

2026 Hokkaido English Challenge

Test Preparation Package

A HEC Publication



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SECTION 1 – ALT PREPARATION

This section is to assist with general preparations for the HEC Test.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to help prepare you, the ALT, for the Hokkaido English Challenge Test. It will explain how the test should be administered, important deadlines as well as how to record your students' video entry. Please note that while the general rules and procedure for the junior and senior division of the HEC test are the same, there are some differences in the contents of the two tests.

For additional support, you can find past tests on the HEC website: hec.hajet.org/the-test/. While the HEC test has evolved over the past years, these tests are valuable practice resources for you and your student. The current HEC format has been used since 2012.

If you are interested in any aspect of the HEC test – content, administration, judging entries or in assisting with the content of the test – please contact the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs, Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson at hajet.hec.test@gmail.com. For general inquiries, contact the HEC Director, Deena Spivak, at hajet.hec.director@gmail.com, or the HEC Co-Director, Ashley St Charles, at hajet.hec.codirector@gmail.com.

TEST OVERVIEW

The registration deadline for the HEC test is **Friday, February 13th, 2026**. This involves completing the online registration form (available at hec.hajet.org) and paying the entry fee via bank transfer on or before the above date. The online registration form and downloadable versions are available on the HEC website hec.hajet.org. Please see page 10 of the HEC Guide for more information on the registration and payment process.¹

Upon completing the online registration form, you will be asked to provide the address at which you would like to receive the test. You may request that the test be sent to a school, your home or another location of your choosing. If you are entering students from multiple schools, you may have the tests for all the schools sent to the same address or directly to each school.

You should receive the test at your previously-determined address on **Monday, March 2nd, 2026**. Once you have received the test package, you may administer the test. You will have until **Tuesday, March 31st, 2026** to complete the test with your student(s). The video file must be uploaded to the Test Submission Google classroom by **March 31st, 2026**. **Instructions on how to upload submissions will be included with each test packet.**

All entries must be submitted by the above deadline. Please keep in mind that it will take time to review and prepare the final recording to be uploaded, so please ensure you have ample time to administer the test, consolidate your files, and upload. It is recommended that all tests be completed at least 10 days before the deadline as students may get sick (often the flu will keep a student out of school for a full week) or there may be upload issues. Please note that this is a hard deadline. If special accommodation is requested, it will be granted at the discretion of the HEC Board. Penalties may also be decided.

¹ The HEC Guide can be downloaded from the HEC website hec.hajet.org.

Test preparations may take place up until the time the test is **administered**. This means that, even after receiving the test package on March 1st, you may continue to work with your student to prepare for the test *provided* that the test envelope has not been opened and neither the ALT nor the student is aware of the test's exact contents. **Once you have administered the test at one school, you MAY NOT continue with preparations at other schools.**

All participating students from one school **MUST** be tested on the same day. If you are entering students from multiple schools, please administer the test at all the schools within a short time frame to prevent the test's contents from being shared. Arrange a test date ahead of time that is suitable for all students, the witness,² and yourself. In the event that testing every student on the same day is impossible – due to a large number of participating students or student illness, for example – the second version of the HEC test **MUST** be administered in place of the first version.

Entries must be submitted to the Test Submission Google classroom by **March 31st, 2026**. The results will be announced by email on **May 29th, 2026**. Winner's certificates will also be sent by mail to the school at this time. Each HEC entrant will receive a certificate of participation. Please choose an appropriate time to award the certificates such as in class or during an assembly to acknowledge your students' efforts.

² See page 14 for more information on the witness.

THE TEST PACKAGE

If you do not receive the test package by March 2nd, 2026, please immediately contact the HEC Test Committee Co-Chairs, Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson, at hajet.hec.test@gmail.com.

You will receive a separate test package for each school. Testing materials for all the students registered at the same school will be sent together in the same package. Exceptions will be made for cases in which two or more ALTs registered students from the same school. In these cases, separate test packages will be sent to each of the ALTs for the corresponding students registered.

When the test package arrives, there will be several components. You may open the test **package** as soon as you receive it. However, be careful **not to open the sealed test manuscript**. The test package will contain the following:

- (1) Cover Letter
- (2) Declaration Form
- (3) Sealed Test Manuscript Envelope **(DO NOT OPEN)**
- (4) Test Manuscript for ALT
- (5) Student supplements (enough copies for each student)
- (6) Certificates of participation for each student

Cover Letter

The cover letter outlines the contents of the test package. The submission links for the video entry and declaration form will be stated on the cover letter. If you are unable to upload your students' video entries, please contact the HEC Test Committee Chairs at hajet.hec.test@gmail.com.

Declaration Form

The witness must sign the declaration form (see *page 22*) **on camera** before the test begins. **The completed form must then be sent to the HEC Test Committee Chairs in picture or .PDF format.** A separate declaration form must be completed for each school. You may consolidate submission of multiple declaration forms in one upload should you have several schools. If the witness must change, a new form must be completed by the new witness.

Sealed Test Manuscript Envelope

This will be a sealed envelope that will be in the test package envelope. It will be labeled. **Please, DO NOT OPEN this envelope until you are in front of the video camera and ready to begin the test.**³ It will contain one test manuscript for the ALT to administer and student supplements. The student(s) **MUST NOT** take these supplements with them after the test. There will also be a blank sheet for each student to use when note taking is allowed. This also **MUST NOT** be given to the student after the test.

³ See steps 3 and 4 on page 13 for more information on how and when to open the test manuscript envelope.

LIST OF EQUIPMENT

The following items are required in order to administer the test:

1. A reliable video camera/digital video recorder (and tripod)
 - Please familiarize yourself with the camera/recorder and its functions before the test.
2. Reliable power supply for the camera/recorder
 - Preferably a power cord for the camera/recorder, but fully-charged batteries may also work.
3. Video storage medium
 - The original test may be recorded on any type of storage medium, but the final entry must be uploaded to the Google classroom.
4. Test manuscript in its original **sealed** envelope
5. Declaration form
6. Stopwatch/timer
 - For timed sections.
7. Student name sheet(s)
 - A separate sheet of A4 paper with each student's name in English should be shown to the camera before the respective student begins the test.
8. Pencils and pens
 - Provide many in case one stops working.
9. Blank paper
 - Students may take notes in certain sections. One piece of paper will be provided for each student but extra may be helpful. **All notes must be collected after the test.** Please give fresh paper to each student.
10. External microphone (optional)
 - This could improve sound quality, especially in the case of quieter students.
11. Bottled water/tea
 - May be present for yourself, the witness, and students.
12. A copy of this guide as a reference

TEST RULES

1. The test manuscript **MUST NOT** be opened before the declaration form has been signed in front of the camera. If the ALT administers the test at multiple schools, the Transparency Statement at the bottom of the declaration form must be read aloud on camera to affirm that the content of the test hasn't been relayed to any students at the new school.
2. There should be minimal breaks in the recording. Breaks may occur between schools or between students if there is not enough room on the recording medium.⁴
3. The ALT and the witness **MUST NOT** use Japanese during the test.
4. The ALT and the witness **MUST NOT** give visual cues during the test. This includes excessive gestures or visual confirmation that the student is correct or has made a mistake (i.e. shaking or nodding your head). Natural hand and face gestures that would be used conversationally are acceptable.
5. The ALT and the witness **MUST NOT** correct a student's pronunciation or answers during any part of the test.
6. The ALT **MAY** ask a student to repeat themselves an unlimited number of times if the ALT did not hear or believes the answer would not have been heard on camera. **The witness MUST NOT ask a student to repeat themselves.** The ALT **MUST NOT** ask the student to repeat themselves in order to encourage the student to correct themselves. The ALT may say "I don't understand," only if the ALT did not understand and a response is required.
7. The ALT **MAY** prompt the student if they are struggling. For example, the ALT may direct attention to certain sentences or picture elements and ask a question such as "What about this?" to try and draw a response from the student. Such prompts should be kept to a minimum and only used if the student is truly struggling. The witness **MUST NOT** provide such prompts. Remember that if the student is not struggling, interrupting them may cause them to lose points in some of the sections.
8. The ALT and witness **MAY** answer questions in English. This includes questions such as "What is *kawaii* in English?"
9. The ALT and witness **MUST NOT** answer any question that requires them to use

⁴ See page 16-18 for more information on the proper procedure for taking a break during recording.

any Japanese. This includes not being able to answer questions such as “What is ‘cute’ in Japanese?” The ALT and witness **MAY**, however, give definitions or explain words in English.

