CAMBRIDGE English

Cambridge English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary for Schools

Developing reading skills for Cambridge English Qualifications: A guide for teachers



Contents

Who this guide is for 3

How to use this guide 3

Key terminology 4

Challenges of reading 6

Developing your learners' reading skills 7

Assessing your learners' reading skills 8

Preparing learners for the B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper 9

How the paper is assessed 10

Part 1 activities 12

Part 2 activities 16

Part 3 activities 18

Part 4 activities 20

Part 5 activities 22

Part 6 activities 24

Appendix 26

Extra resources 35

Who this guide is for

Teachers spend many hours helping to prepare learners for the different types of reading tasks that are assessed in Cambridge English Qualifications. This guide is for you. With lots of practical tips and real examples, it will help you to develop and practise learners' reading skills in preparation for B1 Preliminary for Schools.

About B1 Preliminary for Schools

- ✔ Tests reading, writing, speaking and listening skills
- ✔ Shows that learners have mastered the basics in English, including:
  - reading simple textbooks and articles
  - writing letters and emails on everyday subjects
  - understanding factual information
  - showing awareness of opinions and mood
- ✔ Comes after A2 Key for Schools and before B2 First for Schools
- ✔ Like B1 Preliminary, tests learners at **CEFR** Level B1
- ✔ Unlike B1 Preliminary, is aimed at school-age learners rather than adults
- ✔ Can be taken on paper or on a computer

You can find out more about B1 Preliminary for Schools and other levels on our website. See cambridgeenglish.org/examsandtests.

How to use this guide

To get the most from this guide:

- Try the practical ideas and reflect on how these techniques affect the processes of learning and teaching in your classroom.
- Throughout the guide, there are links to **activities**, other online resources, and there are feature boxes such as 'Further practice' and 'Top tips' for you to try out in your classroom.
- There are **example exam questions**, which you can print out and photocopy for your learners.
- You can navigate the document by using the hyperlinks in the text and the buttons on each spread:

  Previous page Next page First page Previous view

Key terminology

Language assessment is a specialist field and there is some common terminology which might be unfamiliar to you. Learning to recognise these terms will help you to understand this guide.

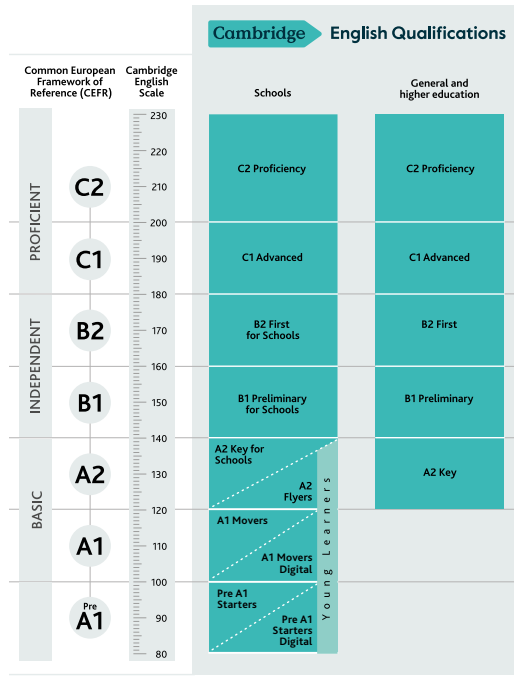
Term	Definition
cohesive devices	Words or phrases that are used to connect ideas between different parts of a text. They include pronouns, synonyms, and transitional words such as *and*, *but*, *also* etc.
collocation	A word or phrase that sounds natural and correct when it is used together with another word or phrase, e.g. *heavy rain* or, Can I *ask* a question? **not**, Can I ~~*make*~~ a question?
distractors	A wrong answer that is similar to the correct answer, designed to see whether the person being tested can notice the difference.
gapped text	A text with some sentences removed. Learners have to select the correct sentence to complete it.
L1	A speaker's first or native language.
learner/ candidate	A learner is someone who is learning English, usually in a classroom. A candidate is someone who takes an exam.
multiple-choice (m/c) cloze	A text with gaps which learners complete by selecting from multiple-choice options.
open cloze	A text with gaps which learners complete with a suitable word.
rubric	Instructions on an exam paper that tell learners how to complete questions.

