

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

(Answers are at the end of all questions)

Translating Written Material - These questions assess applicants' ability to translate written selections from one language into another. Applicants will be given written selections in English and Spanish. The applicants must select the most accurate Spanish or English translations for the given selections.

A. English to Spanish

Example 1: Applicants will be presented with a statement in English followed by four statements in Spanish. For each question, applicants must select the option that **most closely matches** the translation into Spanish.

The speaker cleared his throat before starting his speech.

- A. El orador carraspeó antes de comenzar a su discurso.
- B. El orador se aclaró la garganta después de dar comienzo a su discurso.
- C. El orador limpió su garganta antes de dar comienzo a su discurso.
- D. El orador aclara la garganta antes de dar comienzo a su discurso.

B. Spanish to English

Example 2: Applicants will be presented with a statement in Spanish followed by four statements in English. For each question, applicants must select the option that **most closely matches** the translation into English.

Si no fuera por su buena apariencia, nunca lo hubieran contratado para administrar el negocio de su familia política.

- A. If it weren't for his good status, he would never have managed to get hired to run his in-laws' business.
- B. If it weren't for his good looks, he would never have been hired to run his in-laws' business.
- C. His good looks managed to help him get hired to run his in-laws' business.
- D. He would never use his good looks to manage to run his in-laws' business.

II. Grammar and Usage

These questions assess applicants' ability to apply the basic rules of grammar, usage and sentence structure in English and Spanish.

A. Spanish

Example 3: Applicants will be presented with four sentences and must select the sentence which is **most correct** according to the rules of standard Spanish including grammar, usage and sentence structure.

- A. El museo no exhibió las obras de Monet sino que exhibió las de Picasso.
- B. El museo exhibió las obras de Monet sino que exhibió las de Picasso.
- C. El museo no exhibió las obras de Monet si no que exhibió las de Picasso.
- D. El museo no exhibió las obras de Monet sino que no exhibió las de Picasso.

B. English

Example 4: Applicants will be presented with four sentences and must select the sentence which is **most correct** according to the rules of standard English including grammar, usage and sentence structure.

- A. My friends and me saw the movie six times.
- B. My friends and me seen the movie six times.
- C. My friends and I saw the movie six times.
- D. My friends and I seen the movie six times.

Vocabulary

These questions, presented in English and Spanish, assess applicants' knowledge of general vocabulary including words, phrases or idioms commonly used in court situations. Applicants select from four alternative choices, the word, phrase or idiom that most closely has the same (or opposite) meaning of a given word, phrase or idiom.

A. Spanish

Example 5: Applicants must select the option which most nearly has the **SAME** meaning as the target word or phrase.

Fraternidad

- A. tesoro
- B. incienso
- C. metalúrgica
- D. hermandad

Example 6: Applicants must select the word which is closest to the **OPPOSITE** in meaning of the target word or phrase.

Obstáculo

- A. hipermetropía
- B. ámbito
- C. concienciado
- D. Asistencia
- E.

B. English

Example 7: Applicants must select the option which most nearly has the **SAME** meaning as the target word or phrase.

Truncated

- A. cut short
- B. under duress
- C. misrepresented
- D. long-winded

Example 8: Applicants must select the word which is closest to the **OPPOSITE** in meaning of the target word or phrase.

Procrastinate

- A. pacify
- B. insult
- C. instigate
- D. expedite

IV Reading, Understanding and Interpreting Written Material

These questions assess applicants' ability to comprehend written material in English and Spanish. The following formats are used:

Format A: Applicants are presented with brief reading selections followed by questions pertaining to the information contained in the selections. All of the information required to answer the questions is provided in the selections.

Spanish

Example 9: Based solely upon the reading passage below, choose the option that best answers the stated question. Use only information provided in the passage, do not use any prior knowledge that you may have on the subject.

El lingüista boliviano Carlos Coello participó en los paneles dedicados a debatir los aspectos ideológicos y culturales de la identidad del idioma español. En su mesa se discutió “El español y las comunidades indígenas de hoy”, para cuyo efecto Coello presentó una ponencia en la que describe los rasgos de identidad del castellano que se habla en Bolivia, influido por el aimara y el quechua, en contraposición a los del castellano que se habla en España.