10. During timed sections, the student **MAY** see the stopwatch/timer or clock, but are not required to.
11. Students are only permitted the following items in the test room:
 - i. Pen(s) or pencil(s); ii. Eraser; iii. Sharpener; iv. Bottled beverage (optional: you may have water/drinks present for yourself, the witness, and students.)

All other items should be kept outside of the test environment.

12. Note paper will be provided in the sealed test envelope. The ALT may provide extra paper only if more than one sheet is needed per student.
13. Each student must forfeit his or her notes when they complete the test. The ALT **MUST** destroy said notes when they finish testing all registered students at one school. Neither the ALT nor witness may share the notes with anyone.

Please do your best to respect all the above rules to keep HEC fair for everyone. If any of the rules are broken, the issue will be referred to the HEC Test Committee Chairs.

Depending on the situation, the student’s score may be lowered or the student may be disqualified.

ADMINISTERING THE TEST

Follow these steps to ensure the test is completed properly:

1. **Start the video recording** when ONLY you (the ALT) and the witness are in the testing room.
2. **Ask the witness the three questions** from the Declaration Form⁵ in either English or Japanese – this includes the request for the signature statement. Write down their answers and have them sign. Tell the witness that they may go off-screen.
3. **Clearly show** the **UNOPENED** test manuscript envelope to the camera.
4. **Open the test manuscript envelope.** Take a few minutes to read through and **familiarize yourself** with the test. Make sure that all the pages are there and in order. If something is wrong/missing from the test, **temporarily suspend** administering the test to that student and **immediately** contact the HEC Test Committee Chairs. The test **should not** be administered in the event of missing test materials. A new test will be sent to you.
5. **Call in the first student. Show the student's name** written in English on a piece of A4 paper to the camera for a few seconds. Please make the letters are dark enough to be seen clearly on camera.
6. **Administer the test** following the directions on the test manuscript.
7. **Collect all notes and test materials** from the student after the test. **These materials must be destroyed. They MUST NOT be returned to the student at any time.**
8. **Let the camera record continuously.** Only stop the camera to put in new storage media or to go between schools. Students should not be allowed to talk to each other until they have **ALL** finished the test. *For further explanation, see pages 16-18.*
9. When the test has been administered to all of your students at **ALL** of your schools, please gather the recordings for **EACH** school and **upload to the Test**

⁵ See page 22 for a copy of the Declaration Form.

Submission Google classroom. The initial recording may be done in any format, but the final entry **MUST** be one that can be submitted to Google classrooms.

10. **CHECK THAT THE RECORDING IS COMPLETE AND WORKS!** Watch the recording in a media viewer and check the video and sound. Do not assume that everything is fine. If there is a problem, contact the HEC Test Committee Chairs immediately.

11. The whole recording should then be split by the ALT into **individual recordings for each student**. The title for the submission of the video should include the following information:

i. Your name ii. Student's name (English) iii. School's name (English)

13. If, for any reason, small irregularities occur (ex. forgetting to ask the witness a question), please include a note to the judge to explain what happened. **Small irregularities that do not affect the fairness of the competition will not disadvantage the student.**

All entries must be submitted by **March 31st, 2026.**

Declaration Form

You will receive a declaration form in the test package. This must be completed **on camera** by you and the witness as stated in step 2 as listed on page 13. The declaration form is a means to encourage fairness and transparency. It also acts as a date stamp for the video recording. Please fill this form out before beginning testing at each school. **All declaration forms must be submitted via the upload link provided on the cover letter of the test package.**

Witness

All testing must be attended by a witness. The witness is usually a JTE, but this is not mandatory. The witness may be any teacher from the school or another ALT. The witness will be asked to respond to three questions on the declaration form and to either sign or stamp it with their *inkan*. The questions may be asked and answered in either Japanese

or English. The witness does not have to speak fluent English, but should be able to discern if the ALT is feeding additional information to the student or if any other form of cheating occurs.

The witness is not expected to participate in the test. However, as stated in rule 8 on page 11, **the witness may answer questions** from the student in English. Questions must be asked only in English (not including the specific word a student is asking about, e.g. “How do you say *kawaii* in English?”) and both the witness and ALT may respond in English only.

If, for any reason, a single person cannot be the witness for the full duration of the testing at a school, please have the next substitute witness complete a new declaration form (in this case, **please photocopy the blank Declaration Form before the test begins**).

Likewise, when moving to another school, the new witness must complete a new declaration form. **The witness of each school may be the same person** if that teacher agrees to travel to multiple schools with the ALT.

Slip-ups

- If you realize during the test that you **missed a section or a question**, you may return to administer the missed section or questions at any point.
- If you **make a mistake**, don't panic. If possible, correct the mistake. If not possible, don't worry. As much as possible, errors on the part of the ALT will not affect the student's score.
- If you make a **large mistake** that you feel may affect the judging or may have given your student an unfair advantage, please contact the HEC Test Committee Chair immediately after testing to work out a solution. Please ensure that you make a note of the error and include it in an email at the time of video submission.

RECORDING BREAKS

If you are entering more than one student, you may find that you are unable to continuously record every student's entry. This may be because all the entries won't fit onto a single storage medium, or that your students are at different schools. Please follow these instructions for making the necessary recording breaks.

Breaking Between Students at the Same School

1. Determine an Appropriate Stopping Point.

Recording breaks should occur between students.⁶ If you have many students at a single school, it is possible that all the entries will not fit into one recording. You should factor about 15 minutes of initial recording time for the declaration form, opening the test manuscripts, and general preparation (including carefully reading the instructions before inviting the student into the room). Next, you should budget at least 30-40 minutes for each student. For example, if you are only able to record for 90 minutes, you should break after the second student, despite there still being some space on the storage medium. The remaining time on the medium will likely not be enough to fully complete the next test. Keep an eye and be aware of the time left for the recording. Be prepared in case some tests run long and you may have to break sooner than expected.

2. Stopping the Recording.

When you have finished testing a student and you have insufficient recording room for the next student, you will have to stop the recording. To do so, finish the test with the current student, send them away and invite the next student in. Once seated and ready to begin the test, state to the camera that you are stopping recording number one or two (whatever the case may be). At that point, stop the recording.

3. Switch the Recording Medium.

While the next student to be tested is sitting and ready, prepare the video camera to resume recording.

4. Resuming Recording.

⁶ See page 18 for instructions on how to deal with accidental stops mid-test.

Start the video camera and state that you are beginning recording number two or three (whatever the case may be). Read the Transparency Statement.⁷ The next student to be tested should remain seated and ready during this process.

5. Resume Testing.

At this point you may continue with the test as usual. The student's name (clearly written on A4 paper) should be shown on the new recording before beginning their test as explained in step 5 on page 13.

Breaking Between Schools

1. Changing Storage Mediums.

Decide if you will continue to use the same storage medium or use a new one for each school. If you are only testing one or two students at each school, it may make sense to simply record all the tests on the same medium. However, if you have several students at each school, it is best to use a new storage medium for each school. This way you can keep recording breaks during testing at each school to a minimum.

2. Finishing the Test.

Once you have finished testing all the students at a school, you may stop the recording. There is no special procedure for ending the testing at a school.

3. Beginning at a New School.

You should go to the next school within a short time of finishing at the previous school (i.e. within a day or two). **DO NOT** bring the test manuscript from the previous school; you will be sent a new sealed manuscript for each school. The preparations for testing at every school are the same; once you have your camera and testing space set up begin as previously described.

4. Read the Transparency Statement.⁸

You will have to read the transparency statement before beginning anything at the new school.

5. Repeat Testing Procedure (for each school).

You must have a witness and complete a new declaration form at each school. The

⁷ The Transparency Statement can be found at the bottom of the declaration form on page 22.

