

**Lárionad na Gaeilge: Taighde, Teagasc agus Tástáil
Ollscoil Mhá Nuad**



Scrúdú Cainte d'iarthóirí an MG0

Meánleibhéal 1 (B1)

**Tuairisc an Phríomhscrúdaitheora/
Chief Examiner's Report
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Background

Teastas Eorpach na Gaeilge, or TEG, is an examination system for adult learners. The system is broadly based on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR)* (Council of Europe, 2001). The system was developed as a resource for adult learners who wish to have a recognised qualification in Irish. *Scrúdú Mheánleibhéal 1* was held for the first time in May 2006. The examination is based on a comprehensive syllabus which is available on the TEG website. Other details relating to the examination can be found on the website, as well as sample papers and information for candidates. The website also hosts sample teaching materials for this level.

The oral examination

Each candidate is examined individually. There are two examiners present, one of whom interacts with the candidate, asking questions and directing the conversation. The oral examinations are recorded for monitoring purposes, and also for training and research. Candidates are expected to be able to express simple opinions about matters that relate to their own lives, to describe their plans and to talk about events that have happened to them. Candidates at this level are also expected to demonstrate an ability to compose and organise a longer narrative than those at Beginner 2 Level (A2). The details of the oral examination are laid out in the table below. The oral examination consists of 3 parts at Meánleibhéal 1 (B1).

Part	Time	Type of task	Language functions
1	5 minutes	The candidate is asked questions about his/her daily life (place of residence, family, work, hobbies, future plans for holidays, study etc.)	Giving information and expressing opinions.
2	1 minute preparation 3-4 minutes	Role play (1) Candidates are given a role play card in the examination. There are key words on the card that relate to various scenarios (events/plans experiences etc.). Candidates are given one minute to read the information. Candidates must then answer questions posed by the examiner concerning the information on the card. (2) The examiner will have a role play card with information that relates to a similar subject to that on the candidate's card. On this occasion, the candidate will ask the examiner questions about the information depicted on his/her card. See sample materials.	Asking for information. Giving information. Expressing opinions.

3	1 minute preparation 3-4 minutes	Telling a simple story The candidate is given a series of six pictures and has one minute to study them. The candidate then describes what is happening in the pictures. The examiner may ask the candidate some questions if he/she feels that information has been left out or if additional information is required regarding any of the pictures.	Describing what is happening in a series of pictures.
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Oral examination – advice and suggestions for candidates

General advice

In general, candidates who failed to achieve the necessary grade had poor grammatical control of the basic language structures as outlined for this level. Many candidates struggled with the correct use of tenses (present, past and future) and the correct use of prepositions proved problematic for many. Basic errors or lack of consistency in the use of séimhiú and urú, the copula 'is' and pronouns were also noted. Many candidates who didn't achieve the pass mark had difficulty constructing basic sentences in Irish.

It is important that candidates are aware of the layout of the exam and what is expected of them in the different tasks in the exam. We have created a video explaining the layout of the TEG B1 (Meánleibhéal 1) oral exam. You can watch the video [here](#).

Candidates often failed to display an adequate range of vocabulary (see *Siollabas Mheánleibhéal 1 B1*). Candidates at this level are expected to have a certain level of fluency and to be able to develop points, especially when talking about everyday topics that relate directly to their own lives. It was noted that weaker candidates were often hesitant, even when talking about topics relating directly to their own everyday lives and routines.

It also seemed that some candidates were confused about the role of the exam and put unnecessary emphasis on their suitability for the teaching profession and their experience of working with children. It should be remembered that this is an examination of candidates' ability in Irish and nothing else.

While some use of English words is to be expected, a significant number of candidates tended to rely too heavily on words and expressions such as, *just, like, you know, really*.

Care needs to be given to correct pronunciation. On occasion, candidates' weakness in this regard led to communication difficulties.

It is to be expected, and encouraged, that candidates undertake preparation work for this oral exam. However, such preparation should involve as much practice as possible and should not include the memorising of large chunks of material. The use of material that has been 'learned off' is very obvious to examiners. Candidates are encouraged to use their time in the exam to demonstrate their ability to participate in a free-flowing conversation.

The role play task

In the role play, the main difficulties related to the use of incorrect or incomplete questions. Some candidates had a tendency to pose part of the question and to trail off, e.g. Cén áit a bhfuil an... / An bhfuil aon duine...? /Cén t-am...?. Weaker candidates had a tendency to mix the tenses in which they asked and/or answered questions in the role play, some alternating between past, future and present tense.

Candidates should pay particular attention to the scenario on which the role play is based. See, for example, the information given in relation to the role play in Scrúdú samplach 1: 'Beidh tú ag bogadh isteach i dteach nua go luath le roinnt cairde.' It is important that your answers and your questions in this task relate directly to the scenario. You will also note that this particular scenario is set in the future tense and that your answers and questions should be phrased accordingly.

The picture series task

Many candidates were quite comfortable in describing the series of pictures in Part 3 of the oral exam. Examiners noted, however, that some candidates spoke of things that were not depicted in the pictures at all. There was much use of idioms, many of which were used incorrectly or didn't relate to the story. For example, the proverb 'Is fearr an tsláinte ná na táinte' was used despite having no relation to anything in the pictures. Nor was the proverb made relevant to the theme.

