

Eiken Level 1 speaking practice

Practice quickly choosing a topic

Choose a topic from each of the lists below in the time limit given. Then analyse what makes that one easier and the other ones more difficult, changing your mind about which one you want to choose if you like when you analyse further in that way. As in the exam, don't write anything on the lists.

Practice exam 1

Choose one in 30 seconds

1. Are second and third generation immigrants discriminated against in today's society?
 2. Is Chinese standards of living overtaking Japanese ones inevitable?
 3. Should there be decentralization of powers to individual schools?
 4. Is decreased social mobility a cause for concern?
 5. Should more be done to help university students from poor families?
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Practice exam 2

Choose one in 25 seconds

1. What role should Japan play in international peacekeeping?
 2. Do companies have the responsibility to make up for things they did many decades ago?
 3. Are regional languages always worth preserving?
 4. Should students be asked to evaluate their textbooks?
 5. "When in Rome, do as Romans do" – is that always true?
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Practice exam 3

Choose one in 20 seconds

1. Are we doing enough to keep manufacturing jobs in this country?
 2. Would you be willing to do compulsory voluntary work to pay lower taxes?
 3. Should certain books or music only be available to adults?
 4. The pros and cons of more freelance workers
 5. "Absence makes the heart grow fonder" - do you agree?
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Practice exam 4

Choose one in 15 seconds

1. Does Japanese music have a fair reputation abroad?
2. On balance, does the construction industry beneficial to society?
3. Should schools be responsible for their students' behaviour on the way to and from school?
4. Should the press make names public when people are arrested for crimes that they haven't been convicted of yet?
5. How can schools help children develop healthy lifestyles?

Practice exam 4

Choose one in 10 seconds

1. Are the rich becoming richer while the poor are becoming poorer?
2. Can peer pressure positively affect the development of children?
3. Should Japan strengthen its military?
4. What can be done to help the elderly remain independent?
5. Have people today lost their interest in high culture?

Practice exam 5

Choose one in 10 seconds

1. Is the value of socialising with colleagues decreasing?
2. Do political commentators play a positive role in society?
3. What can we do to stop pets being abandoned?
4. Should governments allow more universities to go bankrupt?
5. Do we still need to use animals for non-food products like leather?

Analysing the questions

Are there any similarities between ones you chose?

Are there any similarities between ones you didn't choose?

Find other similarities and differences between the tasks above.

Hint: Look for topics, questions, what you are being asked to do, and other things you will probably need to do.

Look on the next page if you need more help with the task above.

Find at least one example of each of these things in exam tasks above:

- advantages and disadvantages/ looking at both sides
- business/ economics
- discuss a proverb
- domestic politics
- education
- give examples
- give reasons
- health
- international relations
- judgement/ evaluation (obvious or real)
- obvious judgement and reasons then probably examples
- relationships
- society
- speculate on a fact (obvious or real)
- the environment
- Yes/ No question

Underline words in the exam practice questions which could be used to make different tasks, then create those tasks on other typical Eiken Level 1 topics such as those above.

Presentations speaking practice

Go through the practice exam tasks again, but this time choose one and prepare what you are going to say in exactly one minute and then speak for two minutes.

Do the same thing with your second choice for each of the lists above.

Maybe do the same with your third choices.

Reflection

Reflecting on your performance, do you think you chose the easiest tasks for you first?

When you were getting ready to speak for one minute, how did you prepare what you were going to say?

What other things could you do with that one minute, after you have chosen the question (as in the exam, not writing anything down)? What order should you do those things in?

Compare your ideas with those on the next page.

1. Choose a question in about ten seconds.
2. Decide what your opinion is and how strongly you feel about it, then rehearse that first line in your head.
3. Think of reasons why you feel that way and count ideas off on your fingers, using both hands if there are arguments on both sides. Stop when you get to three or four, even if you think they aren't the best points.
4. If you have time, run through those points by looking at the same fingers, thinking how you will support each point (personal experience, things you have heard or read, statistics, examples, cause and effect, logic)
 - Background information (history etc)
 - Certainty/ Strong opinions
 - Changes/ Trends/ Predictions
 - Clarifying/ Paraphrasing/ Restating
 - Comparing/ Contrasting
 - Conceding points/ Destroying possible arguments against/ Looking at both sides
 - Data/ Numbers/ Statistics/ Generalising
 - Examples
 - Expert opinion/ Quoting/ Mentioning things read or heard/ Mentioning sources/ Other people's experiences
 - Logical arguments, e.g. cause and effect
 - Personal experiences

Full exam practice

Do the same exam tasks again, but this time:

- standing up and pretending to come into the room
- starting with administration and then some small talk questions
- using suitable stages above to prepare what you are going to say
- answering additional questions after your presentation.