⁸ The Transparency Statement can be found at the bottom of the declaration form on page 22.

witness may be the same person or a different person, but they must complete a new declaration form at each school, regardless. You must show a sealed test envelope to the camera. You **MUST NOT** bring the test manuscript from previous schools to subsequent schools or discuss the content of the test with anyone until you have finished testing **ALL** your students at **ALL** schools.

Accidental Mid-test Stops

1. Check Elapsed Time and Storage Space.

Stopping a recording mid-test should be avoided if possible. Stopping mid-test can cause sections and questions to be left out of the final submission or cause students to become flustered. It is advisable to have a timepiece apart from the stopwatch used for testing to keep track of the total elapsed time.

2. Stop the Test.

As soon as you realize the camera has stopped recording, immediately stop testing. If you believe you will run out of time before the test is complete, try to stop between sections of the test.

3. Switch Storage Medium.

The student should remain seated and ready to resume testing while you replace the storage medium in the camera.

4. Resuming Recording.

State to the camera what happened, the current student's name and which recording number you are beginning (for example, state that you are beginning recording number two after the first tape ran out of room). Read the Transparency Statement. The student should remain seated during this process.

5. Resume Testing.

Continue with the test from the point where you stopped. You **MUST NOT** repeat any part of the test even if it was not recorded. If part of the test was not recorded, please make a note to the judge about the missing section and how the student responded during the missing section. Contact the HEC Test Committee Chairs as well with this information. While ensuring the competition remains fair, every effort will be made to prevent such missing sections from adversely affecting the student's score.

TESTING ADVICE

Before the Test

- Find a quiet location to administer the test where you won't be disturbed.
- Make sure that you and the student are on camera for the entire duration of the test. Choose a well-lit area for the test, but do not sit with a window in the background as this will make you nothing more than dark silhouettes. Try to position yourself and the student close to the camera so that the judges can see both your faces. You may sit at a table facing each other; it's all right for the camera to record the sides of your faces.
- Practice using the video camera before the test. Check volume levels. Experiment with different locations to get the best sound and lighting qualities.
- Gather all the necessary equipment well in advance of the test date.
- Make sure that the witness and the student(s) are familiar with the testing process.

On Camera

- After opening the test manuscript, take your time to familiarize yourself with it. Make sure that you understand everything before calling in the first student.
- Do not feel pressured. There is no time limit on the ALT to deliver instructions.
- Encourage your student to speak clearly and loudly.
- Remain approachable and encouraging throughout. Smile!
- You may have this test guide with you during the test. Take time to refer to it during the test if need be. It can be easy to become flustered or lose your concentration.

After the Test

- Talk with the student about how they did on the test. Congratulate the student on having completed the challenge.

- Send feedback to the HEC Test Committee Chairs. There is always a need for feedback in every step of HEC. Let the HEC Test Committee Chairs know of any problems, uncertainties, and things you liked as well as disliked. This will help ensure that positive aspects are not changed in the future.

TESTING CHECKLIST

Before the Test

- ☐ I have read and understood the HEC Guide.
- ☐ I have registered my student by completing the online registration form and paying the entry fee by Friday, February 13th, 2026.⁹
- ☐ I have read and fully understood this HEC Test Preparation Pack.
- ☐ I have made sure that the video recorder works properly.
- ☐ I have checked that the video recorder has a reliable power supply.
- ☐ I have enough storage media for ALL my students at ALL my schools.
- ☐ I have everything listed under “List of Equipment” on page 10.

During the Test

- ☐ I have asked the witness the three question on the declaration form,¹⁰ noted their answers, and had them sign or stamp the form.
- ☐ I have shown the unopened test manuscript envelope to the camera.
- ☐ After opening the test manuscript, I have taken a few minutes to familiarize myself with it.
- ☐ I have shown the name sheets for all the students before their recordings.
- ☐ I have waited until the appropriate time before stopping the camera.

⁹ Registration forms are available as of December 1st on the HEC website: hec.hajet.org.

¹⁰ The Declaration form will be sent with the test (a copy can be found below) and the Transparency Statement is at the bottom of the Declaration form.

After a Recording Break

- ☐ I have prepared the camera to resume recording for at least the duration of the next test.
- ☐ I have asked the student to remain seated while I replaced the storage medium/batteries (if the break was at the same school).
- ☐ I have read the Transparency Statement on camera.
- ☐ I have stated the recording number (e.g. recording number two).

After the Test

- ☐ I verified that everything was recorded properly by watching the recording before submitting.
- ☐ I have noted in writing any errors I made and included relevant details.
- ☐ I have formatted the recording in a suitable file format for upload to the Google classroom link.
- ☐ I have uploaded the declaration form using the Google classroom link.
- ☐ I have uploaded the final recording and I have made sure it was submitted by **March 31st, 2026**.

DECLARATION FORM

2026 Hokkaido English Challenge Declaration Form

DECLARATION QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of this school?
この学校の名前は何ですか？
2. What is your name?
お名前は何ですか？
3. What is the date?
今日は何日ですか？

A verbal response to these questions on camera will suffice.

**If the witness must change for whatever reason, please fill out a NEW Declaration form for that witness.*

REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Now please sign or stamp this declaration form.

証明のため、下の証人のサイン、また印鑑を押してください。

ALT Name:

A L T の名前 : _____

School Name:

学校の名前 : _____

Witness Name:

証人の名前 : _____

Witness Signature or Stamp:

証人のサイン、また印鑑を押してください :



Read the following at the beginning of EACH new recording medium

TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

I hereby state that I have not given any information pertaining to the contents of the 2026 HEC Test to the students that appear on this recording.

TEST STRUCTURE

The 2026 version of the test includes changes from some prior versions of the test. These include a complete change of rubrics, and some changes to the JHS “Comic Description”, and the SHS “How do you...?” sections. Even if you are familiar with the test from previous years (particularly those before 2025), we strongly suggest you review the new rubrics and the changes made to those sections.

Junior High School

Test Sections:

Section I: Warm-up Questions

Sections II: Picture Questions

Section III: Reading Comprehension

Section IV: Listening

Comprehension

Section V: Comic Description

Section VI: 20 Questions

Senior High School

Test Sections:

Section I: Warm-up Questions

Sections II: Picture Questions

Section III: How do you...?

Section IV: Listening

Comprehension

Section V: Comic Description

Section VI: 20 Questions

Points to Consider

- If an instruction says that the student or the ALT “may” do something, it means that it is optional. Neither the student nor the ALT is obligated to do it. For example, if an instruction says that a student “may take notes,” it is ok for the student to take notes if they choose to do so. **Please prepare your student to understand which instructions are optional.**
- Unless stated otherwise, a 30 second warning may be given before the end of each time limit. Please be sure to explain to your student ahead of time how the warnings will work so they are not distracted by it. You may also decide with your student not to provide these warnings. Students may see the timing device during the duration of the test.

- When preparing with your student, keep the judging criteria in mind. The judging rubrics can be found on pages 40 and 62 of this document.
- Make sure that your student becomes familiar with the test format, the rules and instructions. This will make your student feel more comfortable during the test as well as prevent them from losing points due to a misunderstanding of the instructions or rules. **This includes ensuring the student knows which questions may be repeated and which may not.**
- If you are entering multiple students, when administering the test, tailor the test to each student. In some sections, you are able to select the questions to ask your students. Make your selection based on the student you are currently testing. You are encouraged but not required to ask different questions for each student.

SECTION 2 – STUDENT PREPARATION

This section is to assist with preparing your students for the HEC Test.

GETTING STARTED

This section is to assist in preparing your student for the test. You will find **explanations for each section** of the test, a **copy of the judging rubric** as well as **advice on how to help your students prepare**. While general rules and procedures for both divisions are similar, there are some differences between the two. These will be outlined in detail.

The text found in **black** will be the actual text that will be used in the instructions on the test. The information found in **red** will not appear on the final test. The information in red is either advice and additional instruction or information that will be modified for the final test. You can use this information along with past tests to create questions and practice tests for your student(s) when you are preparing for HEC.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL EXAMPLE TEST

This test manuscript contains X pages (including this page). There should be enough duplicates of page X, page X, and page X to give a fresh copy to each student. There should also be one blank page for each student for note taking. Please make sure you have received all pages now.

