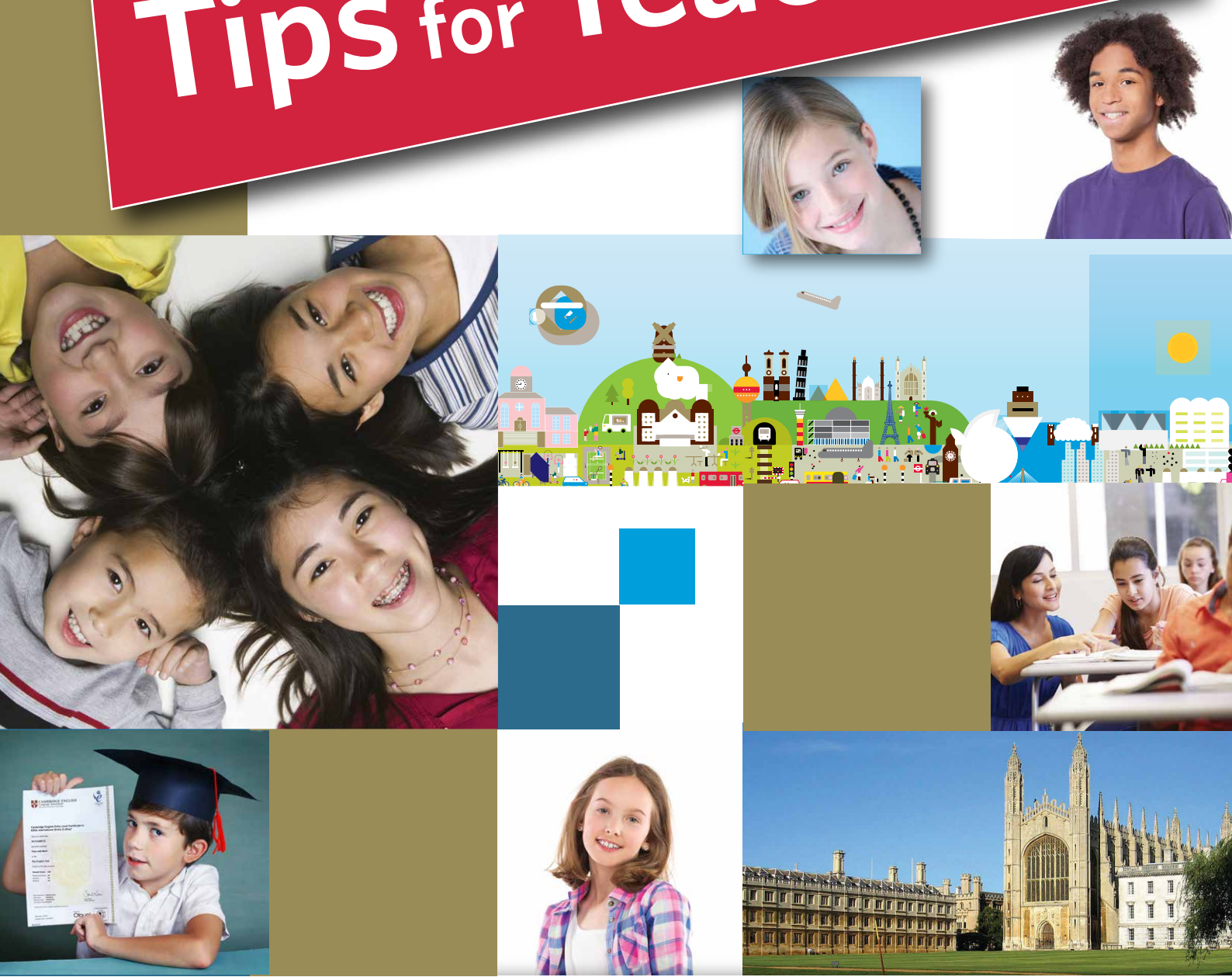


Tips for Teachers



Cambridge English Preliminary



CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH
Language Assessment
Part of the University of Cambridge

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INTRODUCTION

This is a guide for teachers who want to learn more about preparing learners for the Cambridge English: Preliminary and the Cambridge English: Preliminary for Schools exams.

The purpose of this guide is to give you some tips and tools, including practical strategies for each part of the exam and class activities you need to help your learners approach the exam with confidence. The suggested activities will help identify and improve the reading, writing, listening and speaking skills needed for the exam.

The guide also aims to help you identify potential problems your learners may encounter while preparing for the exam and suggest some solutions. A list of “dos and don’ts” for each section gives even more focus to the exam preparation.

Please note this guide is complimentary to and should be used in conjunction with the **Handbook for teachers** (available here: <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/resources-for-teachers/>).

While preparing for Cambridge English: Preliminary exam your learners will acquire and develop all four language skills at B1 Level of the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference).

Content and overview of Cambridge English: Preliminary

Paper / timing	Content	Test focus
1 READING & WRITING 1 hour 30 minutes	Reading Five parts test a range of reading skills with a variety of texts, ranging from very short notices to longer continuous texts. Writing Three parts test a range of writing skills.	Assessment of candidates' ability to understand the meaning of written English at word, phrase, sentence, paragraph and whole text level. Assessment of candidates' ability to produce straightforward written English ranging from producing variations on simple sentences to pieces of continuous text.
2 LISTENING Approx. 36 minutes (including 6 minutes transfer time)	Four parts test a ranging from short exchange to longer dialogues and monologues.	Assessment of candidates' ability to understand dialogues and monologues in both informal and neutral settings on a range of everyday topics.
3 SPEAKING 10-12 minutes per pair of candidates	Four parts: In Part1, candidates interact with an examiner; In Part2 and 4, they interact with another candidate; In Part3, they have an extended individual long turn.	Assessment of candidates' ability to express themselves in order to carry out functions at CEFR Level B1. To ask and to understand questions and make appropriate responses. To talk freely on matters of personal interest.

You can download the complete sample papers from our website:

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams/preliminary/preparation/>



READING



Reading skills

We read many different types of texts in our daily lives and we read the different texts in different ways using different reading skills. When we read a text quickly to get a global or general understanding we are **gist reading** or **skimming**. When we **look for a specific piece of information** in a text we are **scanning** the text. These everyday reading skills are tested in Cambridge English: Preliminary but learners may still need some help preparing for the test. Teachers can prepare different activities to help learners overcome problems or difficulties and to make them more successful in the test.

Task Examples and reading skills tested

Example of instructions for different tasks	Reading skill needed to complete the task
"Read the article describing a part of the world. Where do you think it is? In what ways is it the same as or different from your country?"	gist reading/skimming
"Read the holiday brochure. How much does the holiday cost?"	scanning/reading for specific information
"Read the letter John has written to his mother describing his first week living in Spain. What is his new job like? Does he think that Spanish food is good? How do you know this?"	understanding attitude or opinion
"Gone to lunch. Back at 2.00"	understanding the purpose of signs, notes or messages
"Read the description of the island. How many people live there? What is the weather like? What kinds of things do the people do? What is the most important method of transport?"	detailed reading

Exam Structure, Tasks and Strategies for Learners - Reading

PART 1

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	Three-option multiple choice. Five very short discrete texts: signs and messages, postcards, notes, emails, labels, ect.
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TASK FOCUS	Reading real-world notices and other short texts for the main message.
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NO. OF QS	5
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In Part 1 of the reading test there are five multiple-choice questions and learners choose the correct option from three possible options. This task tests the candidates' ability to understand various short texts. For example, authentic notices and signs, packaging information and communicative messages like notes, emails and cards.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 1 of the reading paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 1 Reading, Step by Step:

1. Don't read the text. Look at the frame, the part around and outside the text, and think about where you would see it.
2. Read the text and decide if the text is a personal text or a text for the public.
3. Read the text, underline the important words and then try to put the sentence into your own words.
4. Read the options and choose the one that matches your own sentence.



In the Part 1 task, in Step 1, learners can be told not to read the text – just to look at the frame.

The aim for this step is to help learners to establish the “context”, or the situation the text is in, because if we know the context it is easier to understand the text.

In this task they are also told to read the text, underline the important words and then try to put the sentence into their own words.

The aim of doing this is for learners to focus on the meaning of the words in the text, and then to try to say what the words mean by paraphrasing or using their own words.



PART 2

**TASK TYPE
AND FORMAT**

Matching.
Five items in the form of descriptions of people to match to eight short adapted authentic texts.

TASK FOCUS

Reading multiple texts for specific information and detailed comprehension.

NO. OF QS

5

There are five questions in the Part 2 matching task. Candidates read five descriptions of people and match the content of a short text to each of the people described. This requires detailed reading comprehension of the descriptions and the texts.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 2 of the reading paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 2 Reading, Step by step:

1. Skim read the questions quickly to get a general idea of what they are about - who the people are and what they want.
2. Skim read the options to get a general idea of their content.
3. Read the questions, the descriptions of the different people, in detail and underline the things they want or like (there are usually three things). Think of words that mean the same or the opposite of the words you have underlined.
4. Read the options, the other texts, in detail and underline the important information there that relates to or matches the information in the questions.
5. Read the questions and match what you have underlined in the questions to what you have underlined in options.
6. Choose the correct options for the texts.

In the Part 2 task, learners are advised to “skim read” or “gist read” the questions and the text to get a general idea of what they are about.

This is to help learners to establish the context of the text. Having a global understanding of a text makes it easier to read for detail, which is the next step.

Having read for gist and got a global understanding of the text, learners can then be asked to read the questions in detail and underline key information. This activity helps learners focus on detail and to read for detailed comprehension.



PART 3

**TASK TYPE
AND FORMAT**

True/false
Ten items with an adapted-authentic long text.

TASK FOCUS

Processing a factual text. Scanning for specific information while disregarding redundant material.

