

CAE – PHRASES FOR THE SPEAKING TEST

The following phrases may be useful at various stages in the CAE Speaking Test. They are divided into different functional groups and according to the parts of the paper to which they refer.

Giving general information about yourself (Part 1)

• on language

I'm studying English for

... my own satisfaction ... for my job/studies ...
in order to improve my employment prospects.

English is a vocational requirement for me.

If you want to get ahead these days, you need to have
a good command of English.

• on employment/studies

I'm a full-time/part-time student at present.

I'm employed as a(n) ... in ...

Actually, I'm between jobs at the moment.

I'm job hunting.

It's not easy finding work in the present economic
climate.

Let's hope that the economy will pick up soon.

• on travel

It's my dream to travel the world.

I've always loved the sea.

I'd love to visit a tropical island/the Far East/a cold
polar region/places untouched by man/space ...

However, there's no place like home.

• plans for the future

That's a big question.

I am/am not ambitious.

I want to be a useful member of society.

I want a stimulating/challenging/creative career.

I'd like a fulfilling/caring family environment.

Expressing your likes, dislikes, preferences (Part 1)

I'm keen on ... (+ noun or gerund)

I'm an avid ... (+ noun)

I like/love/enjoy ... (+ noun or gerund)

I quite like ... (+ noun or gerund)

My favourite pastime is ... (+ noun or gerund)

What I really like is ... (+ noun or gerund)

I'm not very/too keen on ... (+ noun or gerund)

Expressing your opinions/feelings/reactions (Part 1)

I feel quite strongly that ...

In my view,/In my opinion, ...

I hadn't really thought about it.

I haven't given it much thought until now.

It seems to me that ...

Asking for clarification (Part 2)

Sorry, I'm not sure what you mean.

I don't quite understand.

Could I ask a question?

Could you please repeat that? I'm not quite sure what I
have to do.

So I have to describe/compare the pictures?

Correcting yourself (Part 2)

I'm not sure I put that over very clearly.

What I mean to say is ...

What I really meant was ...

What I'm trying to say is ...

Compare (Part 2)

In my view/opinion ...

I'm inclined to believe ...

What I think is ...

They could/might/may be ...

They seem/appear to be ...

It could/might/may be that ...

I can't be sure/certain, but perhaps ...

If you don't know the word for something (Part 2)

The name for this escapes me at present, but it's
for/it's like ...

It's used for (+ gerund) ...

It's used to (+ infinitive) ...

I can't put my finger on it at the moment.

The name for it is on the tip of my tongue.

It's what you do when you ... (if you don't know the
verb)

Involving your partner (Part 3)

What's your opinion?

How do you feel about ...?

Would you say that ...?

Reaching a conclusion with your partner (Part 3)

So, let's make a choice/decision.

What shall we opt for?

Well, that about wraps it up, doesn't it?

Agreeing or disagreeing with your partner (Parts 3 & 4)

I quite agree.

That's exactly my view, too.

I agree up to a point.

I see your point, but ...

We'll have to agree to differ on this/that.

After the test has ended

Thank you for your time.

It was nice/a pleasure meeting you.

Goodness! Has the time gone already?