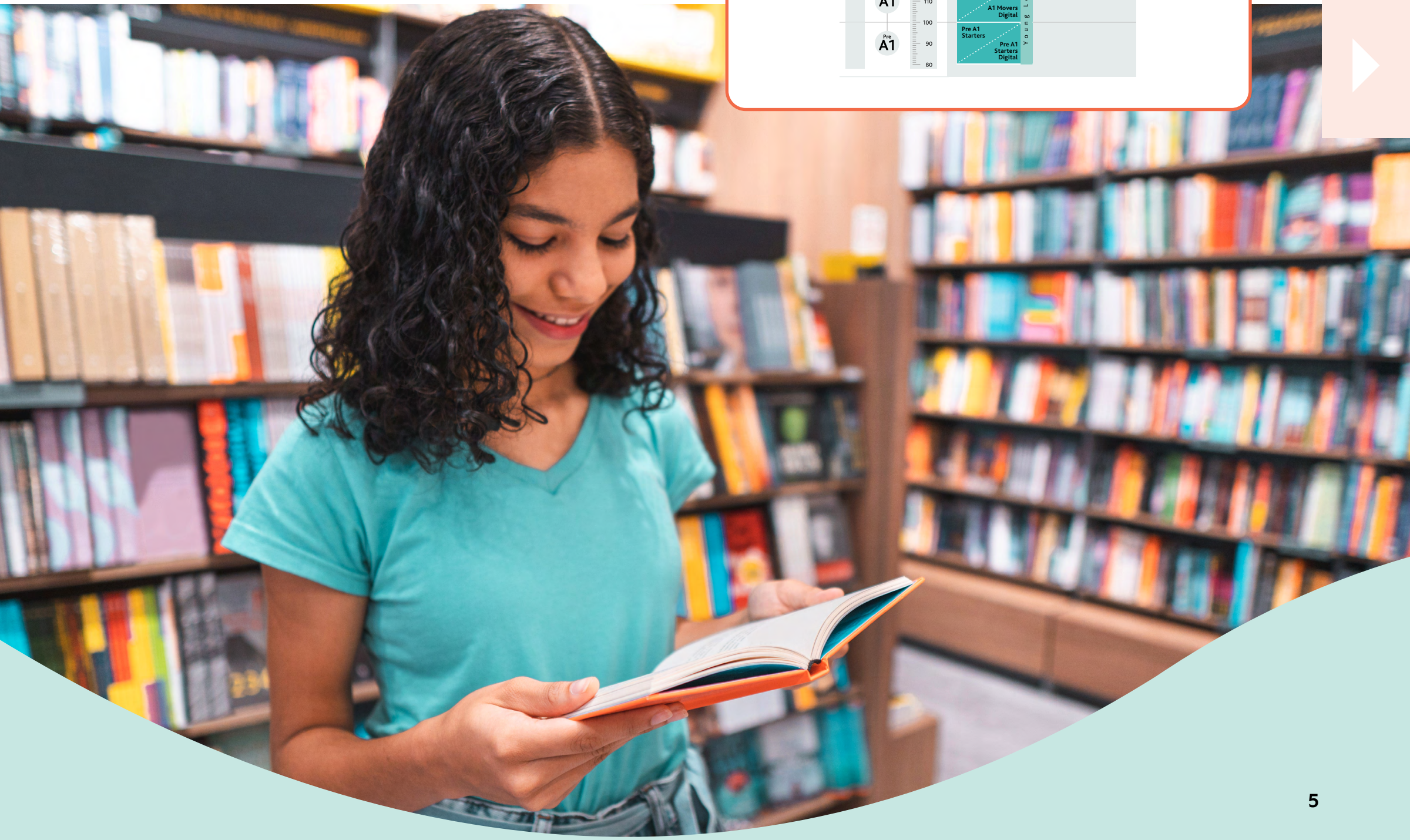
When other terms appear in this guide, you'll find an explanation nearby in a glossary box:

Key terminology

The **Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)** is an international standard for describing language ability. It uses a six-point scale, from **A1** for beginners up to **C2** for those who have mastered a language. This makes it easy for anyone involved in language teaching and testing, such as teachers or learners, to see the level of different qualifications.

CEFR scale





Challenges of reading

Reading is a skill that presents many challenges that learners and teachers need to deal with to prepare learners for success in our exams.

For the teacher

- We are sometimes reluctant to spend class time on reading – it is often seen as less interesting or a less effective use of time than practising speaking.
- Motivating learners who don't read much even in their own language is difficult.
- It can be time consuming and hard to find texts and materials that are interesting.
- Most classes will usually have learners with a range of reading abilities and who will read at different speeds, so teachers need to be ready for the early finishers.

For the learner

- Learners say that understanding vocabulary is the greatest challenge to comprehension.
- Wanting to understand every word but not being able to do so can be very demotivating.
- Having enough time is another common issue – especially in an exam context.
- Non-literal language and multi-word verbs can be difficult for learners' comprehension.
- 'False friends' – words which seem to be similar to a word in your learners' own language **(L1)**, but which have a different meaning in English – can also present a challenge.
- How a text is structured and the **cohesive devices** that hold it together may be very different in a learner's L1.