It is important that candidates try to be consistent and coherent when describing the series of pictures. Coherence relates to the ability to develop the topic and actions depicted in the pictures and link them together in a logical, consistent manner. Where a candidate's overall description of the picture series is coherent, it will make sense and be understandable to the examiner. Take, for example, a set of pictures that depicts Seán falling and injuring himself on a football pitch during bad weather. The candidate's description can be deemed incoherent or difficult to follow if it includes details that are not depicted or contains contradictory information such as: 'Bhí an ghrian ag scoilteadh na gcloch agus thit Seán agus bhí sé ar mhuin na muice'.

The following are some of the common grammatical errors made by candidates in the oral examination:

Incorrect or confused use of the past, present and future tenses

- Ar faigheann tú... ? (An bhfuair tú... ?)
- Níl mé ag snámh mar bhí an uisce an-fuar (Ní raibh mé ag snámh mar bhí an t-uisce an-fhuar)
- Thosaíonn mé (Tosaím) / Tosaigh mé ag imirt galf (Thosaigh mé ag imirt galf)
- Glan mo seomra (Glanaim mo sheomra)
- Foghlaim mé Fraincis (D'fhoghlaim mé Fraincis)
- Ithfidh mé mo lón (Íosfaidh mé mo lón)
- Nuair a bhíonn am saor agam chuaigh mé go dtí an... (Nuair a bhíonn am saor agam téim go dtí an...)

- D'ólann siad fíon (Ólann siad fíon)
- Éist mé le ceol (Éistim le ceol)
- Thaitním *Grey's Anatomy* agus an sobalchlár go mór liom (Taitníonn *Grey's Anatomy* agus sobalchláir go mór liom)
- Nuair a mbeinn i mo mhúinteoir, cuirfidh mé níos mó béim ar an gcaint (Nuair a bheidh mé i mo mhúinteoir, cuirfidh mé níos mó béime ar an gcaint)
- Ba mhaith liom rachaidh ar ais (Ba mhaith liom dul ar ais)
- An bliain seo caite rachaidh mé go dtí Spáinn agus bhí an aimsir go hálainn agus níl aon rian de scamall sa spéir (An bhliain seo caite chuaigh mé go dtí an Spáinn agus bhí an aimsir go hálainn agus ní raibh...)
- Is aoibhinn liom dul ar ais (B'aoibhinn liom...)
- Déan mé Gaeilge, Gearmáinis agus Fraincis agus thaitníonn sé sin go mór liom. (Rinne mé... agus thaitin sé sin...)

Candidates at this level are expected to be fully competent in the present, past and future tenses, especially when dealing with topics such as work and hobbies.

Errors involving séimhiú & urú

ar Pól / an-fuar / an foireann / mo post / mo tuismitheoirí / mo cairde / do daoine eile / ón baile / sa theach / i Corcaigh / ar an cathaoir / i Gaillimh / mar múinteoir / san oifig mór / an Gaeilge / an mhadra / sa carr / sa pictiúr

Séimhiú is omitted after *gur* and the relative participle *a*:

Dúirt sé gur cas sé le Máire. (Dúirt sé gur chas sé le Máire.); Nuair a téim... (Nuair a théim...); Nuair a beidh am agam. (Nuair a bheidh am agam.)

'Tá' instead of 'is' / The copula

- Tá sé baile beag (Is baile beag é)
- Tá mo deirfiúr banaltra (Is banaltra í mo dheirfiúr)
- Ceapaim go bhfuil sé áit deas (Ceapaim gur áit dheas é)
- Bhí ball mé den club peil Gaelach ach níl anois (Bhí mé i mo bhall den chlub peil Ghaelach ach níl anois)
- Is é an gairdín mór agam freisin (Tá gairdín mór agam freisin)
- Tá sé an-spraoi (Is mór an spraoi é)
- Bhí sé as Páras (Ba as Páras é)
- Tá teach dhá stór é freisin (Is teach dhá stór é freisin)

Incorrect use of prepositions / prepositional pronouns

- Chuaigh mé dul ar caifé (Chuaigh mé chuig caifé)
- Ba mhaith liom dul go dtí sa Spáinn (Ba mhaith liom dul go dtí an Spáinn)
- Rinne mé sin amach an scoil (Rinne mé sin taobh amuigh den scoil)
- Níl aon ama agam ag féachaint an teilifís (Níl aon am agam le bheith ag féachaint ar an teilifís)
- Thóg Seán Máire agus a Mham dul ag siúlóid (Thóg Seán Máire agus a Mham amach ar shiúlóid)
- Thógfaimid traein go cathair (Tógfaimid traein go dtí an chathair)
- Ag dul go phictiúrlann (Ag dul go dtí an phictiúrlann)
- Tagann na daoine óga amach as an oíche (Tagann (Téann) na daoine óga amach san oíche)
- Thug mé dhá ticéad ag dul go dtí ceolchoirm (Thug mé dhá thicéad dóibh le dul chuig ceolchoirm)
- Tá cailín i carr freisin agus tá imní air (Tá cailín sa charr freisin agus tá imní uirthi)
- Tugann uachtar reoite an fear do buachaill mar anois sé tá brón ort (Tugann an fear uachtar reoite don bhuachaill mar tá brón air anois)