If the test envelope does not contain the full X pages of the test manuscript plus enough student supplements, **temporarily suspend** administering the test to the current student and **immediately** contact the HEC Test Committee Chair. The test **should not** be administered in the event of missing test materials. A new test will be sent to you.

HEC Test Committee Chairs:
Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson
hajet.hec.test@gmail.com

****ATTENTION!****

- There are **six sections** in this test.
- Please carefully read the directions before beginning each section.
- Some sections are timed while others are not.
- Students may take notes in certain sections.
- The student is NOT allowed to bring any notes into the test room.
- The student is NOT allowed to take notes during sections 1 and 2 of this test
- The student is allowed to take notes during sections 3, 4, 5, and 6 of this test.

Please watch the video immediately following the administration of the test. It is your responsibility to ensure that all your video entries are recorded properly. Improperly recorded tests will significantly limit your student's chances of success. HEC is not obliged to allow a retest or offer a refund.

CHECK YOUR RECORDINGS BEFORE YOU MAIL THEM!

Section One: Warm-up Questions

This is a warm-up section. Please speak slowly and clearly. In step 3, please select questions you think your student will be most comfortable with. Remember that this is supposed to be fun; smile!

- Questions may be repeated once (asked twice in total).
- There is NO time limit.
- The student may NOT take notes.

Step 1: Please read the following introductory statement:

“Section One: Warm-up questions. I will ask you some easy questions.”

Step 2: Please ask the student both the following required questions:

1. What is your name?
2. How are you today?

Step 3: Please ask the student **five** additional questions from the following list. Please choose questions that you believe your student will be most comfortable with.

- Question 1
- Question 2...
- Question 15

In this space, there will be a list of about 15 simple questions. They are meant to get your student warmed-up and comfortable with using English for the test. There will be some variety in the grammar and vocabulary needed in the questions. Please choose questions that you believe would be easiest for your student. Do not worry if you ask multiple questions that use the same structure. Examples of possible questions can be found on past tests available at hec.hajet.org. The list of questions may contain some questions from previous years as well as entirely new ones. While not required in this section, your students can offer their own additions rather than a simple answer if they are comfortable doing so. E.g. “Can you play the piano?” Answer: “yes” Or “yes, I can” but more complex answers are also welcome, such as “I started playing the piano 3 years ago,” though they are not worth additional points.

Tip: *Help your students listen for keywords and stresses that will help them understand questions faster. Practice common formats and responses.*

Section Two: Picture Questions

In this section, the student will be given a picture (Section 2: Picture – Student Copy). You will ask the student **three** required questions, and then the student will ask you **three** questions about the picture. Please give brief, relevant responses to your student's questions.

- Questions addressed to the student may be repeated once (asked twice in total).
- There is an initial ONE MINUTE time limit to look at the picture and prepare. Following this initial minute, there is NO time limit.
- You MAY give a warning when there are 30 seconds left to look at the picture.
- The student may NOT take notes.

Step 1: Give the student the supplement titled Section 2: Picture – Student Copy

Step 2: Read the following introductory statement: "Section Two: Picture Questions. Please look at this picture for one minute, then I will ask you three questions."

Step 3: Once one minute has elapsed, ask the student the following questions one by one. Allow the student to respond between each question. Do not show the student the written questions. You may repeat each question once (asked twice in total).

- *Question 1*
- *Question 2*
- *Question 3*

Three questions will be listed here. The questions will ask the student to identify or explain elements of the picture. The answers will generally be straightforward, but there may be room for interpretation. For example, a piece of fruit shown in the picture could be identified: as fruit, an apple, a pear or something else depending on how much detail there is. These could all be considered correct. Questions may require the ALT to physically point out elements. For example, asking "What's this?" while pointing at something in the picture.

Step 4: Have the student ask you three questions about the picture. Suggested sentence: “Great! Now, please ask me three questions.” Please give brief and relevant responses to your student’s questions.

The student’s questions can be in the same format as those of the ALT. However, the student will receive more points for using diverse structures – meaning making each question different from the previous one. For example, the student would receive low marks for simply asking, “What’s this?” three times.

Tip: *Teach students general question formats that are easily applied to any picture. Make sure they know it is OK to ask “how do I say ~ in English?” This is the only way that Japanese is OK during the test. Remember, the ALT and witness must only speak in English. If the student wants to ask, “What is the bear doing?” but does not know the word for bear, they could ask, “How do you say ‘kuma’ in English?” which the ALT or witness can then answer with “Bear.” This question can be used throughout the test and shows a willingness to try new vocabulary and enthusiasm for English. The comic section and 20 questions are the most common places for use of this question but anywhere is acceptable.*

A small copy of the picture will appear here. A full-page version will be provided to the student and labeled “Section 2: Picture—Student Copy.”

Section Three: Reading Comprehension

In this section, the student will read a passage first silently and then aloud. The student will then be asked to respond to five comprehension questions.

- The student will have an initial limit of THREE MINUTES to silently look over the text. Following this time, there is NO time limit.
- You MAY give a warning when there are 30 seconds left to look at the passage.
- The student MAY take notes.
- Questions may be repeated an UNLIMITED number of times.

Step 1: Give the student the text passage on the page titled Section 3: Reading Passage – Student Copy.

Step 2: Read the following introductory statement: “Section Three: Reading Comprehension. Please read this text silently. You have three minutes.”

Step 3: After three minutes have elapsed, stop the student and have them read the text out loud to you. Suggested sentence: “OK. Now please read the text to me.”

Step 4: Please ask the student the following five questions. Allow the student to respond between each question. You may repeat the questions as many times as necessary.

- Question 1
- Question 2
- Question 3
- Question 4
- Question 5

Five questions will be listed here. Key vocabulary words will be found in the passage. The questions will mostly use the same vocabulary as the text and the student will only be expected to answer questions using the same key vocabulary. By listening to the question, the student should be able to determine where the answer can be found in the text, even if they are uncertain of the meaning of the question. However, information may be found in multiple sentences. For top marks, a student must recognize this and aggregate the necessary information into one answer. For example, the text may read, “Bob likes cake. He also likes sushi.” For top marks, a student will respond to “What does

Bob like?” with one sentence such as “Bob/He likes cake and sushi.”

Tip: *Students may ask for you to explain unfamiliar words but all explanations will be in English. For example, the student could ask, “What does ‘excited’ mean?” Your response could be “When you are really happy and waiting for something to happen. For example, when you have tickets to a concert and can’t wait to go.” You can also act out the meaning to go with the description.*

A copy of the text passage will appear here. A full-page version will be provided to the student that will be labeled “Section 3: Reading Passage – Student Copy”.

Section Four: Listening Comprehension

In this section, you will read a passage twice to the student and then ask four questions about the content.

- There is NO time limit.
- The student MAY take notes.
- The student may NOT see the text.
- The questions are asked only ONCE before the reading, but they may be repeated an UNLIMITED number of times after the text has been read.

Step 1: Read the following introductory sentence to the student: “Section Four: Listening Comprehension. You can take notes. There are four questions. First, I will read all the questions. Then, I will read the story two times. Then, I will ask you the four questions again, and you can give the answers. Here are the four questions:” (Questions are found following step 4.)

Step 2: Please slowly and clearly ask the student questions one through four. Do NOT leave enough time for the student to write down the questions word for word.

The student may take notes, but the student is not meant to take a dictation of the text nor of the questions. Although you should read the questions slowly, do not allow for the student to write down the questions word for word. Instead they should take down key words in English or Japanese to remind them what to listen for.

Step 3: Read the text twice with a small pause between the readings. Do NOT show the text to the student.

Step 4: Ask the student questions one through four again. Allow the student to respond between each question. There is no time-limit on this section, but if 3 minutes have passed and a student seems to be struggling, you are strongly encouraged to move on.

- Question 1
- Question 2
- Question 3
- Question 4

The questions for this section will be similar to those in section three. The process of answering them will be very similar as well.