NO. OF QS

10

In Part 3 candidates do a true or false task. They read a sentence and then they read a text to find information relating to the sentence. They are reading in order to decide if the sentence is true or false. As they read they are scanning the text for synonyms or antonyms.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 3 of the reading paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 3 Reading, Step by step:

1. Skim read the text quickly to get a general idea of what it is about – don't worry about words you don't know.
2. Read the first question and underline the important words. Think of synonyms (words that mean the same) and antonyms (words that are the opposite) of these words.
3. Read the text until where you find a synonym or an antonym of the words you underlined in the question. Ignore words you don't know.
4. Is the question correct or incorrect? Mark your answer on the answer sheet
5. Read the next question, underline the important words, think of synonyms and antonyms then read the next part of the text looking for words like these to match the question. Decide if it's correct or not and mark your answer. Go on to the next question.

In the Part 3 task, learners can be told to read the text until the point where they find a synonym or an antonym of the words they underlined in the text. They can also be told to ignore words they don't know. Reading a text to look for specific information in this way and ignoring words they don't know in a text helps learners to develop scanning skills.

PART 4

**TASK TYPE
AND FORMAT**

Four-option multiple choice.
Five items with an adapted-authentic long text.

TASK FOCUS

Reading for detailed comprehension; understanding attitude, opinion and writer purpose. Reading for gist, inference and global meaning.

NO. OF QS

10

In Part 4 of the reading paper, candidates read a text and answer five multiple choice questions. The type of text used for this part of the reading paper provides more than just factual information. It expresses an opinion or attitude. Candidates have to show that they have understood the writer's purpose and the writer's attitude or opinion.

There are five questions. One question is about the writer's purpose. One question is about the general meaning of the text. Three questions are about details in the text, one of which is about the writer's attitude or opinion. The questions in Reading Part 4 require learners either to skim read for general understanding or read for detail.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 4 of the reading paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 4 Reading, Step by step:

1. Read the instructions at the top of the task.
2. Read the title and look at any pictures. Consider 'what' you think the text will be about, and 'who' you think it will be about
3. Skim read the text quickly to find out the topic, writer's purpose and general meaning. Ask yourself: Who is the text about? Who wrote the text? What is the text about?
4. Read the first question that is about the writer's purpose and the four options. Think about which option might be the right one and which options are wrong.
5. Read the text again more carefully.
6. Read the middle three questions one by one and answer them one by one by referring back to the text.
7. Read the last question and then read the text quickly again. Answer the last question and also check also your answer to the first question.



PART 5

**TASK TYPE
AND FORMAT**

Four-option multiple-choice cloze.
Ten items, with an adapted-authentic text drawn from a variety of sources. The text is of a factual or narrative nature.

TASK FOCUS

Understanding of vocabulary and grammar in a short text, and understanding the lexico-structural patterns in the text.

NO. OF QS

10

In Part 5, candidates are given a short text that has 10 gaps. They are given four options to choose from to complete each gap. The gaps are designed to test vocabulary and grammar.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 5 of the reading paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 5 Reading, Step by step:

1. First, skim read the text to get to know the topic and to get the general meaning.
2. Try to predict some of the answers as you read.
3. Read the beginning of the text and look at the example that has been completed already.
4. Work through the ten questions trying to choose the correct word to fill each gap. Use the words on either side of the gap to help. Remember it may be necessary to read the whole sentence before deciding.
5. After choosing the word you think is correct, check the other words to be sure that they are wrong.
6. Having finished the task read it one more time with the answers for a final check.
7. Read the last question and then read the text quickly again. Answer the last question and also check also your answer to the first question.

➔ Students should avoid 'wordspotting' across question and text, as this will rarely yield the correct answer

Reading: problems and solutions

What kind of problems do your learners have with reading?

How do you help your learners with these problems?

Some problems that learners can have with the reading paper	Possible solutions
Learners don't understand what they have to do in the task.	Do some practice tests to show learners how different task types work.
Learners don't read the instructions for the tasks carefully.	Practice looking at different instructions in class. Get learners to underline key words in the instructions.
Learners don't answer all of the questions on the answer sheet.	Tell learners to guess if they don't know an answer but don't leave any blank.
Learners get very nervous and panic.	Give learners some strategies for trying to relax and try to make them feel confident.
Learners wordspot.	Do some activities in class where learners look at sample tests and look for words which appear in both the question and the option but the option is the wrong answer.
Learners try to read and understand every word in the text.	Set reading tasks where you tell learners to read quickly and set a time limit. Tell learners to ignore words they don't know.
Learners don't understand the context of the text.	Encourage learners to think about the situation by using visual prompts like pictures and frames.
Learners don't identify the key information in the text.	Give learners practise in reading a text and underlining the important words or sentences in the text.
Learners don't see links and matches between texts and questions.	Do exercises where learners read sentences and then think of antonyms or synonyms for some of the words. Tell them to put the sentences into their own words.

Dos and Don'ts for Teaching Reading



DO

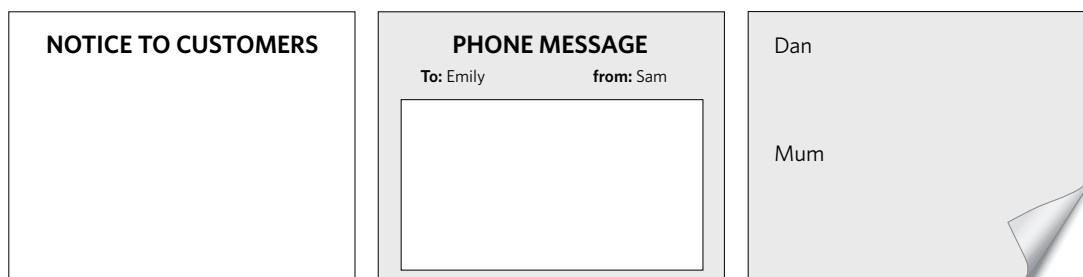
- ✓ encourage learners to read texts for general meaning before looking for detail.
- ✓ encourage learners to predict the content of texts before reading them.
- ✓ encourage learners to predict answers before completing tasks.
- ✓ use authentic materials in your lessons to motivate learners.

DON'T

- ✗ avoid using sample tests and practice texts with learners in class.
- ✗ encourage learners always to read every word of texts they read.
- ✗ tell learners to leave an answer blank on their answer sheet.

Class activities to practise reading skills

Reading Activity 1: "Blank frames"



1. Give learners a number of blank frames from notes, messages, signs etc. (see examples above).
2. Ask them to work in pairs and to decide where the frame comes from.
3. Get each pair to write a text for each frame.
4. Each pairs gives their work to another pair. Learners then put the text they receive into their own words saying what the text means.
5. Learners return the text to the pair that gave it to them and the pairs then check each other's work.

Skills being tested:

- understanding a context or situation
- understanding the meaning of text in signs, notices or messages



Reading Activity 2: "What kind of TV programmes?"

1. Give each learner a picture of a person (see example below). They must imagine what the person is like and then write three things about what kind of TV programmes the person likes to watch.
2. Put learners into groups of four and give them some time to tell each other what kind of TV programmes the person in their picture likes to watch.
3. Give each group a page from the TV guide for that day and tell them to find one programme that would be suitable for each of the people in their pictures.

Skills being tested:

- reading for detail



Reading Activity 3: "A note, a sign or a message"

<p>WAIT FOR LIFT DOOR TO CLOSE BEFORE PRESSING BUTTON</p>	<p>NO BICYCLES AGAINST GLASS PLEASE</p>
<p><u>Saturday's disco</u> <i>There aren't any tickets left. Anyone who ordered a ticket and hasn't given me the money should do so before tomorrow.</i> José Martin</p>	<p>From: Fatima To: Pablo Subject: Missing scarf</p> <p>Hi Pablo Did I leave a scarf in your house ? The problem is it's not mine - i borrowed it and I must give it back.</p>
<p>Throw away any remaining medecine withing one month of opening this bottle</p>	<p><u>Telephone Message</u> <i>Missa - your spanish class is on Friday evening this week instead of thursday, starting 15 minutes earlier than usual.</i></p>

1. Give each learner a card with a note, a sign or a message on it (see examples above). Tell them to answer the following questions. What type of text is it? Who is it for? Where would you see it?
2. Ask them to rewrite the text using their own words.
3. Collect in all of the cards and put them up on the board.
4. Ask learners to talk about the card they had using the questions given as a guide. The rest of the class guesses which card is being described.

Skills being tested:

- reading for detail
- understanding the meaning of text in signs, notices or messages



Reading Activity 4: "True or False"

True / False statements

This trip is for people who like peace and quiet.
Many different activities are organised on board.

Exploring the Arctic

The Arctic is one of the few places in the world _____ by _____ where you can see nature at its _____ and most beautiful. Join our ship the Northern Star from 2 to 18 Jul, for a 17-day _____ to the Arctic. During the voyage you are able to relax and get away from it all. There are no parties or film-shows to attend, quizzes to enter, or entertainers to watch.

1. Give learners true or false statements.
2. Give them a text with a number of words blanked out. They decide if the statements are true or false after reading the text (see example above).
3. Ask them to do the task and then discuss with their partners whether they needed the blanked out words.

Skills being tested:

- ignoring words you don't know
- scanning

Reading Activity 5: "Biographies"

1. Get three biographies of well-known people from the internet. Blank out the names of the people.
2. Divide the class into three sections. Give learners in section A copies of the first biography, and in Section B copies of the second biography and Section C the third biography.
3. Set a time limit for learners to read their text quickly and decide who their text is about.
4. Tell them to turn their texts face down.
5. Ask learners to discuss in their sections who their person was and share ideas about why they think it is that person.
6. Re-group the learners so that they now work in groups of three: one from section A, one from section B and one from section C. Each learner should tell the others in their group about their famous person without saying the name of the person and the other learners in the group guess who the person is.

Skills being tested:

- gist reading



Reading Activity 6: “Holiday brochure”

1. Copy a page from a holiday brochure which has information about a holiday including names of places, prices etc.
2. Prepare some questions where learners need to find specific information e.g. How much does it cost to stay in a double room?
3. Give learners the questions to look at then give them the text and ask them to read and find the answers to the questions.

