

## ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer Test (OPIc) Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the OPIc?

The ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview by Computer (OPIc) is a testing method that measures how well you speak in a language by comparing your performance with the criteria described in the *ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking (Revised 2001)*.

*The OPIc is delivered via secure internet connection and is currently available in English and Spanish.*

### How can I best prepare to take the OPIc?

It is helpful to read the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines in order to be familiar with the functions, discourse length and accuracy features of the level that you need to achieve.

*Speak as much as you can, practicing the functions that you will need to demonstrate during the test, i.e., recounting experiences, giving full descriptions, stating and supporting opinions, etc.*

### How is the OPIc structured?

The test-taker is given 12- 15 prompts at various levels of difficulty. The OPIc contains varying time limits for each prompt. The more advanced prompts will provide more time to respond.

### What is the rating scale of the OPIc?

The OPIc issues ratings based on the ACTFL Proficiency Rating Scale. Although the ACTFL Rating Scale ranges from Novice Low to Superior, the OPIc range is only from Novice Low to Advanced Low. The test does not range to the maximum ratings on the ACTFL Scale due in part to an effort to minimize the length of the exam.

*In order to realize the top levels of the ACTFL Speaking Proficiency Ratings Scale one must still revert back to the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI).*

### How long is the OPIc?

The OPIc itself is not a timed exam, but the response time for each question is timed, with the allowed amount of time varying depending on the difficulty level of the prompt.

The test averages about 20 – 30min.

### What is contained in each prompt?

Each prompt presents the test-taker with the overall speaking task for that prompt.

*Each prompt is specifically structured to elicit the speaking tasks for each level of the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking (Revised 2001).*

### Am I required to answer all questions?

A candidate should be able to respond to every question on the OPIc. It is always better to give the best response one can give than to skip a prompt altogether.

### What are the best strategies for success on the OPIc?

When taking the OPIc, listen to the prompts carefully and address all the specific tasks in each prompt. This is a proficiency test, so we are not measuring the accuracy of your responses, but rather how you communicate them.

*If you need to demonstrate an Intermediate High or Advanced Low speaking proficiency, make sure to fully answer all prompts in as much detail as possible.*

### What if I am asked a question that I do not know much about?

If you are asked a question that you are unfamiliar with, simply talk about how you are unfamiliar with the question and perhaps why you are unfamiliar with it. Again, this is a proficiency test so we are only measuring your abilities to communicate in the target language.

### What if I do not fully remember every question contained in a prompt?

Address the question to the best of your ability. There are often several questions in each prompt to encourage you to provide as much detail as possible in your responses. If you do not remember all of the questions, simply speak with as much detail as possible.