***Tip:** Keyword listening for the questions and text will be very important in this section. Some training on how to take keyword/concept notes can also be helpful.*

Text: (DO NOT show student)

*The text to be read will appear here. It **MUST NOT** be shown to the student.*

Section Five: Comic Description:

In this section, the student will look at a simple comic and describe what they see and think is happening.

- The student has THREE MINUTES of preparation time and TWO MINUTES to respond.
- You MAY give the student a 30 second warning before each of the time limits is up.
- The student MAY take notes.

Step 1: Give the student the page titled Section 5: Comic – Student Copy.

Step 2: Read the following introductory sentence: “Section Five: Comic Description. Please look at this picture for three minutes. Then, please tell me about it. You can use a pen and paper to make notes.”

Step 3: Allow the student to review the comic for three minutes. You may warn the student when there are only 30 seconds left.

Step 4: Once three minutes has elapsed, ask the student to tell you about the comic in two minutes. Suggested sentence: “Please tell me about this comic. You have two minutes. Ready? Go.” You may warn the student when there are only 30 seconds left.

***Tip:** This section is about the student talking as much as possible with a logical flow. **DO NOT** interrupt the student. Let them talk as long as they can without you saying anything. Responses such as nodding or short responses like “ah”, “oh”, “yes”, “uh-huh”, etc. are perfectly alright especially if they prompt the student to continue talking. **DO NOT** correct the student for any reason. If the student has not said anything for some time and is looking lost, you can give them a leading question to get them going again. This should be general, short, and used only if the student needs it. Examples are: “What about this?”, “What is he doing?”, “What is on the floor?”, “How about this?”, “What happens next?” etc.*

A simple comic with no or minimal text will go here. It will have several panels. The goal is to have the student describe the scene and tell a story. The student is expected to describe a chronological sequence of events. The student may also describe the setting, the characters and what they are doing. Students can make-up some relevant details such as giving characters names, making-up the relationship between two characters, or

assigning arbitrary colors or qualities to objects, but it is not necessary and will not be scored.

In previous years this section often used single images, but that is no longer the case as of this year and the comic on the test will have multiple panels. Make sure to adjust for this difference during your preparation.

The student will be provided with a full-page version of the comic. It will be labeled “Section 5: Comic – Student Copy”.

Section Six: Twenty Questions

In this section, you take on the identity of a person, a place, or a thing. The student has six minutes to ask you 20 yes/no questions to gather information in order to determine your identity. You must take on the identity of the person, place, or thing indicated below. Information about each is provided. Please read the information before beginning this section.

- The student MAY take notes.
- Should the student guess your identity in fewer than 20 questions, you may play again using one of the remaining two identities. However the limit of 20 questions does NOT reset and the student will only have the remaining questions from the first round to determine the second identity.

*To further clarify, if you initially take on the identity of the place and the student guesses correctly after only asking 11 questions, the game is **NOT** over. You should then take on the identity of either the person or thing and have the student try to guess your new identity. Since the student already asked 11 questions, they will only have nine questions left to try and determine your new identity. Carry on to the third identity if the first and second identities are guessed after fewer than 20 questions in total. A student's guess as to the identity counts as 1 of their 20 questions.*

- The game ends after six minutes, after a total of 20 questions have been asked, or after all three identities have been determined, whichever comes first.
- Please warn your student when there are only two questions left.
- You MAY warn the student when there are 30 seconds left.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, you may respond with "I don't know," and that question will NOT count towards the 20-question limit.
- You may only respond to questions that can be answered in a yes/no structure. However, nuanced answers such as "maybe," "sometimes," etc. may be given if a definite answer cannot be given. Please be sure your nuanced answer does not give excessive information. These questions WILL count towards the 20-question limit.
- Any and all guesses will also count towards the 20-question limit.

Step 1: Please read all the directions, rules, and identity descriptions before beginning this section.

Step 2: Please choose one of the three identities listed below that you believe the student would know best.

Step 3: Read the following introductory sentence: “Section 6: 20 Questions. We have six minutes. You can take notes. Please ask me yes-or-no questions. **pause** I’m a _____.” (Insert “person,” “place,” or “thing” as appropriate.) Please keep a tally of how many questions are asked.

*The three identities will be listed here. There will be one person, one place, and one thing. In all cases, we will try to choose identities that junior high school students will be familiar with. The person could be a real living person, someone who is deceased, or a fictional character. For example, Mickey Mouse could be the “person” identity. The “place” could be very large such as a country or region, such as “Hawaii,” or more localized, such as “Tokyo Disneyland.” The “thing” will be concrete and tangible such as a hamburger. **Abstract or intangible things such as “hope” or “soccer” will not be used.** To avoid any possible confusion with its classification, animals will not be used, except if the animal happens to be a character. A “bear” will not appear as an option, but “Winnie the Pooh” could be selected as the “person” identity.*

Facts and details pertaining to each option will be listed here as well to assist you with answering the student’s questions. Every possible fact cannot be included with the test, so you will have to pull on your own knowledge. Answer as best as you can, but don’t worry if you don’t know; you can say, “I don’t know,” during the test. After the test, if you discover that you told the student an incorrect answer and think it may have affected the end result of this section, please inform the assigned judge as well as the HEC Test Committee Chair so that this can be factored in during the adjudication process.

Please work with your student ahead of time to stay calm and avoid becoming flustered during the test. During adjudication, the process of asking the questions is weighted much more heavily than actually correctly guessing the identity.

When answering questions, you may answer with simply “yes” or “no.” You may also answer with full sentences such as “No, I’m not red.” Some students may benefit from having you repeat the information in a full-sentence answer, while doing so for other students may be more of a distraction than helpful. Answer in the format that is best for your student.

Questions should use a variety of grammar points if possible. Instead of asking “Are you...” over and over, using “Can you...” or “Do you...” is encouraged, and will result in

more points earned.

For the place, you may find certain location questions difficult to answer. For example, if the “place” identity is China and the student asks, “Are you in China?” the answer can be difficult. For the sake of argument, you can say “Yes, I’m in China.” Please prepare your student to understand that such questions and answers could be a possibility.

Normally the game is played where you, the ALT, takes on an identity and questions are asked in the second-person. However, third-person may be used. Students may use either “Are you...” or “Is it...” to guess your identity.

Tip: *This is often the hardest section of the test. Take the time to practice it with your students. You cannot suggest questions to your students during the test. Please take the time to prepare them in advance. This section is an excellent time for your student to ask, “How do you say ~ in English?”*

The test is now over. Please congratulate your student for his or her hard work. Collect all papers and test materials from the student. The student may NOT leave with any notes or testing materials.

JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL JUDGING RUBRIC

This is the rubric that will be used by the HEC judges to evaluate each junior high school entry in the 2026 HEC Competition. Throughout the judging process, judges will be asked to keep in mind that all entries in the junior level have only completed the first year of junior high school English.

Individual sections are worth different percentages of the overall score. The general section is worth about 33%. The 1st section is worth about 4%, and the remaining sections are worth 12.5% each. At the bottom of this rubric is a breakdown for determining the final score of a student.

General Evaluation

Max Score: 20 points

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Enthusiasm and Attitude	Student speaks in an appropriate volume, with a clear voice, and does not seem affected by mistakes.	Student speaks in an appropriate volume, with a clear voice, and only seems slightly affected by mistakes.	Student speaks quietly, and seems affected by mistakes.	Student speaks very quietly, and is clearly affected by mistakes.
Pronunciation	Student's English pronunciation is very natural with only occasional mistakes that do not affect meaning.	Student's English pronunciation is good, with some mistakes that do not affect meaning.	Student's English pronunciation is good, but with some mistakes that affect meaning.	Student's English pronunciation is poor, with many mistakes that affect meaning.
Grammar	Student's grammar is	Student's grammar is	Student's grammar is	Student's grammar is

	mostly correct, with very few mistakes which do not affect meaning.	generally correct, with some mistakes which do not affect meaning.	generally correct, but with some mistakes which affect meaning.	poor, with many mistakes which affect meaning.
Non-Grammatical Communicative Ability	Student's communication is almost always clear, with almost no ambiguity as to what is being said.	Student's communication is mostly clear, with almost no ambiguity as to what is being said.	Student's communication is almost always clear, but there is some ambiguity to what is being said.	Student's communication is not clear, with great ambiguity to what is being said.
Ability to Deal with Unfamiliar Words	Student shows almost no signs of unfamiliarity with words, and when they do, are quick to confirm the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.	Student shows occasional signs of unfamiliarity with words, and when they do, are quick to confirm the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.	Student seems unfamiliar with many words, but confirms the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.	Student seems unfamiliar with many words, and does not confirm the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.