Skills being tested:

- ignoring words you don't know
- scanning

Reading Activity 7: "An article race"

1. Get some newspaper or magazine articles and cut each article into sections.
2. Put the different sections of the articles on the walls around the room.
3. Give each learner the beginning of an article.
4. Tell them that they are in a race and should read the beginning of their article and then move around the room reading the sections on the walls till they find the sections that belong to their story.
5. When they have read all of the sections of their story they should return to their seats.
6. The person who finishes first wins the race.
7. This can be followed up by getting learners to tell each other about their stories.

Skill being tested:

- gist reading



Reading Activity 8: "Prepositions, connectives, pronouns"

1. Choose a text and blank out some of the prepositions, connectives and pronouns.
2. Divide the class into three groups. Give one group the text and ask them to fill in all of the prepositions. Give the second group the text and ask them to fill in all the connectives. Give the third group the text and ask them to fill in all of the pronouns.
3. When they have finished their task, re-group the learners into groups of three with one learner from each group. They can then test each other on which words should go in the gaps.

Skill being tested:

- reading for detail

Reading Activity 9: "10 words"

1. Do some preparation with learners for this task by discussing how to use the words before and after gaps to help to fill in missing words.
2. Give learners a short text and tell them to blank out 10 words. They must be able to say why they have blanked out the word. The reason must relate to the word that comes before or the word that comes after.
3. Learners exchange texts with a partner and they fill in the gaps in each other's texts.

Skill being tested:

- reading for detail



Reading Activity 10: "Story title"

1. Give learners a title of a story. They must not tell anyone else what their title is.
2. Ask the learners to decide what the story is about.
3. Put all of the titles on the board.
4. Ask each learner to say what they think their story is about. The other learners should listen and then say which title they think it is.

Skill being tested:

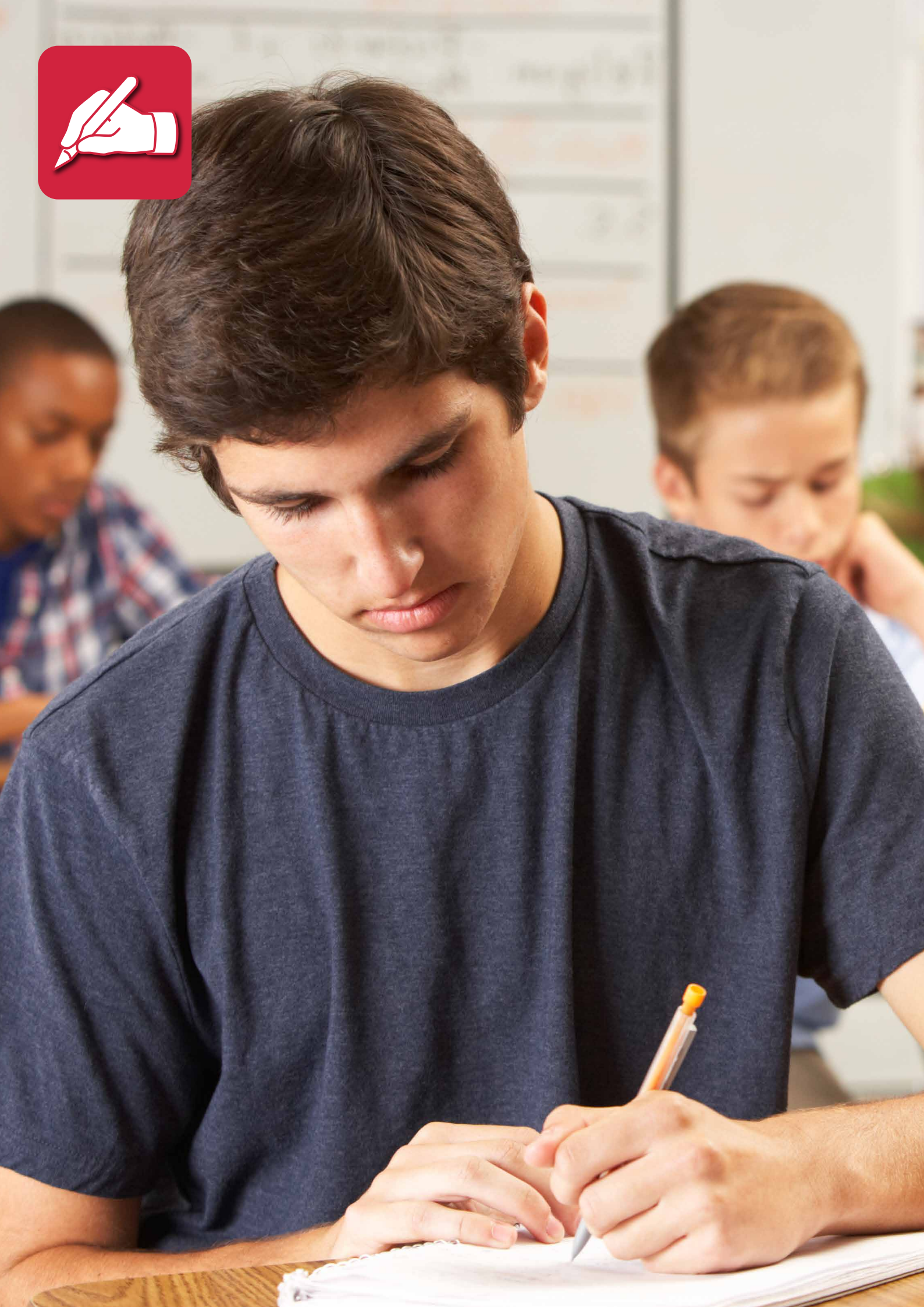
- predicting

Reading Activity 11: "Sample test"

1. Use a sample test, Part 5. Cut up the questions so that each learner has the question and one of the multiple choice options.
2. Learners work in groups of four - each with one of the multiple choice options. They read their text carefully and say if their option is correct or not.
3. Learners discuss why the incorrect answers are incorrect in relation to the text and why the correct answer is correct.

Skill being tested:

- reading for detail



WRITING



Writing skills

The reasons learners may need to write in English in their daily lives are often related to communicating in writing - writing letters, messages, emails, postcards etc.

In order to meet our learners' needs it is necessary to help them in class to improve the writing skills that will help them to communicate better when writing. In the writing part of the Cambridge English: Preliminary and the Cambridge English: Preliminary for Schools some of these writing skills are tested and the tasks used in the tests have a communicative focus.

Writing skills

- **Punctuation:** symbols or marks used to organise written text to make the meaning clear
- **Spelling:** writing words using the correct letters
- **Syntax:** the way words are arranged in a phrase or a sentence
- **Cohesion:** using connectives like linking words and conjunctions to join together sentences and phrases in a text
- **Coherence:** when ideas in a text fit together clearly and are set out logically to help the reader make sense of a text
- **Paraphrasing/rephrasing:** writing something that you have read or heard using different words
- **Style/register:** using language appropriate for the context; choosing the right language for formal situations and less formal situations
- **Layout:** when it is important for a text to be presented on a page in a particular way
- **Summarising:** taking the main points of a long text, and rewriting them in a short, clear way
- **Drafting:** producing the first version of a written text
- **Editing:** changing or correcting written text to make it clearer or easier to understand
- **Redrafting:** writing a text again to include improvements and focus on accuracy

Exam Structure, Tasks and Strategies for Learners - Writing

PART 1

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	Sentence transformations. Five items that are theme-related. Candidates are given sentences and then asked to complete similar sentences using a different structural pattern so that the sentence still has the same meaning. Candidates should use no more than three words.
TASK FOCUS	Control and understanding of B1 level Cambridge English: Preliminary grammatical structures. Rephrasing and reformulating information.
NO. OF QS	5

Part 1 focuses on grammatical precision and requires candidates to complete five sentences, all sharing a common theme or topic. There is an example, showing exactly what the task involves. For each question, candidates are given a complete sentence, together with a gapped sentence below it.

Candidates should write between one and three words to fill this gap. The second sentence, when complete, must mean the same as the first sentence.

There may be more than one correct answer in some cases. It is essential for candidates to spell correctly and no marks will be given if a word is misspelled.

Candidates will also lose the mark if they produce an answer of more than three words, even if their writing includes the correct answer.



Below are some examples of the kind of language work learners need to do and the kinds of sentences they have to transform:

Language area being focused on	example sentences from Part 1 Writing
Changing reported speech and direct speech.	I asked my new neighbours where they had lived before. I asked my new neighbours, "Where did <u>you live</u> before?"
Using different ways of emphasising quality.	We are very lucky that our neighbours are so nice. We are very lucky to have <u>such</u> nice neighbours.
Using different verb patterns.	The kitchen needs painting. They must get someone to <u>paint</u> the kitchen.
Using an opposite adjective.	They said their old house was quite near London. They said their old house wasn't very <u>far</u> (<u>away</u>) <u>from</u> London.
Using different comparatives.	This house is larger than their old house. Their old house wasn't as <u>large as</u> / <u>big as</u> this house.
Using different time expressions.	It is three days since my new neighbours moved into their house. My new neighbours moved into their house <u>three days ago</u> .
Using different ways of expressing a conditional idea.	It will stay a quiet neighbourhood unless they build more houses. If they <u>don't build</u> more houses, it will stay a quiet neighbourhood.
Changing positive and negative sentences.	There are only a few families with cars. There <u>aren't (very)</u> many families with cars.
Using different connectives.	People like living here because it's quiet. It's quiet <u>so</u> people like living here.
Changing passive and active sentences.	The houses were built in different styles. People <u>built (the) houses</u> in different styles.
Changing there is / are and has (got) / have (got).	There are two shops in our neighbourhood. Our neighbourhood has <u>two</u> shops.

Below is a strategy or procedure we could give to learners to help them with the sentence transformations in Part 1 of the writing test.



