


Repeat sentence

This is a short-answer item type that integrates listening and speaking skills, and requires you to understand and remember a sentence, and repeat it using the same words and pronunciation.

You will hear a sentence. Please repeat the sentence exactly as you hear it. You will hear the sentence only once.

Status: Beginning in 3 seconds.

Volume 

Recorded Answer

Current Status:
Beginning in 10 seconds.

Item Type Strategies

Strategy 1

Try to memorize the sentence. To do so, you need to train your short-term memory or working memory.

Strategy 2

Pay attention to the sentence structure, e.g., if the sentence starts with *there* or *it*, or if the verb is in active or passive voice. Knowledge of the word order of the main sentence structures will help you rebuild the sentence correctly without leaving out words or adding in the wrong words.

Strategy 3

Pronounce all consonants and vowels clearly, and place word and sentence stress correctly. Remember that in English the sentence stress is usually on the last content word or important words.

Step 3: Explanation and Practice of Each Strategy

Strategy 1

Having a good short-term memory is a very important skill that helps us in our daily activities. This skill is also important for spoken language learning and communication. When you try to remember the sentence that you heard a few seconds earlier, you are actually calling on your short-term or working memory. That is why it is important to train your working memory.

Spoken utterances will vary in length, and the best way to memorize longer sentences is to break them into small groups of words. You should also understand the speaker's meaning. You should not not just repeat the words.

To practice this strategy, do the following activities:

- Make some sentences beginning with short ones and gradually increasing to longer, more complex ones. For example, *Staff make notes available. Teaching staff make notes available. Teaching staff make their notes available. Most teaching staff make their notes available. Most teaching staff make their lecture notes available. Most teaching staff make their lecture notes available online.* Have someone read them out loud to you. Repeat each one and record yourself.
- Play back your recorded sentences and assess your performance by crossing out words that were omitted, inserting words that were added, putting a checkmark next to sentences that were repeated correctly, etc.

Strategy 2

The basic word order of English is: Subject, Verb, Object. You should also be aware that English has a fixed word order, and there are a certain number of sentence structures that you should remember. This will help you rebuild the sentences correctly without leaving out words or substituting with the wrong words.

To practice this strategy, do the following activities:

- Make a list of all the sentence types in English and their structures that you are familiar with. Use academic vocabulary and topics when you write the example sentences.
- Read some sentences out loud, beginning with the main parts: the subject and the verb, and increase the complexity by adding other parts of speech such as objects, adverbs, adjectives, prepositional phrases, etc. For example, *Adults learn. Most adults learn. Most adults learn best. Most adults learn best when information is presented. Most adults learn best when novel information is presented. Most adults learn best when novel information is presented through a variety of experiences.*
- Repeat the activity with other sentence structures. For example, *There are some structural and behavioral adaptations. It is estimated that 40% of the nation's energy comes from petroleum. The federal government advised people to evacuate their homes. People were advised by the federal government to evacuate their homes.*

Strategy 3

Accurate pronunciation is an important aspect of this item type, and you should improve your pronunciation so that you are understood and sound natural. There are two areas you should pay attention to: 1) sounds and 2) word and sentence stress.

To practice this strategy, do the following activities:

- Identify which sounds you have difficulty pronouncing. This will depend on your first language. For example, for Chinese learners, pronouncing some diphthongs as in *how/now* or *phone/cone* is a problem. Find some pronunciation exercises on 'minimal pairs' to listen to and repeat, e.g., *John* and *Joan*. (There are lots of games and activities on the Internet).
- Study different sentences and learn to distinguish between content and function words, and learn where the stress on syllables should be.
- Learn to identify the sentence stress, i.e., the last content word which usually provides new information. For example, *Learners are actively involved in using language.*
- Repeat a selection of utterances without looking at the written sentences paying attention to content words and sentence stress.

Respond to a Repeat Sentence Item

You will now respond to a test item simulating the test conditions. You will have 15 seconds to give your response. Remind yourself of the three strategies for this item type and apply them.

Play the audio [L2_Repeat_sentence_1] and record your response using the recording device on your mobile phone or computer.

Assess your Response

Were you able to use the strategies? Which one was the most difficult to apply? Which one do you think was the most useful?

Play back your response and compare it to the three sample responses in audio files [L2_Repeat_sentence_1_Response_B1], [L2_Repeat_sentence_1_Response_B2] and [L2_Repeat_sentence_1_Response_C1].

Read the explanation about each response. Which one do you think your response was closest to? What do you think you need to improve?

Item 1: Transcript and Explanations

Transcript:

There will be a conference here next summer on using the web for academic research.

Audio [L2_Repeat_sentence_1_Response_B1]

There are several hesitations, one repetition and one long pause. The rate of speech is uneven. Incorrect pronunciation of vowels and consonants makes several words unclear.

Audio [L2_Repeat_sentence_1_Response_B2]

Some words in the sentence are left out, and some words that are not in the sentence are added. Phrasing is uneven, and there are a few hesitations and one repetition. Incorrect pronunciation of vowels and consonants makes several words unclear.

Audio [L2_Repeat_sentence_1_Response_C1]

Phrasing is somewhat uneven, but the response is spoken at a conversational rate. Small pronunciation errors do not affect understanding.