

July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear Valued Customer,

**Versant English (Speaking) Test**  
**Temporary change of the question format to collect response samples**

Thank you very much for your continued support of our English assessment test, Versant. Based on customer feedback, we are working hard to improve the quality of the Versant English Test by leveraging the recent enhancements in second language measurement and automatic speech recognition technology, to provide a more reliable assessment of English language proficiency that meets today's needs. As part of this effort, we will be temporarily changing the question format during the following period in order to collect sample data from test takers. Please note that the change in question format will not affect the scoring. We would appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

**Sample data collection period**

**July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 - December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021**

The question format will be switched sequentially from the 19th, and the switchover is expected to be completed on the 20th. There is a possibility that there will be a mixture of two question formats during the changeover period.

**Outline of key features**

**1. New introductory question type, Speech Sample will be added after the system check**

This question will remain after the response sample collection period.

**2. Two new test sections (Part G and Part H) will be added at the end of the test.**

**These sections are subject to response data collection.**

- There will be no changes to the scoring methodology or the scoring logic.
- The length of the test will increase by about two minutes.
- Responses to the new introductory question type, Speech Sample, will be available for review in the ScoreKeeper platform. This will replace the current audio samples available for review. Following the research phase of our work at the end of 2021, parts G and H will be removed from the test.
- The test will be automatically updated in your account. No action is required.

## Test format changes

Current		
Part	Task	# of Qs
-	-	-
A	Reading	8
B	Repeat	16
C	Questions	24
D	Sentence Builds	10
E	Story Retelling	3
F	Open Questions	2
-	-	-
-	-	-
<i>Response available for review:</i> Part F (2 questions)		

July-December 2021		
Part	Task	# of Qs
Introduction	Speech Sample	1
A	Reading	8
B	Repeat	16
C	Questions	24
D	Sentence Builds	10
E	Story Retelling	3
F	Open Questions	2
G	Conversations	1
H	Passage Comprehension	1
<i>Response available for review:</i> Speech Sample (1 question)		

Jan 2022-		
Part	Task	# of Qs
Introduction	Speech Sample	1
A	Reading	8
B	Repeat	16
C	Questions	24
D	Sentence Builds	10
E	Story Retelling	3
F	Open Questions	2
-	-	-
-	-	-
<i>Response available for review:</i> Speech Sample (1 question)		

## New test items

**Introduction (Speech Sample):** Before test takers start the test, they will be asked to provide a speech sample. They will hear a question and then will have 30 seconds to answer.

Describe a book you read as a child that you still remember. Explain why you still remember it.

**Conversation:** Test takers will hear a short conversation between two people. They will then be asked a question about the conversation and need to answer with a short phrase. The conversations will be about general topics such as work, travel, interpersonal exchanges, and family life.

*Speaker 1:* "Lucy, can you come to the office early tomorrow?"  
*Speaker 2:* "Sure, what time?"  
*Speaker 1:* "7:30 would be great."

Question: What will Lucy have to do tomorrow morning?

**Passage Comprehension:** Candidates will listen to a spoken passage and then answer three questions about it using short phrases. The passages will generally be simple stories that feature a situation, a character (or characters), a setting, and an ending.

Jason woke up feeling sick. He called his boss and explained that he could not come in to work. Immediately after making the phone call, he took some medicine. A few hours later, Jason no longer felt sick. Rather than waste the afternoon at home, he decided to go to work after all.

*After listening to a passage, the candidate hears and responds to three comprehension questions.*

Question 1: What problem did Jason have when he woke up?  
 Question 2: What did he do right after calling his boss?  
 Question 3: What did Jason do that afternoon?

For any questions or feedback about this change, please contact your local sales representative.

The Versant Product team