Strategy for Learners for Part 1 Writing, Step by Step:

1. Read the first sentence and think about its meaning.
2. Read the second sentence, looking at which words are repeated from the first sentence and which words are different.
3. Look at the second sentence again and think about which phrases and structures could be used to complete it.
4. Complete the second sentence using one, two or three words and write them on the answer sheet. Make sure you spell them correctly.
5. Read both sentences again, checking their meaning is the same.

PART 2

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT

Short communicative message Candidates are prompted to write a short message in the form of a postcard, note, email, etc. The prompt takes the form of a rubric or short input text to respond to.

TASK FOCUS

A short piece of writing of 35-45 words focusing on communication of three specific content points.

NO. OF QS

1

Candidates are asked to produce a short communicative message of between 35 and 45 words in length. The message is in the form of a postcard, note, email etc. They are told who they are writing to and why, and must include three content points which are laid out with bullets in the question.

To gain top marks, all three points must be present in the candidate's answer, so it is important that candidates read the question carefully and plan what they will include. Their answer should relate to the context provided in the question. Candidates are also assessed on the clarity of the message they produce; minor, non-impeding errors are not penalised. Candidates' answers should be within the 35-45 word limit.



In Writing Part 2, learners should still try to make their writing accurate so they will need to use their skills in punctuation, spelling and syntax, but they are not penalised for minor errors. They will need to use connectives to make their work flow more easily and the message will need to be logically set out so cohesion and coherence are still important. However, the most important focus in Writing Part 2 is on communicating the content points of the message and relating them to the context. Although learners are not penalised for using inappropriate style/register, their writing will be more acceptable if it is appropriate as it shows learners understand the relationship between the writer and the person the message is for and it is important that they edit their work to make sure the message is clear.

In addition to helping learners develop their writing skills, there is also some useful language work that can be done to help them complete the task successfully.

The messages that learners have to write in Part 2 have a communicative purpose. We can help our learners complete the tasks by teaching them appropriate language; that is, by teaching them suitable functional language, for example:

- giving information/explaining
- thanking
- making an apology
- making an offer
- expressing likes and dislikes
- inviting
- making a suggestion

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 2 of the writing paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 2 Writing, Step by Step:

1. Read the question carefully to find out what the situation is and what the purpose of the message is.
2. Read the question again to decide on the relationship between the writer and the recipient of the message, and decide whether the message should be formal or informal.
3. Read the question a third time and underline the three content points.
4. Plan your answer.
5. Write your answer on the answer sheets.
6. Edit your work to ensure that all of the content points are included and that the writing is clear. Correct any mistakes.

For Part 2, it is essential for candidates to read the whole question carefully... and produce a communicative message that is in line with the task rubric (Communication is more important than the language here!) If candidates proofread their writing, they may get more marks.

PART 3

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT

A longer piece of continuous writing.
Candidates are presented with a choice of two questions: an informal letter or a story.
Candidates are assessed using assessment scales consisting of four subscales: Content, Communicative Achievement, Organisation and Language.

TASK FOCUS

Writing about 100 words focusing on control and range of language.

NO. OF QS

1

In Part 3 candidates produce a longer piece of continuous writing. They are presented with a choice of two questions; either an informal letter or a story may be written. Both tasks require an answer of about 100 words. For the informal letter, candidates are given an extract of a letter from a friend of theirs, which provides the topic they must write about. Candidates must keep to the topic or they will lose marks. For the story, candidates are given either a short title or the first sentence. The answer must be recognisably linked in content to the question and candidates should pay particular attention to any names or pronouns given in the title or sentence. In both the letter and the story it is important for candidates to show ambition. They are assessed on their ability to use a range of language. Coherent organisation, spelling and punctuation are also assessed. Candidates could gain top marks by including a range of tense, appropriate expressions and different vocabulary, even if their answer is not flawless. Non-impeding errors, whether in spelling, grammar or punctuation, will not necessarily affect a candidate's mark, whereas errors which interfere with communication or cause a breakdown in communication are treated more seriously.



In this type of continuous writing task learners use almost all of the skills listed at the beginning of this unit. In this type of task it is important that their work is accurate so they will need to use their skills in punctuation, spelling and syntax.

They also need to use connectives to make their work flow more easily, and the message will need to be logically set out so cohesion and coherence are still important.

Style and register are also important, especially if learners choose the option of the letter, as the register for the letter should be informal because it is written to a friend. If they choose to write the letter, they also need use the correct layout for a letter.

In the work they produce they are assessed on the use and control of language so it is important that they edit their work to make sure their work is accurate. It may be useful for them to produce a first draft of their work, edit it and re-draft it to make the work more accurate and better presented.

The following areas are assessed in Writing Part 3

Content: focuses on how well the candidate has fulfilled the task, in other words if they have done what they were asked to do.

Communicative achievement: focuses on how appropriate the writing is for the task and whether the candidate has used the appropriate register.

Organisation: focuses on the way the candidate puts together the piece of writing, in other words if it is logical and ordered.

Language: focuses on vocabulary and grammar. This includes the range of language as well as how accurate it is.

Examples of relating questions that you may ask when assessing these categories for practice tests:

Content	Communicative achievement	Organisation	Language
<i>How does the story begin? Why does it begin in this way?</i>	<i>Is the story interesting to read? Why?</i>	<i>Is the story easy to follow? Why?</i>	<i>Which grammatical forms are used accurately in the story?</i>
<i>How many words does the story have?</i>	<i>Is the register appropriate for a story?</i>		<i>Are there many errors? Do they prevent you from understanding the story?</i>
<i>Is the content relevant to the task? How?</i>	<i>Is the layout appropriate for a story?</i>		<i>Which items of vocabulary show the writer has a good range?</i>

Tips for learners to help them fulfil the assessment criteria when writing

a story:

- Include the title in the first line.
- Keep the content relevant to the task.
- Write in continuous prose.
- Write in neutral register.
- Plan carefully so the story has a beginning, middle, and an end.
- Make sure the story holds the attention of the reader.
- Use connectives to link sentences.
- Use narrative tenses accurately.
- Use a range of grammar and vocabulary.

a letter:

- Refer to the topic in the first line.
- Keep the content relevant to the task set.
- Use the correct layout for a letter.
- Write in informal register.
- Plan carefully so the letter has a beginning, a middle and an end.
- Make sure the letter holds the attention of the reader.
- Use connectives to link sentences.
- Use functional language accurately
- Use appropriate language for beginning and ending a letter.
- Use a range of grammar and vocabulary.

For Part 3, learners will have given a good answer if they can say yes to all of the points below.

- I have written about 100 words.
- The answer is well organised.
- There is a clear ending to the story.
- The ideas are connected using and, because, etc
- I have used a range of different tenses.
- The answer can be understood although there are some mistakes.

If a learner also proofreads their work, they may get a better mark.



Writing: problems and solutions

What kind of problems do your learners have with writing?

How do you help your learners with these problems?

Some problems that learners can have with the writing paper	Possible solutions
My learners don't have enough ideas for writing tasks.	Develop your learners' brainstorming skills. In class get learners to work in groups and to share ideas for writing tasks.
My learners don't refer to the content or topic in the question when they write their answers.	Give learners practice in class reading a test question and underlining the main topic word. Then get them to write a first sentence that includes this word.
My learners don't include all of the points in the question when they are writing their answers.	Give learners practice in class reading test questions and underlining all the points that have to be included.
My learners don't write letters or stories in their daily lives so don't have much experience of this type of writing.	Use letters and stories in reading comprehension tasks and grammar gap-fill tasks so that they can see more examples of this type of text.
My learners produce writing that is not well organised. They move from one point to another and then back again.	Get learners to plan what they are going to write so that all of their ideas are in their plan for them to follow.
My learners use very limited vocabulary in their writing.	Do activities and games in class where learners have to think of words that mean the same or words that are opposites of words given.
My learners use very formal English in their writing, I think it's because they are all professional people.	Do reading and listening activities and role plays which have informal language to provide examples and to practise language used between friends.
My learners find it difficult to sit and concentrate on writing for more than a couple of minutes.	Do writing activities for short periods of time in class and encourage learners to work in pairs and groups and perhaps add some competition.
My learners use a different script in their own language and are very slow in writing a whole piece of text in English.	In class include activities where learners can practice letter formation and joined up script like copying a model answer.
My learners give in work that has a lot of mistakes that I know they could correct themselves.	Set aside extra time in class for learners to proofread and edit their work.
My learners don't have much experience so don't know anything about a lot of topics they are asked to write about.	Find out what your learners' interests are and use topics they know about for writing tasks. Remind them to choose the task that interests them in the exam.

Dos and Don'ts for Teaching Writing

DO

- ✓ train learners to edit their work and to make corrections before they hand it in.
- ✓ encourage learners to choose a topic that interests them in the exam.
- ✓ encourage learners to use a wide range of tenses and different vocabulary.
- ✓ tell learners to personalise their letters and to use informal language.
- ✓ encourage learners to read the questions to be sure they include all the content.

DON'T

- ✗ tell learners to write at least 200 words to make the story interesting.
- ✗ discourage learners from being ambitious in their writing.
- ✗ teach learners to avoid complex sentences and to keep to simple sentences.



Class activities to practise writing skills

Example of activities	Writing skills developed
Learners re-write a paragraph putting full stops and commas in the right places	punctuation
Learners do a crossword puzzle filling in the puzzle with the names of different fruit and vegetables	spelling
Learners put jumbled words in a sentence into the correct order	syntax
Learners match halves of sentences and then decide if they should have but or and in the middle	cohesion
Learners look at a picture story and put sentences with the events of the story into the correct order	coherence
Learners put a list of phrases into two categories: language used with people I know well and language used with people I don't know well	style/register
Learners look at a letter and complete a task saying where the sender's address is, where the address of the person receiving the letter is, where the date is etc	layout
Learners read a sentence and re-write it so that it means the same as the original sentence	paraphrasing / rephrasing
Learners write three sentences saying what their favourite movie is about	summarising
Learners brainstorm ideas for a text then write the text ensuring that all of their ideas are included, not focusing on accuracy, focusing on content	drafting
Learners read a letter written by their partner and suggest things that can be done to improve it	editing
Learners re-write recipes they have written so that they can be put in a class magazine	redrafting

Writing Activity 1: Stories

1. Give learners a number of separate pictures (see examples below).
2. Put the learners into pairs and ask them to put the pictures into order to make a story beginning Tom set his alarm clock for 6 o'clock ...
3. Learners work together and decide on the details of what happened in the story.
4. Tell learners to write a plan in their pairs of the different events in the story saying what they would include in each paragraph.
5. Learners write their stories.
6. Each pair exchanges their stories with another pair. They read the stories and suggest ways that the work could be improved.
7. Learners return the stories to the person that wrote it. The stories are then re-written and put on the classroom walls for everyone to read.
8. Learners walk around reading each other's stories and choose the one they think is the best.



