

Tips on the Oral Exam

- The oral is worth 40%. Therefore you should **spend 40% of your Irish study time on it**. Generally, so much time goes into the prose and poetry, people don't seem to realise that reading the poem alone is worth more than a prose/ poetry question in the written paper.
- Don't disregard ANY part of the oral. Make sure you can read all poems fluently and don't leave out any Sraith Pictiúr. Imagine learning 19 and getting the one you didn't study for...
- There are only 5 questions that are guaranteed in the oral. Your name, age, address, date of birth and exam number. **Know these inside out**: they're easy. Also you can't lie on this part, as the examiner has this information.
- Before reading the poem, **make sure to say the name of the poem and author**. So many people forget this but there are marks going for it.
- When reading the poem **read slow, take your time and speak clearly**. As embarrassing as it is, the best students put huge amounts of emotion into their reading. The poems are about love, couples, feelings etc... You can never be too dramatic. Stand out from the rest.
- During the conversation part, try to make it as much like a regular conversation as possible. This won't come naturally to most but after practice you will improve. The examiner is aware that Irish isn't your first language so there is some leeway here but the more fluent you can sound, the better, even if this does mean talking slower. Look at the examiner in the eye and **speak with confidence**. The less pauses and stutters the better. Examiners have a sharp eye for little details like this to separate the excellent from the good students.
- If you are correcting a mistake DO NOT say "oh sorry". Simply go back on your wording or say "Tá brón orm", and continue.

- For the SP, 50 marks are for story-telling and 20 for grammar. This is why it's important to, even at ordinary level, have at least 1-2 constructive words/phrases per picture that you know you will say before you go in.
- The remaining 10 marks are for the questions. You ask the examiner three and they ask you three. They should be very straightforward and accessible to all.
- Try your best to give your answer the way the question was asked.
i.e. Q. An réitíonn tú le...?
The answer should be “Réitím/Ní Réitím le...” rather than “tá/sea”.
- Don't underestimate the power of time. The oral exams will seem like they were thrown on top of you even though there was plenty of notice. Make sure to **start oral study as soon as the Christmas break is over at the latest.**
- Finally, try not to let the pressure put you down. You will get nervous on the day and few minutes before the exam but most examiners are nice and understand that you are still only 16-18 years old and are nervous because you want to do well. If it didn't go as planned, **don't panic**, if you are determined enough to do well, you will make up for it in the written paper.
- Finally, best of luck & try your best!