

Strategies for the Open Response answers in the MTEL

Important features of the strong sample response:

- Good organization of arguments/suggestions;
- the memo structure as requested in the question;
- the inclusion of all of the writer's knowledge of relevant theory;
- use of names of researchers i.e. Krashen, Cummins;
- use of names of theories, i.e. affective filter, CUP, comprehensible input, CALP, BICs, etc;
- sticks to the question;
- looks for clues in the question;
- answers the question fully and completely;
- uses connecting words: first, second, third, finally.
- concise.

Before you start to write your response:

- Read the question several times, underline important points that you need to address.
- Use the rest of the test: look for material in the questions that you can use in your open response
- It is important to organize your knowledge first, in the form of a concept map or a graphic organizer of some sort.
- Decide what material from your organizer is redundant and what is required for the answer to this particular question.
- Stick to the format asked for; if it is a memo, do not write an essay with an introductory paragraph, supporting body and conclusion.
- You can move things along by using transitions such as: first; second; third; in addition; another thing; finally.
- Keep the audience in mind. Whoever the question suggests your audience is (parent, teacher, student), your actual audience is the MTEL tester, the person marking your paper.
- Try to pace yourself: 10 minutes for the organizer, 20-25 minutes for writing.