Skill being tested:

- connecting ideas



Writing activity 2: Holiday to the Mountains

Last year my friends and I decided to go on holiday to the mountains. We chose a mountain holiday because we wanted to walk and camp and to be in the outdoors. We found a fantastic campsite where we could put up our tent. Every day we walked and explored the countryside. One day we found a lake and we went swimming. It was really lovely although the water was a bit cold. In the evenings we ate a simple meal which we cooked on a camp fire. While we were preparing and cooking the food, we sang songs and told stories about people we knew.

The weather was warm and the days were sunny for the whole holiday. It was perfect.

1. Tell learners that you are going to read them a story (see example above) and that they have to write down the key points or key words in the story.
2. Read the story at normal speed several times (3 or 4). It is not a dictation so don't read it very slowly. Learners should write down key words and phrases adding more to their notes every time you read the text.
3. Put learners into pairs and ask them to reconstruct the text you read putting key words and phrases that they wrote down into whole sentences.
4. When the pairs have done their reconstruction, put each pair with another pair of learners so that they are now working in groups of four. Give them some time now to compare their stories and to correct each others' work.
5. Read the story out one final time and get the learners to listen and correct their work.
6. Ask the learners to write a story of their own beginning Last year my friends and I decided to go ...

Skill being tested:

- using narrative tenses
- using a range of grammar and vocabulary

Writing Activity 3: Functional language

1. Give out the two tables (see examples above). Ask learners to work in pairs and to put an expression from the expressions list into the expression column in the table.
2. Check their answers in class and then ask them to complete the sentences (this will help you to find out if they have the correct verb patterns for the expressions).
3. Check some examples in open class to ensure that they are using the correct verb patterns (-ing / infinitive).
4. Ask learners to work in pairs again and to complete the your example column with different expressions they know for these functions.
5. Learners work in larger groups and share their ideas.

Functional language	Expression	Your example
inviting		
making a request		
suggesting		
thanking		
refusing an invitation		
advising		
apologising		
expressing an opinion		
agreeing		
expressing obligation		

Why don't we ... ?	You really should ...
I'm sorry.	Would you like to ...
Would you mind ... ?	Thanks very much for ...
We can't	I'm afraid I can't ...
I think it would be a good idea to ...	You're right

Skill being tested:

- using functional language
- using a range of grammar and vocabulary



Writing Activity 4: Letter writing

I am sorry to inform you that ...

Give my love to ...

I'm really sorry ...

I am very grateful for ...

Thanks for your letter.

Why don't we ...

I will not be able to attend the ...

Give my regards to ...

Write soon.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Let me know ...

- 1.** Give learners a list of sentences used in letter writing (see examples above). Ask them to work in pairs and to decide which of the sentences are formal and which are informal.
- 2.** Check their answers in open class.
- 3.** Ask them to work in pairs again to complete the sentences and to discuss which part of a letter the sentences come from.
- 4.** Check their answers in open class.
- 5.** Give out a list of functions e.g. apologising, thanking etc. and ask them to say which expression matches the functions.

Skill being tested:

- using functional language
- register

Writing Activity 5: Letter writing

1. Ask your learners about informal situations. Who do they talk to in an informal situation? For example, *Do you talk to your family using formal or informal language?* Give me some examples of other people you talk to using informal language. Depending on the learners' situation and experience the answers could include friends, classmates, work colleagues etc. Ask the learners if they also write to these people by email or letter.
2. Write the following questions on the board and ask learners to brainstorm ideas in groups.
 - How do you start an informal letter in English?
 - What can you write in the opening sentence of a letter?
 - What can you write for the last sentence of a letter?
 - How do you end an informal letter in English?
3. Give out a worksheet with examples of possible answers to the questions and ask learners to decide which phrase goes with which of the questions on the board. For example
 - Lots of love + your first name
 - Hope we can meet soon.
 - Thank you for your letter.
 - With love + your first name
 - Take care + your first name
 - Lovely to hear from you.
 - Hope you are well.
 - I hope you are well.
 - See you soon + your first name
 - Hope to hear from you soon.
 - Dear + first name
 - How are you?
4. Check learners have the correct answers then ask them to use the sentences in a letter. Give an example question for them to follow.

Skill being tested:

- using functional language
- using a range of grammar and vocabulary



LISTENING

Listening skills

We use different listening skills depending on what we are listening to, and on our purpose for listening. The skill that we use whenever we listen is bringing the knowledge and experience we have of life to help us understand what is being said. We often predict what the speaker will say using this knowledge, together with visual *clues*. When we want to get a general understanding of a text, we listen for *gist*. When we need to understand everything in a text, we listen for *detail*. Sometimes when we listen, we only listen for the information that we need, such as times or places etc. This is listening for specific information. All of these listening skills are tested in the Cambridge English: Preliminary, but although learners use these skills in their own language every day, they may need help to *transfer* these skills to a new language.



Exam Structure, Tasks and Strategies for Learners - Listening

PART 1

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	Multiple choice (discrete). Short neutral or informal monologues or dialogues. Seven discrete three-option multiple-choice items with visuals.
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TASK FOCUS	Listening to identify key information from short exchanges.
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NO. OF QS	7
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There are seven short listening texts. Each text has a question and three pictures. Candidates listen to the text and then choose the picture which best answers the question. Part 1 texts may be monologues or dialogues. They are short extracts taken from daily life and may include, for example, conversations at home or between friends, radio announcements, parts of talks, conversations in shops, etc. The task requires candidates to listen for specific information in the text which will answer the question. Each text is played twice. Candidates should listen for gist the first time they hear the text and choose the best option as they do so. They should then check carefully, listening for key information on the second listening to be sure that their answer is correct.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 1 of the listening paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 1 Listening, Step by Step

1. Do the example. Listen to the question and the first text and check the answer to get a bit of practice.
2. Use the five second pause before the first question. Look at the question and think what the situation is. Look at the pictures and think of vocabulary for the things in the pictures.
3. Listen to the first text and look at the pictures. Try to get a general understanding of the text and an idea of which is the correct picture.
4. Listen to the first text again, listen for particular words in the pictures and choose your answer. Listen right to the end and be careful not to be led to the wrong answer by a distractor. Tick the box under the picture. You will have to transfer these answers to the answer sheet at the end of the test, after you hear Part 4.
5. Follow this procedure for each of the texts.

PART 2

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	Multiple choice (discrete). Longer monologue or interview (with one main speaker). Six three-option multiple-choice item.
TASK FOCUS	Listening to identify specific information and detailed meaning
NO. OF QS	6

Candidates listen to a longer text, which may be either a monologue, or an interview. Texts are taken from a range of contexts, and are informational in focus. Some may be radio announcements or recorded messages, providing information about places and events, whilst others may be extracts from talks or radio programmes, in which people are talking about their lives, interests or experiences. There are six multiple-choice questions and to get the correct

answer, candidates need to understand the detailed meaning of the text. The text is played twice. Candidates should listen for gist the first time they hear the text and choose the best option for each question as they do so. They should then check carefully that their answers are correct as they listen for detail the second time.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 2 of the listening paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 2 Listening, Step by Step

1. Listen and read the instructions. Think about what the situation is, who will be speaking in the recording, and what they will be speaking about.
2. Use the 45 second pause before the recording to read through the questions. Think about the topics that the questions cover. Make some notes about what you know about the topic and about the kind of vocabulary and grammar the speaker will use.
3. During the first listening, listen for the overall meaning of the text and choose the best answers for the questions.
4. When you have answered a question, quickly read the next question to remind yourself of the topic.
5. During the second listening, listen for more detail and listen for synonyms and antonyms and ways the questions could be paraphrased. Tick the box next to the correct answer. You will have to transfer these answers to the answer sheet at the end of the test, after you hear Part 4.

PART 3

**TASK TYPE
AND FORMAT**

Gap-fill
Longer monologue.
Sixgaps to fill in. Candidates needs to write one or more words in each space.

TASK FOCUS

Listening to identify, understand and interpret information.

NO. OF QS

6



Candidates listen to a longer text, an informational monologue, taken from a range of contexts. They may be radio announcements or recorded messages or they may be extracts from talks or radio programmes, in which people are talking about courses, trips or holiday activities. Candidates have a page of notes summarising the content of the text and six pieces of information have been removed from the text. As they listen, candidates complete the missing information with words from the text. Most answers are single words, numbers or very short phrases. The text is heard twice and the task requires candidates to locate and record specific information from the text, whilst ignoring other parts of the text that include unnecessary information.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 3 of the listening paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 3 Listening, Step by Step

1. Listen and read the instructions to find out who the speaker is and what the situation is.
2. Use the 20 second pause before the recording to read through the summary sheet. Look at the gaps, try to remember what you know about the topic and predict what words could go in the gaps.
3. During the first listening, write short answers in the gaps. Write down exactly what is said on the recording. Don't change the words. If there are numbers to write use figures not words – it is quicker.
4. When you have filled in a gap quickly go to the next gap to remind yourself of what you expect to hear.
5. During the second listening, check your answers and fill in any gaps that you didn't get in the first listening. Check your spelling. You will have to transfer these answers to the answer sheet at the end of the test, after you hear Part 4.



