prompt more questions.</p> <p>Ask me, What's my friend's favorite thing to do on Saturdays? What other questions do you have for me?</p> <p>Task 3.4 = Close conversation at a level comfortable to the student regardless of his/her proficiency level.</p> <p>What's your favorite sports or activities? Why?</p>	<p>Task 4.1 = "EXPOUND"</p> <p>"Tell me about your <u>best friend</u>"</p> <p>Task 4.2 = Follow-up question about 4.1</p> <p>Where do you and your friend go and what do you do to have fun?</p> <p>Task 4.3 = Prompt for student to ask questions (try for 3)</p> <p>Ask me about my friend(s) note: give short, not very informational answers</p> <p>Task 4.4 = Wind down question to close situation</p> <p>What don't you like to do with your friend and why?</p>
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0305

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SAMPLE

BENCHMARK LEVEL 4 ORAL PROFICIENCY

You are visiting with an exchange student (the interviewer) and talking about holidays or special days that your family celebrates. The interviewer is unfamiliar with the typical American holidays and celebrations. Be sure to describe how your family celebrates, and what traditions and foods make the celebration special.

- Be prepared to ask the interviewer (exchange student) about his/her celebrations.

Benchmark 3 Tasks	Benchmark 4 Tasks
<p>3.1 What is your favorite holiday?</p>	<p>4.1 Tell me about a holiday or special day that your family celebrates and describe what you do to celebrate it.</p>
<p>3.2 What do you eat on (the holiday mentioned in 3.1)</p>	<p>4.2 Why do you like it?</p>
<p>3.3 Ask me what my favorite holiday is. What other questions do you have for me?</p>	<p>4.3 Ask me some questions about my holidays and how I celebrate them.</p>
<p>3.4 Where do you celebrate _____ at home or somewhere else?</p>	<p>4.4 Do you enjoy summer or winter holidays? Why?</p>

BENCHMARK LEVEL 4 ORAL PROFICIENCY

Your friend (the interviewer) invites you to go shopping and wants to make a day of it. You want to go because you have several things to buy. Be sure to find out:

- Where your friend wants to go and why.
- What your friend wants/needs to buy and why.

Benchmark 3 Tasks	Benchmark 4 Tasks
<p>3.1 Tell me two things you want to buy.</p>	<p>4.1 Hi, do you want to go shopping with me? Where do you want to go shopping and why?</p>
<p>3.2 Why do you need a _____?</p>	<p>4.2 What do you need to buy and for whom? Why do you need/want these things?</p>
<p>3.3 Ask me what time we're going. What other questions do you have for me?</p>	<p>4.3 Let's decide how we are going to get there. Then, ask me about what I want to buy and for whom.</p>
<p>3.4 How long will we be shopping?</p>	<p>4.4 What will we do afterwards?</p>

0305-10