Section 1: Warm-up Questions

Max Score: 4 points

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Quality of Responses	Student answers	Student answers	Student answers	Student does not

	quickly and correctly.	correctly.	mostly correctly. Questions are answered slowly.	answer most questions correctly. Questions that are answered are answered slowly and with difficulty.
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Section 2: Picture Questions

Max Score: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Quality of Answers	Student answers all questions correctly.	Student answers 2 of 3 questions correctly.	Student answers 1 question correctly.	Student answers no questions correctly.
Quality and Variety of Questions	Student asks 3 distinct questions. Each question uses different grammar and refers to different objects.	Student asks 1 distinct question, 2 questions are the same (i.e. using "What's this?" twice). At least some variation in grammar, and each question refers to different objects.	Student asks 1 distinct question, 2 questions are the same. There is little variety in grammar and some questions refer to the same object.	Student fails to ask 3 questions or asks the same question 3 times.

Section 3: Reading Comprehension

Max Score: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Quality of Answers	Student answers all 5 questions correctly.	Student answers 3 or 4 of 5 questions correctly.	Student answers 1 or 2 of 5 questions correctly.	Student answers none of the 5 questions correctly.
Oral Reading Quality	Student reads without stops or mistakes and places appropriate pauses after commas and periods.	Student reads with some slight stops and mistakes and places appropriate pauses after commas and periods.	Student reads with some stops and mistakes and sometimes forgets to pause after commas and periods.	Student reads with many stops and mistakes and often forgets to pause after commas and periods.

Section 4: Listening Comprehension

Max Score: 4 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Quality of Answers	Student answers all 4 questions correctly.	Student answers 3 questions correctly.	Student answers 1 or 2 questions correctly.	Student answers no questions correctly.

Section 5: Comic Description

Max Score: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Sequencing/Flow	Student's description follows logically from beginning to ending. Details are included often, and are mentioned in sequence with the story.	Student's description follows logically from beginning to ending with some occasional deviation. Details are included often, but may come at random intervals.	Student's description only sometimes follows logically from beginning to ending. Details that are included come at random.	Student's description does not follow logically from beginning to ending, and description is mostly random details.
Use of Time	Student speaks for the full 2 minutes with barely any pause.	Student speaks for the full 2 minutes with occasional pauses.	Student speaks for about 1 of 2 minutes, with occasional pauses.	Student does not speak for even 1 of 2 minutes and pauses often.

Section 6: 20 Questions

Max Points: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Logical Deduction	Student's questions follow logically, and have no redundancies (i.e repetition or gaining information already gained in	Student's questions almost always follow logically, and have few if any redundancies. Any guesses follow logically from	Student's questions sometimes follow logically, and have multiple redundancies. Any guesses do not always follow logically.	Student's questions do not follow logically, and have multiple obvious redundancies. Any guesses are random, following no logic.

	earlier questions). Any guesses follow logically from questions asked.	questions asked.		
Quality of Questions	Questions use a wide variety of grammar and are always clear to the listener.	Questions use a variety of grammar and are usually clear to the listener.	Questions use little variety of grammar and are sometimes unclear to the listener.	Questions use almost no variety of grammar and are often unclear to the listener.

General Evaluation: 33.3% (each point is worth 1.665% of total score)

Section 1: 4.2% (each point is worth 1.05% total score)

Section 2: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

Section 3: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

Section 4: 12.5% (each point is worth 3.125% total score)

Section 5: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

Section 6: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL EXAMPLE TEST

This test manuscript contains X pages (including this page). There should be enough duplicates of page X, page X, and page X to give a fresh copy to each student. There should also be one blank page for each student for note taking. Please make sure you have received all pages now.

If the test envelope does not contain the full X pages of the test manuscript plus enough student supplements, **temporarily suspend** administering the test to the current student and **immediately** contact the HEC Test Committee Chair. The test **should not** be administered in the event of missing test materials. A new test will be sent to you.

HEC Test Committee Chairs:
Emma Buchel & Kya Richardson
hajet.hec.test@gmail.com

****ATTENTION!****

- There are **six sections** in this test.
- Please carefully read the directions before beginning each section.
- Some sections are timed while others are not.
- Students may take notes in certain sections.
- Students may NOT take any notes or other materials away with them after the test.

Please watch the video immediately following the administration of the test. It is your responsibility to ensure that all your video entries are recorded properly. Improperly recorded tests will significantly limit your student's chances of success. HEC is not obliged to allow a retest or offer a refund.

CHECK YOUR RECORDINGS BEFORE YOU MAIL THEM!

Section One: Warm-up Questions

This is a warm-up section. Please speak slowly and clearly. In step 3, please select questions you think your student will be most comfortable with. Remember that this is supposed to be fun; smile!

- Questions may be repeated once (asked twice in total).
- There is NO time limit.
- The student may NOT take notes.

Step 1: Please read the following introductory statement:

“Section One: Warm-up questions. I will ask you some easy questions.”

Step 2: Please ask the student the following three required questions:

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is the name of your school?

Step 3: Please ask the student **five** additional questions from the following list. Please choose questions that you believe your student will be most comfortable with.

- Question 1
- Question 2...
- Question 15

In this space, there will be a list of 15 questions. They will be simple questions that require simple answers. They are meant to get your student warmed-up and comfortable with using English for the test. There will be some variety in the grammar and vocabulary needed in the questions. Please choose questions that you believe will be easiest for your student. This is not a section for showing- off. Do not worry if you ask multiple questions that use the same structure. Examples of possible questions can be found on past tests, available at hec.hajet.org. The list of questions may contain some questions from previous years as well as entirely new questions. The list is changed every year.

While this section does not require it, your students can offer their own additions rather than a simple answer if they are comfortable with it. E.g. “Can you play the piano?” Answer: “yes” Or “yes, I can” but more complex answers are also welcome, such as “I started playing the piano 3 years ago,” though they will not earn your students additional points.

Tip: Help your students listen for keywords and stresses that will help them understand questions faster. Practice common formats and responses.

Section Two: Picture Questions

In this section, the student will be given a picture (Section 2: Picture – Student Copy). You will ask the student three required questions, and then the student will ask you three questions about the picture. Please give brief, relevant responses to your student's questions.

- Questions addressed to the student may be repeated once (asked twice in total).
- There is NO time limit.
- The student may NOT take notes.

Step 1: Give the student the supplement titled Section 2: Picture – Student Copy

Step 2: Read the following introductory statement: "Section Two: Picture Questions. Please look at this picture. I will ask you three questions."

Step 3: Ask the student the following questions one by one. Allow the student to respond between each question. Do not show the student the written questions. You may repeat each question once (asked twice in total).

- *Question 1*
- *Question 2*
- *Question 3*

Three questions will be listed here. The questions will generally be asking the student to identify or explain elements of the picture. The answers will generally be straightforward, but there may be some room for interpretation. For example, a piece of fruit shown in the picture could be identified as fruit, an apple, a pear or something else depending on how much detail there is. These could all be considered correct. Questions may initially prompt something to look at and then ask a question. For example, the question may say, "There is a girl in the doorway. What is she doing?"

Step 4: Have the student ask you three questions about the picture. Suggested sentence: "Great! Now, please ask me three questions." Please give brief and relevant responses to your student's questions.

The student's questions can be in the same format as those of the ALT. However, the student will receive more points for using diverse structures. This means different from

those of the ALT as well as making each question different from the previous one. For example, the student would receive low marks for simply asking, “What’s this?” three times.

