◼ Oral Tests

Most of these assessments look at a variety of criteria:

- Related to the topic
- Amount of time spent speaking (one-word answers to a long period of time)
- Appropriate grammar and vocabulary
- Simple/complex language used
- Comprehensible pronunciation
- Fluency (how hesitant is the speech?)
- Interaction (can they maintain the conversation?)
- Compensation strategies (what do they do when they aren't sure how to respond?)
- Prompting (how much extra do you have to say to get them to understand the question or keep talking?)

Most of these tests will go through a series of questions that move from simple to more complex.

These are some examples:

Connect Placement Test
http://old.fltrp.com/download/11011811.pdf

English Unlimited Placement Test
http://shvidko172.narod.ru/olderfiles/1/Oral_Placement_Test.pdf

Cambridge Face2Face Oral Placement Test
http://www.cambridge.org/elt/face2face/resources/placement-test/OralTestQuestionBank.pdf

IECP Penn State Oral Placement Test
https://scholarsphere.psu.edu/concern/generic_works/d217qp592

Other options: You can give them a topic and ask them to talk for one minute. (If you have access to video, you can show them an example.) The questions listed in the "Writing Tests" section are some examples of what you can ask.

Considerations when selecting placement tests

	Standardized Tests (CASAS, etc.)	Textbook placement test	Creating your own placement tests
▶ **Assesses all four skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking**	Yes	Generally, not equally well	Program determines
▶ **Aligned to levels in your program**	These are aligned to National Reporting System Standard levels (See the chapter on determining levels)	Aligned to textbook series (Book 1, Book 2, etc.)	Yes, you can create assessments specific to your program
▶ **Training needed for those administering the tests**	Most of the tests have required training, which often can be done online, but giving the test is generally a straight-forward process	No required training, but if there is an oral component, it may need some training to standardize evaluation	Depends on what you decide to do, but may need training if you have specific criteria you are using
▶ **Time involved to administer, grade, and decide on levels**	2–3 hours	1–2 hours	Program determines, but can be done quickly
▶ **Cost**	Generally expensive. You must use their materials	Not very expensive. Many series allow you to print these out from CD, website, or their books	Varies on what you decide, but potentially much less expensive than other options
▶ **Flexibility in regard to what is assessed and how**	None—these are set questions in set formats	Not a lot, but many of the text series have test generators that will allow you to choose questions	Total flexibility and you can revise as needed