Developing your learners' reading skills

Top tips

✔ **Do ...** give your learners plenty of practice, in class and at home, of reading a variety of different genres and text types. These might be both authentic and adapted – magazines, social media, news and sports websites, newspapers, text chats and **graded readers**.

✔ **Do ...** make sure your learners know clearly what each exam task type is asking them to do. Is it a multiple-choice task? Do you have to fill the gap? How many words do you need to write? How much time do you have? Always quickly check these kinds of questions in class so learners get into the habit of asking themselves too.

✘ **Don't ...** forget to tell your learners that it's a good idea to underline the key words in an exam question to help focus on the instructions.

✔ **Do ...** get learners to practise **skimming** and **scanning** both shorter and longer texts. It's a good idea to encourage learners to always skim-read the text quickly first to get a general idea of what it's about. There is an example of this in the **Part 3 Activity**.

✔ **Do ...** help learners think about different ways they read texts. For example, if they are reading an information leaflet, ask them to scan the text to find some specific information. However, if they are reading a message, then ask them to think about how they would reply.

✔ **Do ...** encourage your learners to try to work out or guess the meaning of words they don't know. Get them to use the context and the rest of the text to help. Ask learners to think about the part of speech (noun, verb, adjective etc.), if the word has a positive or negative feeling, if there are any similarities to other words they know or to words in their **L1**.

✘ **Don't ...** let your learners waste time. Tell them that if they don't know a word and they can't guess the general meaning from the other words around it, to skip it and just keep on reading the text.

✔ **Do ...** ask learners to predict what the answer might be before looking at the multiple-choice options, then look at the options and choose the one closest to their prediction. There is an example of how to do this in the **Part 3 Activity**.

Assessing your learners' reading skills

The key to understanding how well your learners' reading skills are developing is through regular, effective assessment. It's a good idea to use a mix of teacher, **peer** and **self-assessment** during an exam preparation course. This variety can make lessons more interesting and engaging.

★ Top tips

✔ **Do ...** ask your learners to think about *why* an answer is right or wrong. This will help you to assess whether they have understood what is being tested in each question.

✔ **Do ...** demonstrate why the answers are correct, and why some possible choices are wrong. This will show your learners how to analyse the questions and help them get to the correct answers. See the **task familiarisation sections** starting on page 12.

✔ **Do ...** get your learners to justify and explain their answer choices to each other. See an example of this in the Part 2: Task familiarisation and activity on pages 16–17.

✔ **Do ...** talk to your learners about what feedback they appreciate and work together to find what works best. Adopting different approaches to giving feedback is particularly helpful to support learners with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia.

✘ **Don't ...** forget that assessment isn't just about correcting mistakes – **formative assessment** is about learning from feedback.

✘ **Don't ...** just give tests to assess your learners. Assessment doesn't have to be formal. You can also use games and quizzes such as **Kahoot!** to create fun activities which assess learners' understanding.

Key terminology

Peer assessment is when learners give feedback on each other's language, work, learning strategies, or performance. Research shows that people who are similar to the learner in age, gender, first language and learning goals are very motivating as role models.

Self-assessment is when learners decide for themselves if they think their progress or language use is good or not. Developing good self-awareness is important for becoming an effective independent learner.

Formative assessment is when a teacher gives learners feedback on their progress during a course, rather than at the end of it, so that the learners can learn from the feedback.

Preparing learners for the B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper

In order to become a good reader, there are many habits and qualities that you can encourage learners to try and develop.

A good reader:

- reads a wide range of things and reads regularly
- uses different skills such as **skimming** and **scanning**
- guesses the meaning of words they don't know
- reflects on what they have read
- records useful new vocabulary and tries to use it in their language practice.

To do well in Cambridge English Qualifications, learners must also understand:

- how the B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper is organised and assessed
- their own strengths and weaknesses
- how they can improve any areas of weakness.

Key terminology

Skimming is when you read quickly. For example, to understand the main ideas in the text and discover what type of text it is – Is it a serious news article, a notice, a magazine?

Scanning is when you read quickly to find specific information. For example, scanning a cinema guide to find a specific film, or film times.

How the paper is assessed

The B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper has six parts and lasts for 45 minutes in total. There is no extra time to copy answers to the answer sheet (if candidates are taking the paper-based test).

Part	Task types	What do candidates have to do?
1	3-option multiple choice	Read five real-world notices, messages and other short texts for the main message.
2	Matching	Match five descriptions of people to eight short texts on a topic, showing detailed comprehension.
3	4-option multiple choice	Read a longer text for detailed comprehension and global meaning, as well as the writer's attitude and opinion.
4	Gapped text	Read a longer text from which five sentences are removed. Show understanding of how a coherent, well-structured text is formed.
5	4-option multiple-choice cloze	Read a shorter text and choose the correct vocabulary items to complete the gaps.
6	Open cloze	Read a shorter text and complete six gaps with one word. Show knowledge of grammatical structures, phrasal verbs and fixed phrases.