Tip: Teach students general question formats that are easily applied to any picture. Make sure they know it is OK to ask, “How do I say ~ in English?”, as this is the only way that Japanese is acceptable during the test. Remember the ALT and witness must only speak in English. If they want to say, “What is the bear doing?” but do not know the word for bear, they could ask, “How do you say ‘kuma’ in English?” which the ALT or witness can answer with “Bear”. This question can be used throughout the test and shows a willingness to try new vocabulary and enthusiasm for English.

Question use — The comic section, how to, and 20 questions are the most common places for question use but anywhere is acceptable.

Students will be able to earn points by asking more complex questions. Rather than asking “What is this?” they should try to ask “What is he holding?” or “What is on the desk?” Questions that avoid pointing are best. An ability to discern what the question is about will earn more points. Like the above: “There is a girl in the doorway. What is she doing?”

A small copy of the picture will appear here. A full-page version will be provided to the student and labeled “Section 2: Picture – Student Copy.”

Section Three: How do you...?

In this section, the student will demonstrate his or her ability to explain a process in a systematic and methodical way. You will ask the student to describe how to do one of the tasks or activities listed in step one.

- There is NO time limit.
- The student may NOT take notes.

Step 1: Choose one of the three 'How to...' options below:

- Activity 1
- Activity 2
- Activity 3

Three tasks or activities will be listed here. They will all be menial tasks that every high school student would know how to do and require a few steps. Encourage your student to be as detailed in their description as possible. For example, if you ask the student to describe how to wash the dishes, a response such as "Wash the dishes, then dry the dishes," is overly simplified and will receive low points. More details such as describing the process of turning on water, wetting a sponge, putting soap on the sponge, scrubbing the dishes with the sponge, etc., will receive far more points. Although 3 options will be listed, you only need to choose one. Choose the option that you believe your student would be the most comfortable with.

Tip: *This is a great time for your student to ask, "How do you say~ in English?" Teach students how to use joining words and sequence words (first, second, then, after that, next).*

Step 2: Please read the following introductory sentence to the student:

"Let's begin Section 3. I will ask you how to do something. Tell me as much as you can. Ready? Please tell me how you _____.\" (insert your selection)

Section Four: Listening Comprehension

In this section, you will read a passage twice to the student and then ask four questions about the content.

- There is NO time limit.
- The student MAY take notes.
- The student may NOT see the text.
- The questions are asked only ONCE before the reading, but they may be repeated an UNLIMITED number of times after the text has been read.

Step 1: Read the following introductory sentence to the student: “Section Four: Listening Comprehension. You can take notes. There are four questions. First, I will read all the questions. Then, I will read the story twice. Then, I will ask you the four questions again, and you can give the answers. Here are the four questions:” (Questions are found following step 4.)

Step 2: Please slowly and clearly ask the student questions one through four. Do NOT leave enough time for the student to write down the questions word for word.

The student may take notes, but the student is not meant to take a dictation of the text nor of the questions. Although you should read the questions slowly, do not allow time for the student to write down the questions word for word. Instead they should take down keywords in English or Japanese to remind them what to listen for.

Step 3: Read the text twice with a small pause between the readings. Do NOT show the text to the student.

Step 4: Ask the student questions one through four again. Allow the student to respond between each question. There is no time-limit on this section, but if 3 minutes have passed and a student seems to be struggling, you are strongly encouraged to move on.

- Question 1
- Question 2
- Question 3
- Question 4

There will be four questions listed here. Keywords from the questions will be found in the text, but there may be some simple words in the questions that refer to ideas or concepts in the text. For example, the text may read, “Joe woke up at 7:00.” The question

may then ask, “What time did Joe get up?” The concept is the same, but the terminology may change slightly. The passage may also have information spread out in many sentences. The question may then require students to aggregate all the information together. For example, the text may read, “Bob likes cake. He also likes sushi.” For top marks, a student will respond to “What does Bob like?” with one sentence such as “He likes cake and sushi.”

Tip: Keyword listening in the questions and text will be very important in this section. Some training on how to take keyword/concept notes can also be helpful.

Text: (Do NOT show student)

The text to be read will appear here. It must NOT be shown to the student.

Section Five: Comic Description:

In this section, the student will look at a simple comic and describe what they see and think is happening.

- The student has THREE MINUTES of preparation time and FOUR MINUTES to respond.
- You MAY give the student a 30 second warning before each of the time limits is up.
- The student MAY take notes.

Step 1: Give the student the page titled Section 5: Comic – Student Copy.

Step 2: Read the following introductory sentence: “Section Five: Comic Description. Please look at this picture for three minutes. Then, please tell me about it. You can use a pen and paper to make notes.”

Step 3: Allow the student to review the comic for three minutes. You may warn the student when there are only 30 seconds left.

Step 4: Once three minutes has elapsed, ask the student to tell you about the comic in two minutes. Suggested sentence: “Please tell me about this comic. You have four minutes. Ready? Go.” You may warn the student when there are only 30 seconds left.

***Tip:** This section is about the student talking as much as possible with some logical flow. Do not interrupt the student. Let them talk as long as they can without you saying anything. Responses such as nodding or short responses like “ah”, “oh”, “yes”, “uh-huh”, etc. are perfectly alright especially if they encourage the student to continue talking. Do not correct the student for any reason.*

If the student has not said anything for some time and is looking lost, you can give them a leading question to get them going again. This should be general, short, and used only if the student needs it. Examples are: “What about this?”, “What is he doing?”, “What is on the floor?”, “How about this?”, “What happens next?” etc.

***A copy of the comic will go here.** It will have multiple panels and be in black and white. The student should describe a simple story line based on what they see in the comic. The student **MAY** make some dialogue, but it is not necessary. The emphasis is on describing the events in a coherent chronological order. Text in the comic will be kept to a minimum. If there is any text, it will be simple greetings, identifying labels or onomatopoeia.*

Students can make-up some relevant details such as giving characters names, making-up the relationship between two characters, or assigning arbitrary colors or qualities to objects, but it is not necessary and will not be scored. Help to prepare your student to introduce information at appropriate times. The flow of the comic description is important. They are also encouraged to include their thoughts on the comic and the events therein.

The student will be provided with a full-page version of the comic. It will be labeled “Section 5: Comic – Student Copy”.

Section Six: Twenty Questions

In this section, you take on the identity of a person, a place, or a thing. The student has five minutes to ask you 20 yes/no questions to gather information in order to determine your identity. You must take on the identity of the person, place, or thing indicated below. Information about each is provided. Please read the information before beginning this section.

- The student MAY take notes.
- Should the student guess your identity in fewer than 20 questions, you may play again using one of the remaining two identities. However the limit of 20 questions does NOT reset and the student will only have the remaining questions from the first round to determine the second identity.

To further clarify, if you initially take on the identity of the place, and the student guesses correctly after only asking 11 questions, the game is NOT over. You should then take on the identity of either the person or thing and have the student try to guess your new identity. Since the student already asked 11 questions, they will only have 9 questions left to try and determine your new identity. Carry on to the third identity if the first and second identities are guessed after fewer than 20 questions in total. A student's guess as to the identity counts as 1 of their 20 questions.

- The game ends after five minutes, after a total of 20 questions have been asked, or after all three identities have been determined, whichever comes first.
- Please warn your student when there are only two questions left.
- You MAY warn the student when there are 30 seconds left.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, you may respond with "I don't know," and that question will NOT count towards the 20-question limit.
- You may only respond to questions that can be answered in a yes/no structure. However, nuanced answers such as "maybe," "sometimes," etc. may be given if a definite answer cannot be given. Please be sure your nuanced answer does not give excessive information. These questions WILL count towards the 20-question limit.
- Any and all guesses will also count towards the 20-question limit.

Step 1: Please read all the directions, rules, and identity descriptions before beginning this section.

Step 2: Please choose one of the three identities listed below that you believe the student would know best.