Los rasgos lingüísticos de estos idiomas, a criterio del experto, repercuten de manera notable en nuestra forma de expresarnos. El extranjero menos avisado se percata de inmediato, cuando visita alguna de las ciudades de Bolivia, que la gente habla en las calles y en las plazas un castellano muy matizado y distinto del que se oye en otras latitudes de América.

Según el último Censo Nacional de Población y Vivienda en Bolivia en 2001, quienes hablan quechua en Bolivia alcanzan 2.1 millones de habitantes, y quienes hablan aimara son 1.4 millones de personas. Estos datos le dan pie a Coello para aseverar que “en términos absolutos aumentó el número de los que hablan castellano, quechua o aimara, pero, en términos relativos, en los últimos 25 años, el porcentaje de los primeros incrementó; en cambio, el de los dos últimos sufrió un pequeño decremento. Creció el número de bilingües, de los cuales la gran mayoría tiene el quechua o el aimara como lengua materna.

A criterio del lingüista Coello, ¿cuál de las siguientes razones explica las aparentes discrepancias entre el castellano boliviano y el de España?

- A. La influencia de lenguas aborígenes.
- B. La enorme distancia entre ambas naciones.
- C. La extensión de la educación a sectores rurales donde antes no llegaba.
- D. Las cada vez mayores migraciones del campo a la ciudad.

English

Example 10: Based solely upon the reading passage below, choose the option that best answers the stated question. Use only information provided in the passage, do not use any prior knowledge that you may have on the subject.

“Kendra’s Law” establishes a court procedure for ordering individuals suffering from a mental illness to accept and receive “assisted outpatient treatment” (AOT). A court order is obtained that will direct an appropriate agency to provide or arrange for services for the identified individual as outlined in a written treatment plan submitted by an examining physician. This initial order is effective for a six-month period and can be extended for successive periods of one-year increments upon a judge’s order. In cases where the patient fails to comply with the ordered treatment or poses a significant risk of harm to themselves or others, the patient may be involuntarily confined as an inpatient to a hospital or other treatment facility.

Which of the following statements regarding Kendra’s Law expresses the information contained in the above passage most accurately? Kendra’s Law:

- A. ensures that an examining physician is providing psychotherapy to individuals with a mental illness.
- B. ensures that individuals with mental illness receive "assisted outpatient treatment."
- C. orders any agency to provide services to individuals with mental illnesses.
- D. orders individuals with mental illness to receive appropriate treatment for six months.

Format B: Applicants are presented with short written sentences or passages with a word or phrase missing. From a list of four options, applicants must select the word or phrase that best fits into the sentence. Questions are in the same language as the reading selections. Applicants are not required to have any special knowledge relating to the content area covered in the selections.

English

Example 11: These questions should be answered by choosing the option that best completes the given sentence.

After hours of listening to boisterous World War II stories, the children finally escaped from their _____ grandfather.

- A. evasive
- B. spiritual
- C. garrulous
- D. nebulous

Spanish

Example 12: These questions should be answered by choosing the option that **best completes** the given sentence.

El Juez le _____ que si no comparecía lo encarcelaría.

- A. encargó
- B. adhirió
- C. ensañó
- D. advirtió

Answer Key:

- 1. A
- 2. B
- 3. A
- 4. C
- 5. D
- 6. D
- 7. A
- 8. D
- 9. A
- 10. B
- 11. C
- 12. D

Applicants must obtain a passing score on the multiple-choice test in order to be invited to participate in the oral test.

More sample questions for the Multiple-choice Examination may be accessed by clicking on the link below: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/6151698/Court-Interpreter-Spanish-Sample-Written-Examination>

GRADING THE EXAM

In general, for multiple-choice exams, final scores are converted from raw scores (*number of questions answered correctly*) and placed on a scale that ranges from 0 to 100. The passing raw score (*number of questions answered correctly*) is determined after an exam is given and all the test results have been analyzed. A test taker must receive a scaled score of 70 in order to pass an examination. A scaled score of 70 may or may not be equivalent to 70% of the questions answered correctly on any exam. For example, if an exam contains 100 questions and it's determined that a test taker needs to have gotten at least 65 questions correct in order to pass the exam, then 65 (the raw score), is converted to a scaled score of 70, and the test taker will receive a 70 on the exam. Similarly, if an exam contains 100 questions and it's determined that a test taker needs to have gotten at least 80 questions correct in order to pass the exam, then 80 (the raw score), is converted to a scaled score of 70, and the test taker will receive a 70 on the exam.