PART 4

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	True/false. Longer informal dialogue. Candidates need to decide whether six statements are correct or incorrect.
TASK FOCUS	Listening for detailed meaning, and to identify the attitudes and opinions of the speakers.
NO. OF QS	6

Candidates listen to an informal dialogue, usually between two people of similar age and status. There is generally one male and one female speaker and the conversation focuses on everyday things that affect the speakers. The conversation is informal and involves speakers discussing their attitudes and opinions as they agree and disagree on a topic. As candidates listen to the text they look at a series of six statements which report the attitudes and opinions of the speakers. Candidates must decide whether these statements are true or false. The text is heard twice and candidates need to understand the gist of the conversation and identify attitudes, opinions and agreement. Candidates will need to understand detailed meaning in order to make the correct choice for each question. They should therefore listen for gist the first time they hear the text, choosing the best option for each question as they do so. They should then check carefully that their answers are correct as they listen for the second time.

Here are steps that learners can follow to complete Part 4 of the listening paper successfully:



Strategy for Learners for Part 4 Listening, Step by Step

BEFORE THE TEXT IS PLAYED

1. Read and listen to the instructions and think about who is speaking and what the conversation is about.
2. Think about what you know about the subject.
3. Read the six statements and underline key words.
4. Think of synonyms and antonyms for the sections underlined as the recording will paraphrase these phrases.

WHILE THE TEXT IS PLAYING THE FIRST TIME

5. Listen for gist to get a general understanding of the text and try to decide if the statements are true or false and mark your answer sheet.

WHILE THE TEXT IS PLAYING THE SECOND TIME

6. Check your answers and mark the answers you didn't mark the first time.
7. Listen for cues to the answers. The cues are the utterances that come just before the answer.
8. Listen for the language the speakers use to express opinion and attitude

WHEN THE TEXT FINISHES

9. You have six minutes to copy the answers onto the answer sheet for the whole test, parts 1, 2, 3 and 4. Do this carefully. Don't change any answers.



Listening: problems and solutions

What kind of problems do your learners have with listening?

How do you help your learners with these problems?

Some problems that learners can have with the listening paper	Possible solutions
Learners don't listen right to the end of the text.	Do examples in class, like the one in Emma's video where the correct answer changes towards the end of the text.
Learners don't read the instructions for the tasks carefully.	Practise looking at different instructions in class. Get learners to underline key words in the instructions.
Learners don't check their answers.	Tell learners to use the second listening to check the answers they have written. Do practice on editing work in class.
Learners don't transfer their answers to the answer sheet correctly.	Practise in class transferring answers from the question paper to answer sheets. Set a strict time limit of only six minutes.
Learners don't answer all of the questions in the test.	Tell learners to guess if they don't know an answer but don't leave any blank.
Learners panic when they don't understand.	Give learners some strategies for trying to relax and use praise in class to build their confidence.
Learners are led to the wrong answer by distractors.	Give learners the audioscript after they have listened and get them to underline the correct answers and all the distractors.
Learners stop listening when they don't know a word.	Do work in class on working out the meaning of words from context.
Learners don't predict answers before they listen.	Do work in class on activating schemata and using existing knowledge, experience and visual clues to predict the content of texts.
Learners try to understand every word each time they listen.	Set a gist task before you set detailed tasks in class to encourage learners to listen for a general understanding first.

Dos and Don'ts for Teaching Listening



DO

- ✓ encourage learners to read the instructions and the questions carefully.
- ✓ encourage learners to activate their knowledge and experience of the topic.
- ✓ encourage learners to predict language before they listen.
- ✓ encourage learners to listen for gist in longer texts the first time they listen.
- ✓ focus on developing particular listening skills in class.
- ✓ use sample tests and practice tests with learners in class

DON'T

- ✗ encourage learners to write long answers on their question paper to each of the tasks.
- ✗ encourage learners to listen and to understand every word of the text the first time they listen.
- ✗ tell learners to leave the answer blank on their answer sheet if they don't know it.

Class activities to practise listening skills

Example of activities	Listening skills developed
Give the learners a map of the world and ask them to discuss in groups what the weather is like in different countries at this time of year.	to encourage learners to use their existing knowledge to help them understand a text
Give each learner a part of the world to focus on. Tell them to listen to the recording about the weather around the world and to note down information about the weather in their area.	to practise listening for specific information
Tell learners that they will listen to a man and a woman talking about the weather in their country. Ask them to look at some pictures of the weather they will describe and to say what they think the people will say about the weather.	to practise predicting using visual clues
Tell learners to listen to the recording of the man and the woman talking about their country and decide, while they are listening, if the weather being described is mostly good or bad.	to practise listening for gist
Give learners a table to fill in with information from the recording that the man and the woman give about the country they live in and the weather there.	to practise listening for the details of a whole text
Ask learners to listen to the recording again and to say if they think the man and the woman like the country and the weather and to note what they like/don't like.	to identify attitude and opinion



Listening Activity 1: "Journey to the city"

1. Put the learners into groups. Give each group the name of a city. Tell them that they are going to this city and that they should decide together what they need to know about the journey to the city. For example, how they are getting there, how long the journey takes, what time they leave/arrive etc.
2. Read out a text or play a pre-recorded text. The text has details of the different journeys to the different cities. Learners must listen to the text and note down the answers to the questions they made for their city.
3. The text should be read / played at least twice.
4. Learners compare their answers in their groups to check that they all have all of the details of their journey.
5. Re-group the learners so that there is one learner from each of the original groups in the new groups. The learners take turns to tell the other people in their group the details of their journeys. The learners listen and write down the details of their classmates' journeys.
6. The learners discuss which journey is the best and which journey they would prefer to make.
7. A follow-up to this activity could be learners doing a role-play at the tourist information desk. One would be a tourist and the other would give information about a journey.

Skill being tested:

- listening for specific information
- bringing existing knowledge / experience to a text
- predicting language

Listening Activity 2: "A picture story"

1. Cut up a picture story. Put learners to work in pairs. Give each pair of learners one of the pictures and ask them to decide on a story that fits around the picture they have.
2. Re-group the learners so that they work in bigger groups. Each group will have a learner who had a different picture. Learners tell each other their stories and then decide on a story that they can all agree on.
3. Read out the story or play a pre-recorded version of the story. Learners listen and note the differences between their stories and the one they listened to.
4. The text should be read / played at least twice.
5. Put learners back into the pairs they started in and get them to compare their notes on the differences in the stories.
6. Learners decide which of the stories they heard they like the best.
7. A follow-up to this activity could be that they write the story they liked the best.

Skill being tested:

- predicting using visual clues
- listening for gist
- listening for detail
- bringing existing knowledge / experience to a text
- predicting language



Listening Activity 3: “Sample Listening”

1. Use a sample Listening Part 1. Give learners one of the questions and the three pictures that go with it. Elicit a short dialogue for one of the pictures and write it on the board as you elicit it. Make sure you lead the learners to include distractors using words from the other pictures.
2. Put learners into pairs. Give each pair a question and the three pictures that go with it from another of the questions in the sample test. Ask the learners in their pairs to work out a dialogue which could represent one of the pictures like the one you did on the board together (this could be a writing or speaking activity).
3. Tell learners that they should continue working with their partner but that everyone should get up and find another pair to talk to. The pairs should say or read out their dialogue to the pair they meet and the pair they meet should choose the picture that best answers the question. They should also listen to the dialogue the pair they meet made and choose the correct picture. The pairs should talk to as many different people as they can in the time you set.

Skill being tested:

- listening for specific information
- predicting using visual clues
- listening for gist
- bringing existing knowledge / experience to a text
- predicting language

Listening Activity 4: "Shakespeare"

1. Tell the learners that they are going to hear a recording of someone talking about the life of Shakespeare (or someone else famous that the learners will know about). Tell them to write down anything they know about the person before they listen.
2. Get learners to share ideas and information in pairs and groups.
3. Give out some questions about the famous person's life that are answered in the text. Ask learners to look at the questions and to see if they know the answers.
4. Read out or play a pre-recorded biography of the famous person and ask the learners to answer the questions you gave them.
5. Read out/play the recording at least twice.
6. Get learners to compare their answers in pairs and then check them in class.
7. Put learners into pairs and ask them to think of a famous person that they know. They should note some things about the person's life in their pairs.
8. Learners do a mingle activity, moving around the room telling different classmates about the person they chose. The classmates should guess who they are describing.
9. A follow up to this activity could be that learners write a biography of the person they chose.

Skill being tested:

- listening for gist
- listening for detail
- bringing existing knowledge / experience to a text
- predicting language



Listening Activity 5: "Town or City"

- 1.** Prepare a number of sentences about the town you are in. For example, The population of London is 8 million. The biggest park in London is Richmond Park. Cut the sentences into two halves.
- 2.** Give each learner the beginning of one sentence and the end of another. For example one learner would have The population of London is and Richmond Park.
- 3.** Get learners to work on their own and to try to work out what the missing parts of their sentence might be.
- 4.** In a mingle activity get learners to walk around saying their halves of the sentences to each other until they find the person that can complete their sentences. They should write down the other half of their sentence.
- 5.** A follow-up to this activity could be for learners to work in groups to produce a tourist guide for the town using the information circulated in the mingle activity.

Skill being tested:

- listening for specific information
- bringing existing knowledge/ experience to a text
- predicting language

Listening Activity 6: "Asking for opinion"

1. Prepare a dialogue with a number of different informal expressions for asking for opinion (e.g. What do you think would be best?), giving opinion (e.g. that sounds reasonable), agreeing (e.g. you could be right) and disagreeing (e.g. I'm not sure about that).
2. Give learners a handout with a table with headings for each language area. For example

asking for opinions	giving opinions	agreeing	disagreeing
---------------------	-----------------	----------	-------------

3. Read out the text or play the dialogue which you pre-recorded and ask learners to listen and put the expressions into the correct columns.
4. Get learners to compare their answers in pairs.
5. Practise the expressions in open class to check pronunciation and to check understanding of meaning and form.
6. Get the pairs to choose one example of each language area and to write a dialogue which includes the examples.
7. Regroup the learners so that each learner works with a different partner. They read out their dialogues to their new partner and the new partner marks which expressions were included on their tables.
8. A follow-up to this activity could be learners doing a role-play taking the parts of the people in the dialogue you read out.