Step 3: Read the following introductory sentence: “Section 6: 20 Questions. We have five minutes. You can take notes. Please ask me yes-or-no questions. *pause* I’m a _____.” (Insert “person,” “place,” or “thing” as appropriate.) **Please keep a tally of how many questions are asked.**

*The three identities will be listed here. There will be one person, one place, and one thing. In all cases, we will try to choose identities that junior high school students will be familiar with. The person could be a real living person, someone who is deceased, or a fictional character. For example, Mickey Mouse could be the “person” identity. The “place” could be very large such as a country or region, such as “Hawaii,” or more localized, such as “Tokyo Disney Land.” The “thing” will be concrete and tangible such as a hamburger. **Abstract or intangible things such as “hope” or “soccer” will not be used.** To avoid any possible confusion with its classification, animals will not be used, except if the animal happens to be a character. A “bear” will not appear as an option, but “Winnie the Pooh” could be selected as the “person” identity.*

Facts and details pertaining to each option will be listed here as well to assist you with answering the student’s questions. Every possible fact cannot be included with the test, so you will have to pull on your own knowledge. Answer as best as you can, but don’t worry if you don’t know; you can say, “I don’t know,” during the test. After the test, if you discover that you told the student an incorrect answer and think it may have affected the end result of this section, please inform the assigned judge as well as the HEC Test Committee Chair so that this can be factored in during the adjudication process.

Please work with your student ahead of time to stay calm and avoid becoming flustered during the test. During adjudication, the process of asking the questions is weighted much more heavily than actually correctly guessing the identity.

When answering questions, you may answer with simply “yes” or “no.” You may also answer with full sentences such as “No, I’m not red.” Some students may benefit from having you repeat the information in a full-sentence answer, while doing so for other students may be more of a distraction than helpful. Answer in the format that is best for your student.

Questions should use a variety of grammar points if possible. Instead of asking “Are you...” over and over, using “Can you...” or “Do you...” is encouraged, and will result in more points earned.

For the place, you may find certain location questions difficult to answer. For example, if the “place” identity is China and the student asks, “Are you in China?” the answer can be difficult. For the sake of argument, you can say “Yes, I’m in China.” Please prepare your student to understand that such questions and answers could be a possibility.

Normally the game is played where you, the ALT, takes on an identity and questions are asked in the second-person. However, third-person may be used. Students may use either “Are you...” or “Is it...” to guess your identity.

Tips: “20 questions” and “how to...” sections are often the hardest sections of the test for SHS students. Take the time to practice it with your students. You cannot suggest questions to your students during the test. Please take the time to prepare them in advance. This section is an excellent time to ask, “How do you say ~ in English?”

The test is now over. Please congratulate your student for his or her hard work. Collect all papers and test materials from the student. The student may NOT leave with any notes or testing material

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL JUDGING RUBRIC

This is the rubric that will be used by the HEC judges to evaluate each senior high school entry in the 2025 HEC Competition. Throughout the judging process, judges will be asked to keep in mind that all entries in the senior level have only completed the first year of high school English.

Individual sections are worth different percentages of the overall score. The general section is worth about 33%. The 1st section is worth about 4%, and the remaining sections are worth 12.5% each. At the bottom of this rubric is a breakdown for determining the final score of a student.

General Evaluation

Max Score: 20 points

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Enthusiasm and Attitude	Student speaks in a loud, clear voice, and does not seem affected by mistakes.	Student speaks in a loud, clear voice, and only seems slightly affected by mistakes.	Student speaks quietly, and seems affected by mistakes.	Student speaks very quietly, and is clearly affected by mistakes.
Pronunciation	Student's English pronunciation is very good with only occasional mistakes that do not affect meaning.	Student's English pronunciation is good, with mistakes that do not affect meaning.	Student's English pronunciation is good, but with some mistakes that affect meaning.	Student's English pronunciation is poor, with many mistakes that affect meaning.
Grammar	Student's grammar is	Student's grammar is	Student's grammar is	Student's grammar is

	mostly correct, with only occasional mistakes that do not affect meaning.	generally correct, with some mistakes that do not affect meaning.	generally correct, but with some mistakes that affect meaning.	poor, with many mistakes that affect meaning.
Non-Grammatical Communicative Ability	Student's communication is almost always clear, with almost no ambiguity to what they are talking about.	Student's communication is mostly clear, with almost no ambiguity to what they are talking about.	Student's communication is clear, but there is some ambiguity to what they are talking about.	Student's communication is not clear, with great ambiguity to what they are talking about.
Ability to Deal with Unfamiliar Words	Student shows almost no signs of unfamiliarity with words, and when they do, are quick to confirm the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.	Student shows occasional signs of unfamiliarity with words, and when they do, are quick to confirm the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.	Student seems unfamiliar with many words, but confirms the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.	Student seems unfamiliar with many words, and does not confirm the meaning with the test administrator or intuit the meaning.

Section 1: Warm-up Questions

Max Score: 4 points

	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
Quality of Responses	Student answers	Student answers	Student answers	Student does not

	quickly and correctly.	correctly.	mostly correctly. Questions are answered slowly.	answer most questions correctly. Questions that are answered are answered slowly and with difficulty.
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Section 2: Picture Questions

Max Score: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Quality of Answers	Student answers all questions correctly.	Student answers 2 of 3 questions correctly.	Student answers 1 question correctly.	Student answers no questions correctly.
Quality and Variety of Questions	Student asks 3 distinct questions. Each question uses different grammar and refers to different objects.	Student asks 1 distinct question, 2 questions are the same (i.e. using "What's this?" twice). At least some variation in grammar, and each question refers to different objects.	Student asks 1 distinct question, 2 questions are the same. There is little variety in grammar and some questions refer to the same object.	Student fails to ask 3 questions or asks the same question 3 times.

Section 3: How do you...?

Max Score: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Clarity	Instructions are clear and easy to follow. The listener could repeat the action as instructed without clarification.	Instructions are mostly clear and easy to follow. The listener might require some clarification.	Instructions are not very clear or easy to follow. The listener would require clarification to repeat the action.	Instructions are not clear or easy to follow. The listener would require a lot of clarification to repeat the action.
Sequencing/Flow of Information	Instructions follow logically in order and use distinct timing words (i.e. first, second, next, etc.) to convey instructions.	Instructions follow logically in order, with some slight mistakes, and use mostly distinct timing words.	Instructions often do not follow logically in order, and use only a few timing words.	Instructions do not follow logically in order and do not use any timing words for clarification.

Section 4: Listening Comprehension

Max Score: 4 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Quality of Answers	Student answers all 4 questions correctly.	Student answers 3 questions correctly.	Student answers 1 or 2 questions correctly.	Student answers no questions correctly.

Section 5: Comic Description

Max Score: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Sequencing/Flow	Student's description follows logically from beginning to ending. Details are included often, and are mentioned in sequence with the story.	Student's description follows logically from beginning to ending with some deviation. Details are included often, but may come at random intervals.	Student's description only slightly follows logically from beginning to ending. Details that are included come at random.	Student's description does not follow logically from beginning to ending, and description is mostly random details.
Use of Time	Student speaks for the full 4 minutes with barely any pause.	Student speaks for the full 4 minutes with occasional pauses.	Student speaks for about 2 or 3 of 4 minutes, with occasional pauses.	Student does not speak for even 1 of 2 minutes and pauses often.

Section 6: 20 Questions

Max Points: 8 Points

	4 Points	3 Points	2 Points	1 Point
Logical Deduction	Student's questions follow logically, and have no redundancies (i.e repetition or	Student's questions almost always follow logically, and have few if any redundancies.	Student's questions sometimes follow logically, and have multiple redundancies.	Student's questions do not follow logically, and have multiple obvious redundancies. Any

	gaining information already gained in earlier questions). Any guesses follow logically from questions asked.	Any guesses follow logically from questions asked.	Any guesses do not always follow logically.	guesses are random, following no logic.
Quality of Questions	Questions use a wide variety of grammar and are always clear to the listener.	Questions use a variety of grammar and are usually clear to the listener.	Questions use little variety of grammar and are sometimes unclear to the listener.	Questions use almost no variety of grammar and are often unclear to the listener.

General Evaluation: 33.3% (each point is worth 1.665% of total score)

Section 1: 4.2% (each point is worth 1.05% total score)

Section 2: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

Section 3: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

Section 4: 12.5% (each point is worth 3.125% total score)

Section 5: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)

Section 6: 12.5% (each point is worth 1.5625% total score)