Singular and plural

- Réitíonn gach daoine go maith le chéile (Réitíonn gach duine go maith le chéile)
- Chonaic muid na radharc álainn agus tá sé an-mhaith (Chonaic muid radhairc áille agus bhí siad an-mhaith)
- Beidh muid ag dul go bialanna Fhrancach (Beidh muid ag dul go bialann Fhrancach/go bialanna Francacha)
- Chonaic siad bialann deasa (Chonaic siad bialann dheas)
- Tá go leor rud ann (Tá go leor rudaí ann)
- Déanann sí a lán béile blasta (Déanann sí a lán béilí blasta)
- Na rang (na ranganna)
- Ar na múinteoir (Ar na múinteoirí)
- An daoine óga (Na daoine óga)
- Na bia (An bia)

Difficulties with the numbers in Irish

- Cúig is fiche euro (Fiche a cúig euro/Cúig euro is fiche)
- Bhí tríocha daoine agus ocht páistí... (Bhí tríocha duine agus ochtar páistí...)
- Beidh sé duine ag dul ann (Beidh seisear ag dul ann)
- Dhá chara agus triúr pháistí (Beirt chairde agus triúr páistí)
- Ceathrú nóiméad tar éis a naoi (Ceathrú tar éis a naoi)
- Ceathair seomra leapa (Ceithre sheomra leapa)
- Dódhéag go naoi dhéag i mí Lúnasa (An dara lá déag go dtí an naoú lá déag de mhí Lúnasa)

Use of the definite article

- An muintir na háite (Muintir na háite)
- An Ceanada (Ceanada)
- An mí Meán Fómhair (Mí Mheán Fómhair)
- Sa Baile Átha Cliath (I mBaile Átha Cliath)

Sentence structure

- Taitním an bia (Taitníonn an bia liom)
- Ba mhaith liom ag dul go dtí (Ba mhaith liom dul go dtí)
- Is féidir leat téigh isteach (Is féidir leat dul isteach)

Use of the verbal noun

- Ba mhaith leo uachtar reoite a ceannaigh (Ba mhaith leo uachtar reoite a cheannach)
- Is maith liom ag éist (Is maith liom a bheith ag éisteacht)
- Ag cabhraigh m'athair ar an bhfeirm (Ag cabhrú le m'athair ar an bhfeirm)
- Ag itheann bia (Ag ithe bia)

Answering questions

Candidates, even at this level, often give *is ea* or *tá* as affirmative answers to every question. See the examples below:

Examiner:	An maith leat ceol?
Candidate:	Is ea. (Is maith /Ní maith).
Examiner:	An imríonn tú aon spórt?
Candidate:	Is ea. (Imrím / Ní imrím).
Examiner:	An as Corcaigh tú?
Candidate:	Tá / Tá mé. (Is ea / Ní hea).
Examiner:	An tusa is óige sa chlann?
Candidate:	Tá / Tá mé. (Is mé / Ní mé).

Other problems

- Words used in the wrong sense: ar siúl v ag siúl; ag súil v ag siúl; thit v leag; Francach v Fraincis; féach v feic; taisteal v teastáil; gaolta v Gaeilge
- Positional and directional adverbs: thuas v suas / anseo v ansin / amach v amuigh / isteach v istigh
- Confusing nouns and adjectives, e.g. Bhí an fear fearg (Bhí fearg ar an bhfear/Bhí an fear feargach); Bhí brónach ar an mbean (Bhí brón ar an mbean/Bhí an bhean brónach)
- The verb cónaigh, e.g. Tá mé i mo cónaí / Tá mé i gcónaí (Tá mé i mo chónaí); Tá sí ina cónaí (Tá sí ina cónaí)
- Using the word cúpla with the plural form of the noun instead of the singular, e.g. Téim ag siúl le cúpla daoine eile (Téim ag siúl le cúpla duine eile); Buailfidh mé le cúpla cairde (Buailfidh mé le cúpla cara); Tá cúpla fadhbanna sa cheantar (Tá cúpla fadhb sa cheantar)

General suggestions

Candidates are strongly advised to study carefully the sample examinations and the accompanying instructions on this website. It is particularly important that candidates are fully aware of the different sections of the exam and what is expected of them in each section.

The website also provides sample teaching materials suitable for teachers who are preparing candidates for *Scrúdú Mheánleibhéal 1*. Instructions for teachers, worksheets and sound files can be found at <http://www.teg.ie/links-resources/teaching-materials.290.html>

There are other teaching and learning resources that would be useful to teachers and learners at this level. See, for example, the exercises based on Nuacht TG4 on the Lárionad na Gaeilge website at <http://vifax.maynoothuniversity.ie/> and also the material on the TG4 Foghlaim website <https://www.tg4.ie/ga/foghlaim/ceachtanna/>