

FCE Speaking

Part Two

Comparing two photographs

Examiner: Paola, here are your two photographs. They show people shopping for food in different places. I'd like you to compare these photographs and say what you think are the advantages and disadvantages of shopping for food in these different places.



Tips

To get a good mark in this part of the test you need to be able to listen and respond appropriately to what the examiner has asked you. It is not enough to merely describe the photos – you have to **compare** them and **reflect** on the situations they depict.

One minute is not much time, so you need to practise organising your thoughts quickly. You need to keep focussed on the two central parts of the task – **comparing** the places and **discussing** the advantages and disadvantages of both.

The passage below is the transcript of a good response to this task. Pay particular attention to the words in **bold**, which may be useful when you are describing other pairs of photos.

Well, **this photograph shows** people shopping in a supermarket, **while this one shows** a woman buying some fruit from a street market. **So, what are the advantages and disadvantages of** shopping in these two places? **Well, the main advantage of** the supermarket **is that** you can buy everything there, from fruit and vegetables to meat and tinned food. They have a wide range of food, **so** you have a good choice. **And another advantage is that** prices are usually lower in a supermarket. **One disadvantage might be that** supermarkets are often very crowded, and shopping in them can be stressful. And sometimes the produce isn't as good, or as fresh, as in a smaller shop. **So the main advantage of** the market **is that** the fruit and vegetables are usually of a better quality, and you can see exactly what you are buying. **And also** you have a personal relationship with the person who is serving you – you can ask them for advice and they have a clear reason not to cheat you, or you won't come back! **On the other hand** the service can be quite slow, and the prices are often higher, too.

You might want to record yourself reading the text above. Then look at the photos again and record yourself doing the task. Listening to a recording of yourself speaking English can be a very revealing exercise!