



EAL/D Common Oral Assessment Task Advice for Teachers

Below is feedback and advice for teachers from reviewers of the common oral assessment task (COAT). Teachers can use this advice as they prepare themselves and their students for the COAT.

Purpose of the COAT

The image and focus questions function as **prompts** to elicit spoken responses from students so that they can demonstrate their language skills and abilities. The students are **not being assessed on historical/geographical/political knowledge**. For example, if a student is not confident discussing a specific sub-topic/issue, they may choose to redirect the discussion to a related topic/issue **from the unit context**. For example: 'I am not very familiar with X; however, I can tell you about Y ...' Please note that the discussion should **still be related to the Unit 3 context**, as per the marking key.

It is important to remember the COAT:

(a) is assessing students' ability to:

- analyse and evaluate issues and topics **related** to the unit context
- present opinions, points of view and arguments
- justify ideas with examples/evidence
- speak fluently and clearly
- control grammar and vocabulary
- communicate effectively

(b) is not assessing students':

- content knowledge/factual understanding of particular issues or topics
- personal opinions/beliefs/viewpoints on issues/topics.

Preparing students for the interview

- Take note of the selected COAT Unit 3 Contexts published on the [School Curriculum and Standards Authority \(the Authority\)](https://www.scsa.wa.gov.au/) website and focus on these topics with students.
- Give opportunities for students to practise with samples of images and focus questions.
- Focus on:
 - encouraging students to link their description of the image to the highlighted learning context
 - sharpening students' comprehension skills, moving from literal to inferred and evaluative analysis
 - the comparison of how attitudes towards issues have changed and developed over time
 - practising phrases that are used to express an opinion/introduce an argument/justify a point of view.
- Remind students to use examples from texts where possible. Examples from texts are often more complex and, if they have spent a substantial amount of time analysing a text, students will be more familiar with and confident about textual examples.
- Analyse the marking key with students, so that they know what skills they need to demonstrate.

Administration of the interview

1. Logistics

- Numbers written in pen are not visible on the candidate's sheet. Use a thick marker and ensure candidates clearly state their image number at the beginning of the COAT.
- Preparation time does not need to be recorded.
- The video recorder can be placed to the side of the student and not front on, as long as the audio is still clear. This is less intrusive and intimidating for the student.
- Ask students to remove masks.

2. Interview techniques

- Remember the appropriate register of an interview for an assessment task. It should be formal and not too 'chatty'.
- The interviewer can ask follow-up questions that provide students with opportunities to demonstrate the skills described in the marking key. For example:
 - Open-ended questions:
 - i. What makes you say that?
 - ii. Could you explain that further?
 - iii. What do you mean by that?
 - iv. Why do you think that happened?
 - v. You mentioned _____; can you tell me more about that/explain that further?
 - Questions about texts can help students better link their opinions, ideas and arguments to the unit context. For example:
 - i. Which texts have you studied that highlighted this issue/topic?
 - ii. Is there a text that you have studied that would help you explain this idea further?
 - iii. Can you relate your ideas to any texts?
 - If a student moves completely off topic, ask a broad follow-up question or redirect the student to the focus questions.
 - If a student cannot address in detail the specific **topic** or **issue** in a focus question, ask them to apply the same analysis to a similar topic or issue from the Unit 3 topic with which they are familiar.

3. Interviewer expectations

- Use the wording of the focus questions as written instead of substituting your own preferred wording.
- Use 'wait time'; give students time to think and respond before prompting them further or moving to another question.
- Avoid monopolising the interview or wasting time by offering your opinion or own knowledge about a topic.
- Avoid correcting, disagreeing or debating with candidates.
- Use the entire 10 minutes to give **each** student **maximum** opportunity to **demonstrate the skills and abilities listed in the marking key**.

Advice for candidates

- Familiarise yourself with the purpose, structure and language register of the interview.
- When you are given your image, read the description and use this to focus your discussion to ensure it is relevant and concise.
- Learn subject-specific vocabulary linked to the unit contexts.
- Revise and review texts and examples that you have covered in class to use as evidence to support your ideas in your discussion.
- Look at the criteria in the marking key to guide your preparation. Analyse what is required for each mark.
- Use your preparation time to structure your responses using examples and analysis.
- Use the whole 10 minutes of interview time to give yourself **maximum** opportunity to **demonstrate the skills and abilities listed in the marking key**.
- If a focus question asks you about a specific period in time, make sure your example correctly relates to that point in time.
- If you refer to policies such as assimilation or multiculturalism, or laws like the *Immigration Restriction Act*, make sure that you are familiar with their key details. Using terms like 'back then' to describe when a policy was implemented is too vague.
- Try not to use interjections such as 'ummm', 'uh' and 'like' too much, as this can affect speech fluency and register.