Skill being tested:

- reviewing language of opinion and agreement
- listening for attitude and opinion



Listening Activity 7: Example

1. Do an example Part 4 listening with your class.
2. Check that learners have the correct answers.
3. Give learners the audioscript and ask them to read it and to find the answers in the text and to underline them.
4. Use the first answer to show learners about cues and the sentences that lead directly to the answer.
5. Get them to work in pairs and to read the audioscript again this time circling the sentences that work as cues to the answers.
6. Give learners a list of answers and get them to work out some cues for the answers. For example, the cue it cost 5000 dollars! might elicit the answer Wow! that's expensive!
7. A follow-up to this activity could be learners doing a mingle activity where they walk around saying their answer to different classmates and the classmates having to guess what the cue was.

Skill being tested:

- Recognising cues

Listening Activity 8: Controversial statements

- 1.** Prepare a list of controversial statements on a particular subject. For example, on the subject of education in class, put one of the statements could be: There should never be more than 10 children in a class. Children should only learn reading, writing and mathematics before the age of 10. Children should not have lessons in art and music.
- 2.** In class put one of the statements on the board and elicit and practise some expressions for giving opinions, agreeing and disagreeing.
- 3.** Put learners into groups and ask them to discuss the statements.
- 4.** Get learners to share some ideas in open class.
- 5.** A follow-up to this activity could be getting learners to write new sentences on the subject that they can all agree with in their groups.

Skill being tested:

- reviewing language of opinion and agreement
- listening for attitude and opinion



Listening Activity 9: Example

1. Do an example Part 4 listening with your class.
2. Check that learners have the correct answers.
3. Give learners the audioscript and ask them to read it and to find the answers in the text and to underline them.
4. Use the first answer to show learners how the true/false statement has been paraphrased.
5. Get them to work in pairs and to read the audioscript again and to say how each of the true/false statements has been paraphrased.
6. Give learners a list of statements and ask them to work in pairs and to paraphrase the statements. For example, It's not very warm today could be paraphrased to It's a bit cold today.
7. A follow-up to this activity could be learners doing a mingle activity where they walk around saying their statement to different classmates and the classmates having to guess what the paraphrase might be.

Skill being tested:

- paraphrasing

Listening Activity 10: Monologues

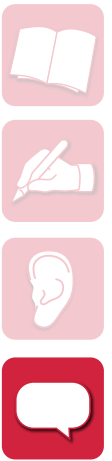
- 1.** Prepare four monologues with four people talking about the same subject. Each person has a different attitude or opinion about the subject. For example, on the subject of cars in city centres, one person would think cars should be banned from city centres, another would think they should be allowed, another would think they should be allowed but that they should have to pay to enter, and another would say that some cars should be allowed some days and others allowed on other days. In the text they explain their opinion and say why they think this is a good idea. Record the texts so that each recording can be listened to by a different group of learners.
- 2.** In class divide the class into four groups. Get each group to listen to one of the people talking and to answer some questions about the speakers' ideas, opinions and attitude.
- 3.** Put the learners into new groups so that there is one learner from each of the original groups in the new group.
- 4.** Get learners to tell each other about the opinions and attitude of the speaker they listened to.
- 5.** A follow-up to this activity could be for learners to discuss their own ideas and opinions about the subject and to say which of the speakers they agree and disagree with.

Skill being tested:

- to review language of opinion and agreement
- to listen for attitude and opinion



SPEAKING



Speaking skills

Your learners need to practice the following skills below (with some examples of language they can use)

Speaking skills	Examples of language
Opening the conversation	<i>It's a beautiful day today.</i>
Taking turns in conversations	<i>If I could just add something to that point, Maria ...</i>
Showing interest	<i>Oh really? That's amazing!</i>
Clarifying or repairing what you are trying to say	<i>What I'm trying to say is ...</i>
Asking for clarification	<i>What do you mean, exactly?</i>
Using vague language or paraphrasing when you don't know a word	<i>It's a thing for putting your shopping in when you're in the supermarket</i>
Checking that the person you are speaking to is listening	<i>Erika, do you see what I mean?</i>
Using fillers to give yourself time to think	<i>It's umm, a, er, how shall I put it?</i>
Summing up and closing a conversation	<i>It looks like we all agree then. That's good.</i>
Interrupting	<i>Can I just say something here?</i>

Below are examples of skills required for the Speaking paper arranged according to the area assessed:

Grammar and Vocabulary

- ✓ *grammatical control*
- ✓ *use of grammatical forms*
- ✓ *appropriacy of vocabulary*
- ✓ *range of grammar and vocabulary*

Discourse Management

- ✓ *using extended stretches of language*
- ✓ *repetition*
- ✓ *coherence and cohesion*

Pronunciation

- ✓ *intelligibility*
- ✓ *phonological features - intonation, word and sentence stress and individual sounds*

Interactive Communication

- ✓ *initiating*
- ✓ *responding*

Exam Structure, Tasks and Strategies for Learners - Speaking

PART 1

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT

Each candidate interacts with the interlocutor. The interlocutor asks the candidates questions in turn, using standardised questions.

TASK FOCUS

Giving information of factual, personal kind. The candidates respond to questions about present circumstances, past experiences and future plans

TIMING

2-3 minutes



The test begins with a general conversation led by the interlocutor, who asks the candidates questions about their personal details, daily routines, likes and dislikes, etc. Candidates are addressed in turn and are not expected to talk to each other at this stage. At the beginning of the test, candidates are asked to spell all or part of their name. The purpose of this conversation is to test the language of simple social interaction and to assess the candidates' ability to take part in spontaneous communication in an everyday setting. It also enables each candidate to take part in the test right from the start.

The interlocutor's questions elicit short rather than extended responses but candidates should be discouraged from giving one-word answers. Candidates should be encouraged to extend their answers with reasons and examples. They should also be discouraged from preparing rehearsed speeches as these will sound unnatural and will not answer the specific questions asked.

Tips for teachers for Part 1 Speaking:

- Provide practice in using language for expressing likes and dislikes.
- Teach learners to say the letters of the alphabet and make sure they can spell their names
- Teach the questions for asking for clarification or repetition
- Learners need to know the past simple tense.
- Use mingle activities such as where learners chat to a classmate about what they did last night.
- Create situations in your lessons for learners to have conversations about themselves.

Tips for learners for Part 1 Speaking

- Use fillers like How can I put it? ummm, ahh when you need time to think.
 - Paraphrase when you can't think of the word.
 - If you don't understand something it's OK to ask the interlocutor or your partner to repeat it.
-

PART 2

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	Simulated situation. Candidates interact with each other. Visual stimulus is given to the candidates to aid the discussion task. The interlocutor sets up the activity using a standardised rubric.
TASK FOCUS	Using functional languages to make and respond to suggestions, discuss alternatives, make recommendations and negotiate agreement.
TIMING	2-3 minutes

This part of the test is a simulated situation. It is not a role-play as candidates give their own opinions about an imaginary situation, rather than assuming a role. The interlocutor sets up the task, repeating the instructions whilst candidates look at sheet of visual prompts. The prompts are designed to generate ideas and provide the basis for the discussion. The candidates speak to each other. The interlocutor does not take part in the discussion but may intervene if there is a complete breakdown in the interaction. Candidates are expected to work independently, negotiating turns and eliciting opinions from each other. Candidates are assessed on their ability to take part in the task, not on the outcome of their discussions, and so they don't have to finish the task in the time given. They are assessed on their use of appropriate language and interactive strategies, not on their ideas. Candidates should be encouraged to make positive contributions that move the discussion forward by picking up on each other's ideas. Candidates should discuss the situation fully with their partners, using the visual prompts to extend the discussion, before coming to a conclusion.

Tips for teachers for Part 2 Speaking

- Teach functional language like making and responding to suggestions and recommendations.
- Present and practise interactive strategies like showing an interest in what someone is saying.
- Teach functional language like asking for and giving opinions, discussing alternatives.
- Present and practise interactive strategies like responding to what someone is saying.



- Do not try to dominate or to talk more than your partner, you will lose marks for this.
- Teach learners to use fillers to give themselves time to think.

Tips for learners for Part 2 Speaking

- Listen carefully to what you have to do in the task – don't let the pictures distract you.
- If you don't know the word for one of the pictures, paraphrase
- It is important that you work together and take turns in the conversation.
- Invite your partner to speak – you'll be given marks for this.
- Use the pictures to give you ideas about what to say.
- Listen to your partner so you can pick up on their ideas.
- You don't have to finish the task or make a decision quickly
- The examiners are interested in the language you use so explain your ideas and give reasons.



PART 3

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT	Extended turn. A colour photograph is given to each candidate in turn and they are asked to talk about it for approximately one minute. Both photographs relate to the same topic.
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TASK FOCUS	Describing photographs and managing discourse, using appropriate vocabulary, in a longer turn.
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TIMING	3 minutes
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Each candidate is given one colour photograph on a common theme to describe. The photographs are of everyday situations and candidates give a simple description of what they can see in their photograph.

This part of the test allows candidates to demonstrate both their range of vocabulary and their ability to organise language in a long turn.

Candidates should describe the people and activities in the photograph as fully as possible. They should imagine that they are describing the photograph to someone who can't see it.

Candidates don't need to use difficult or specialised vocabulary but they are given credit for paraphrasing or using other strategies to deal with vocabulary they don't know.

Tips for teachers for Part 3 Speaking

- Learners need to be taught language for general descriptions, describing people and places.
- Teach phrases for giving opinions and making comparisons.
- Learners need to have had a lot of practice in using the present simple and continuous.
- Learners need to be taught language for describing the position of things and giving details.