The passing score is also in part determined by Rules of the of Chief Judge, §25.13:

The Chief Administrator of the Courts may authorize the use of any professionally recognized examination scoring and conversion methods, taking into consideration the type of examination, the examination difficulty, the size of the applicant population in relation to the number of positions to be filled, labor market conditions, or other factors which can affect the number of eligibles.

RATING OF THE ORAL PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION

The audio recording of each applicant's performance is rated by a professional (federally certified) bilingual expert. The primary consideration in rating the exam is accuracy. The oral performance exam consists of 115 pre-selected words and phrases called "scoring units" that are embedded across the six parts of the test. The rater listens to the applicant's recording to determine the total number of scoring units correctly interpreted. A scoring unit is considered as interpreted correctly if the word/phrase is known to the rater as being of acceptable usage or is found in a standard dictionary and is used at the appropriate register (*level of formality of spoken or written word*).

Oral Score

In evaluating applicants' performance, the raters record the number of "scoring units" which were correctly interpreted by the applicant. The maximum possible score units (*in parentheses*) for each of the sections are as follows: English Sight Translation (10), Spanish Sight Translation (10), Consecutive Q & A (40), One-Voice Simultaneous (English → Spanish) (15), One-Voice Simultaneous (Spanish → English) (15), Two-Voice Simultaneous (25).

Global Rating Score

As part of the rating process, raters also assign a structured global rating score for each applicant. The five-point rating scale is described below. It assesses applicants' overall performance with respect to fluency, clarity of pronunciation, accuracy and completeness of applicants' interpretation which includes vocabulary, grammar, idioms, and register, in both languages. The possible global score ratings are: I, II, III, IV, and V. The following criteria are used to assign the global rating score and associated points.

Rating Points

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|------|-----|--|
| I. | +10 | Outstanding. Performing at the level of an educated native speaker in both languages. Interpretations are accurate. Little or no accent in either language that interferes with comprehension. Very few omissions, even in the most difficult passages. |
| II. | +5 | Has near-native command of both languages. Occasional errors limited to difficult or complex passages at fast conversational speed, or with highly technical or specialized terminology. Omissions are infrequent. Any noticeable accent is easily understandable. |
| III. | 0 | Overall adequate interpretation. May have minor difficulties with less common vocabulary. Occasional omissions. Less than adroit handling of complicated sentence structure, but with no serious misunderstandings. May exhibit some difficulty with long passages in simultaneous and/or consecutive interpreting. Accent noticeable but does not interfere with understanding of the interpretation. |
| IV. | -5 | Has basic command of both languages but makes some mistakes or omissions even in easy passages. Exhibits some hesitancy going from one language to the other which diminishes the quality of the interpreting. Occasionally substitutes |

summarization for interpreting. Intonational patterns that impact negatively upon comprehension. Accent interferes with comprehension of interpretation.

- V.- 10 Although some language skills are evident, significant and/or frequent omissions. Serious mistakes/misunderstandings. Frequently resorts to summarization. Non-native word groupings that impede comprehension. Distracting accent that interferes with understanding of interpretation.

If an applicant receives a 'I' on the global score, 10 points are added to the oral score. For a 'II', 5 points are added. For a 'III', there is no change to the oral score. For a 'IV', 5 points are subtracted from the oral score and for a rating of 'V', 10 points are subtracted.

Final Score

The **Final Score** on the Court Interpreter (Spanish) Exam is equal to 50% of the **Converted Adjusted Oral Score** and 50% of the **Converted Multiple-Choice Exam Score**. Each component accounts for 50% of the **Final Score**.

Practice Oral Examination:

[Parts I and II](#)

[Parts III - VI](#)