

THE WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY  
PROFICIENCY TEST OF  
ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
SAMPLE QUESTIONS

NOTE: You must bring your passport with you to the test.

The WSU Proficiency Test contains three parts (five sections):

Part I: Written Essay (30 minutes)

Part II: Listening Comprehension (45 items, about 15 minutes)

Part III: Grammar, Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension (75 minutes)

**Part I is the WRITTEN ESSAY** (30 minutes)

Various topics will be selected at the time of each administration. You should select one of the three selected topics, organize your thoughts, compose an essay with as much information and detail as you can. While length is not the most important factor, a longer essay sometimes indicates a person's fluency with the language.

Essays are graded on

- 1) how well you addressed the specific topic chosen; i.e., you did not wander into topics unrelated to the one chosen.
- 2) the mechanics of punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure (verb usage, appropriate tense selection, etc).
- 3) organizational structure, including paragraphing.
- 4) fluency in the English language, including style and idiomatic control.

**Part II is LISTENING COMPREHENSION** (45 items, about 15 minutes)

Each problem will be spoken only ONCE. You will select an appropriate answer and mark your answer choices on the answer sheet.

Example A

(You will hear)	Are you busy?	(pause 12 seconds)
(You will read)	a) Yes, I am. b) Yes, you are. c) Yes, he is.	

“Yes, I am” is the correct answer. You would mark choice **a** on the answer sheet.

Example B

(You will hear)	I've just begun.	(pause 12 seconds)
(You will read)	a) I am almost finished. b) I just finished. c) I just started.	

*I just started* means about the same thing as *I've just begun*. Choice **c** is the correct answer, so you would mark choice **c** on the answer sheet.

**Part III contains 3 sections: Grammar, Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension.** You will have 75 minutes to complete all 3 sections of Part III. This section contains 100 items. Do not spend too much time on any one problem or you will not have time to finish the test. Mark only ONE answer for each problem.

**Part III: Grammar**

Example C

“What is that thing?”

“That \_\_\_\_\_ a spider.”

- a) to call
- b) for calling
- c) be called
- d) is called

The correct English sentence is “That is called a spider.” Therefore, you would mark choice **d** on the answer sheet.

**Part III: Vocabulary**

Type 1: Example D

It’s too windy to go for a stroll.

- a) swim
- b) sail
- c) drive
- d) walk

The word *walk* means about the same thing as *stroll* in this sentence, so you would mark choice **d** on the answer sheet.

Type 2: Example E

Because of the storm and the rough waves, it would be foolish to go sailing today in a small \_\_\_\_.

- a) automobile
- b) house
- c) boat
- d) beast

The word *boat* fits the best in the sentence, so you would mark choice **c** on the answer sheet.

**Part III: Reading Comprehension**

The test contains four or more reading passages, each followed by approximately five questions about each passage. You should read each passage carefully and then try to answer the questions following the passage. Sometimes it helps to read over the questions quickly before you read the passage.

Example F

While I was getting ready to go to town one morning last week, my wife handed me a little piece of red cloth and asked if I would have time during the day to buy her two yards of cloth like that. I told her I would be glad to do it. And putting the piece of cloth into my pocket, I took the train for town.

- 1) The person telling the story is . . .
  - a) a married lady
  - b) an unmarried lady
  - c) a married man
  - d) an unmarried man

You know the person telling this story is a *married man* because he says, “...my wife handed me...” The correct answer is **c**, so you would mark choice **c** on the answer sheet.

- 2) The author was given a piece of red cloth . . .
  - a) in the morning
  - b) at noon
  - c) in the afternoon
  - d) in the evening

The passage says, “...one morning last week, my wife handed me a little piece of red cloth...” The correct answer is **a**, so you would mark choice **a** on the answer sheet.

(There are usually five questions following each passage, not just two) Naturally, the passages used in the test are much more difficult than this example and are often paragraphs that have an informational format rather than a story-like one. For example, some topics might include conversation techniques, the development of urban life, the discovery of a famous landmark, or directions for playing a game.