Tips for learners for Part 3 Speaking

- When your partner is speaking be quiet but try to look interested.
 - Look at your partner's photograph and meet their eye if they look at you.
 - Use interactive strategies like nodding to show you are listening.
 - When it's your turn to speak, describe the photograph in detail.
 - Imagine the other people in the room can't see your photograph.
 - Name the objects and describe the people, the activities and the situation in the photograph.
 - If you don't know the word for something in the photograph, describe it and paraphrase it.
-



PART 4

TASK TYPE AND FORMAT General conversation. Candidates interact with each other. The topic of the conversation develops the theme established in Part 3. The interlocutor sets up the activity using standardised rubric.

TASK FOCUS The candidates talk together about their opinions, likes/dislikes, preferences, experiences, habits, etc.

TIMING 3 minutes

Tips for teachers for Part 4 Speaking

- Make sure learners know the language for asking for and giving opinions and preferences
- Make sure learners know the language of agreeing and disagreeing politely and giving reasons.
- Teach the language for asking for clarification so learners can follow each other's ideas.

Tips for learners for Part 4 Speaking

- Make sure you stick to the theme or topic.
 - Do not try to dominate or to talk more than your partner, you will lose marks for this.
 - Listen to your partner so you can pick up on their ideas.
 - Show that you are listening to your partner by nodding, smiling and making responding noises.
 - Use ideas and vocabulary from the photograph in Part 3.
 - Listen carefully to the instructions so that you know what you are supposed to talk about.
 - Ask your partner for their opinion, you'll be given marks for this.
 - It is important that you work together and take turns in the conversation.
-

Speaking: problems and solutions

What kind of problems do your learners have with speaking?

How do you help your learners with these problems?

Some problems that learners can have with speaking	Possible solutions
My learners don't seem to have any ideas when they do a discussion activity. They speak for a couple of minutes then stop.	Give your learners prompts to work with. For example, give them some statements that they have to agree or disagree with.
Some of my learners don't have the confidence to speak in front of the rest of the class. They just seem to freeze.	Give learners an opportunity to work in groups or pairs to prepare what they are going to say before you ask them to speak in open class.
My learners are bored with speaking activities. They aren't interested in the topic and they start texting their friends on their phones.	First, choose subjects that you know the learners are interested in, such as texting! Then make sure the activity has a clear purpose, like a problem to solve.
I have one learner in my class who is very dominant and takes over in speaking activities, not giving anyone else a chance to speak.	Do a lesson on interactive strategies including turn taking and inviting others to speak. Tell the class that you will be listening to them in class and that you will award marks any time a learner uses these strategies.
I find it difficult to get my learners to stop using their mother tongue when they are speaking in groups.	Appoint one learner in each group to be the person that reminds the others to use English only.
Sometimes when I do a speaking activity in class, the learners get really excited and make a lot of noise.	This may not be a problem unless there are exams taking place next door, in which case you may need to change the activity.
My learners don't have very much language to use so I don't know if they are able to take part in a speaking activity.	Do simple tasks on everyday subjects that they know about like family and food.
I have a learner who is very quiet. I think her speaking is quite good but she doesn't join in when we do speaking activities.	Perhaps you could do some role play activities where each learner is given a role that requires them to speak to achieve an outcome.

Dos and Don'ts for Teaching Speaking



DO

- ✓ encourage learners to listen carefully to the instructions.
- ✓ encourage learners to listen and respond to their partner in the test.
- ✓ encourage learners to paraphrase when they don't know a word.
- ✓ encourage learners to use the prompts and contexts for ideas.
- ✓ teach learners how to ask for clarification or repetition if they don't understand.
- ✓ tell learners to look at the interlocutor and at each other in the test.
- ✓ tell learners to ask their partner for their opinions and ideas.

DON'T

- ✗ encourage learners to talk more than their partner in the test.
- ✗ encourage learners to search for a word they don't know and stop talking till they remember it.

Class activities to practise speaking skills

Speaking Activity 1: A picture of a person

- 1.** Give each learner a picture of a person. Tell them not to show their pictures to their classmates.
- 2.** Tell the learners to imagine that they are the person in the picture. They should think of the person's name, job, family, hobbies, likes and dislikes.
- 3.** Take back all of the pictures and pin them up on the walls around the room.
- 4.** Set up a mingle activity where learners imagine they are the people in the picture and walk around telling their classmates about 'themselves'. They also need to ask their classmates questions about 'themselves'. They make notes about each of the people they talk to (you could give them a table to fill in with the following headings: name, job, family, hobbies, likes and dislikes).
- 5.** When they have finished they look at the pictures of the people around the room and try to guess which people their classmates were pretending to be.
- 6.** A follow-up to this activity would be for learners to write a biography of the person they invented.

→ *Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part1 Speaking*



Speaking Activity 2: Driving across a desert

1. Put the learners into pairs.
2. Give each pair pictures of the some objects, for example: a penknife, a torch, a box of matches, a mobile phone, a radio, a laptop computer, a tent, a bar of soap, tins of food, a newspaper, a corkscrew (include some objects that your learners will not know the name of).
3. Tell the learners that they have a friend who is going to drive across a desert. The pair must choose eight of the items in the picture that think their friend should take with him. They should discuss the things in the pictures and decide together on the eight things. They need to say why they have chosen the eight things.
4. When they have chosen, re-group the learners into groups of four. Tell them that their friend can, in fact, only take four things on the trip. In their group of four they must decide and agree on the four things.
5. Conduct a plenary to allow learners to share ideas.
6. A follow-up to this activity would be for learners to do a role play where one is the person that went on the trip across the desert and the other is a reporter. The reporter interviews the 'explorer' about his trip.

→ Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part2 Speaking

Speaking Activity 3: Furniture

1. Review vocabulary for furniture.
2. Give each learner a picture of a room in a house. Tell them not to show their picture to their classmates.
3. Put learners to work in pairs, A and B. A describes their room and the objects in it to B and B produces a drawing showing the objects and where they are in the room.
4. When A has finished his description, he shows his picture to B and they compare the two pictures.
5. The task is then repeated with B describing and A drawing.
6. A follow-up to this activity could be a speaking activity with learners suggesting improvements to the rooms in the pictures.

→ *Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part3 Speaking*



Speaking Activity 4: working with audioscript

1. Review the language of asking for opinion, giving opinion and preferences, agreeing and disagreeing politely and giving reasons.
2. Give learners the audioscript from a completed sample exam task. Give learners different coloured pens.
3. Do a comprehension task to make sure learners know the gist of the conversation, e.g. What is it about? How many people are speaking? Do they agree or disagree?
4. Put learners to work in pairs. Allocate each pair a particular coloured pen and a particular function from the list you looked at earlier (asking for opinion, giving opinion and preferences, agreeing and disagreeing politely and giving reasons.) Ask them to read the audioscript and identify the examples in the audioscript of their function. They should mark the examples with their coloured pen.
5. Re-group the learners so that they work in groups made up of learners who have looked at different functions. Learners show each other their examples of the functions in the text and they all mark their texts with the corresponding colours for the different expressions (asking for opinion, giving opinion and preferences, agreeing and disagreeing politely and giving reasons).
6. Learners return to their original pair and look at the text again. This time they should suggest where the expressions could be added.
7. A follow-up to this activity would be for learners to do an exam task.

→ *Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part4 Speaking*



This is an activity from a book called *Keep Talking* by Friederike Klippel. This activity can be adapted depending on the level of your learners.

Source: Kippel, F - *Keep Talking: Communicative Fluency Activities for Language Teaching*, Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers Cambridge. Cambridge University Press

1. Put learners into groups of three to five. Each group needs a copy of the handout and dice. Each learner needs a counter.
2. The learners take turns to throw the dice and to move their counter along the squares according to the number on the dice. If they land on a white square they must speak about the subject on the square. For example, a good friend, your pet, your favourite kind of music. The other learners in the group can ask questions if they want to. If a learner lands on a 'Free Question' square then the other learners in the group ask him a question of their choice.

→ Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part5 Speaking

Speaking Activity 6: Discussions that Work

This activity is taken from a book called *Discussions that Work* by Penny Ur. You can prepare your own pictures and blank out different things depending on what language you want your learners to practise.

Learner A



Learner B



Source: Ur, P - Discussions that Work: Task-centred Fluency Practice, Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers Cambridge. Cambridge University Press.

1. Put the learners into pairs A and B. Give learner A a copy of picture A and learner B a copy of picture B. They should not show their pictures to each other.
2. Explain that learners A have a complete picture. Learners B have a picture with some of the objects missing. The missing objects are on the left of picture B (telephone, plant, calendar etc.).
3. Learners B need to ask learners A where the objects are and mark them on their picture. For example, Learner B Where's the telephone? Learner A It's on the desk, next to the typewriter.

→ ***Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part3 Speaking***



Speaking Activity 7: discuss the statements

The aims of schooling

- to teach people to be sociable and responsible
- to develop independence and critical thinking
- to give people the skills they need to get a job
- to give people practical skills for everyday life
- to give people something to do so that they aren't bored
- to teach people to read and write
- to teach people to be tolerant of each other

1. Put learners into groups of three or four. Give each group a list of the statements. Tell them that these are all reasons for people to go to school. They must discuss the statements and decide on the order of importance. They should put the reason they think is the most important at the top and the least important reason at the bottom.

2. This activity could be adapted to suit the interests of the learners. Other subjects could include: reasons for doing sport at school, reasons for tidying your room, the qualities of a teacher, the needs of children, and the role of governments.

→ Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part 4 Speaking



Speaking Activity 8: Holidays



1. Put learners into pairs or groups. Give learners the pictures of different holidays and the pictures of different people (see examples above). Tell learners that the people in the pictures want to go on holiday. They should talk together and decide which holiday would be the best for the different people. They need to give reasons for their choices.
2. Learners re-group and explain their choices to other learners in the class.
You can use your own pictures for this activity depending on your learners' interests.

→ *Use this activity to help learners to prepare for Part 2 Speaking*

Cambridge English Language Assessment

Europe Office

80, rue Saint Lazare
75009 Paris - France

Tèl: + 33 (0)1 45 49 49 29



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