Important note: The example exam tasks used in this guide are provided to give you and your learners an idea of the format of the exam and what is being tested in each part. The tasks have not been fully pretested and calibrated like our published exams. To assess your learners' readiness for a live exam, use one of the official sample tests on **cambridgeenglish.org**, or go to our **Mock Test Toolkit** for tips on using sample tests.

The next section of this guide will look at each part of the Reading paper for B1 Preliminary for Schools. We will analyse why the answers are correct, and why other choices are wrong. Demonstrating this will show your learners how to analyse the questions and help them get to the correct answers.



Part 1: Task familiarisation

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 1 and what is needed to get the correct answer; to raise awareness of text types and functional language (e.g. giving advice, apologising etc.).

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 1 without answers**.

Steps: You can use the answers and explanations below to show learners how this exam part works either before you do the Part 1: Activity 1 and Part 1: Activity 2, or afterwards as further practice.

Here is an example of one question from Part 1.

For each question, choose the correct answer.



Zara intends to:	Answer key
A look after her brother.	✘ Although a brother is mentioned, he is not Zara's brother.
B take part in a sport.	✘ The tennis match was cancelled so Zara is not taking part in a sport. Also, *taking* is included in the text, but not with the meaning of *take part in* something.
C hang out with friends.	✔ Correct! *hang out with* is an informal multi-part word meaning to spend time with someone, and Zara is going to do that when she watches a film with a few friends.

Further practice

Here is a **lesson plan** which gives learners more practice in identifying the functions of real-world notices.

Part 1: Activity 1

Aims: To help learners become familiar with Part 1; to skim and scan the text.

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 1 without answers**.

Steps:

1. Show learners only the text message, not the question or options, and ask:
   - *What type of real-world text does the artwork show? (How do you know?)*
   - *Who is the message for? Who is it from?*
   - *What is the main reason for the message?* (If learners need help prompt them with some questions: *Is it to give advice, ask for help or give information?*)

Point out that this strategy will remind learners to read the text first before rushing in to answer the question.

2. Now show learners the rubric with the three options A, B and C. Ask learners:
   - *How many people are mentioned in the message?*
   - *Who does the rubric ask you about?*

This will help learners **scan** to find names in the text before concentrating on the question and to identify the correct person to find explicit information about.

3. Put learners in pairs and ask them to answer the question and discuss why that option is, or is not possible, as shown in the **answer key** in the Part 1: Task familiarisation section. At this stage, do not give the answers, as you will be going through the vocabulary and answers in Part 1: Activity 2.

Demonstrating this strategy will show your learners how to analyse the questions and help them get to the correct answers.

Go to Part 1: Activity 2

Part 1: Activity 2

Aims: To raise awareness of multi-word verbs; to practise using and remembering vocabulary.

Preparation: Prepare a list of direct questions, which contain multi-word verbs, as a gap-fill.

Steps:

1. Give each learner a printed copy of your list of gap-fill questions. See the examples in the table below.
2. Learners complete the questions by writing the missing part of the multi-word verb in the Missing Word column.
3. Feedback with the class to check they have completed it correctly.
4. Tell learners to fold their paper so they cannot see the Missing Word.
5. Learners can then ask and answer their questions with a partner while having to remember the target language.
6. They should make a note of their partner's answers in the Answer column, before they report back to the class with some interesting information that they have learned.
7. You could then get learners to repeat this several times with different partners, moving around the classroom to create some energy.

Below is an example using vocabulary from the **Part 1: Task familiarisation**. The first row has been completed as an example to demonstrate the activity to your learners.

Fold

	Question	Answer	Missing Word
1	Who do you like to hang …… with at the weekends?	My best friend Ana.	out
2	Have you ever taken part …… a competition?		
3	Who looks …… you when you are ill?		

Top tip

Vocabulary list

It's a good idea to see the range of multi-word verbs that are assessed at this level. Cambridge Assessment English produces a **B1 Preliminary for Schools vocabulary list** that contains the non-literal multi-word verbs, with example sentences, which learners will need to know.



Part 2: Task familiarisation

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 2 and what is needed to get the correct answer; to identify the different things that the people in the photo want.

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 2 without answers**.

Steps: You can use the answers and explanations below to show learners how this exam part works either before you do the Part 2: Activity or afterwards as further practice.

Here is an example of one description followed by two possible matches from Part 2. The different coloured highlighting in the question matches the answers and distractors in texts A and B.

The young people below all want to visit an interesting museum.

Decide which museum would be the most suitable for the people below.



Yuki and Hitashi are keen to discover how children played in the past. Their parents want to visit a historical building, but also spend time in the open air.

A	**O' Farrell's** This museum has a fantastic collection of items from ancient times. See the things people used every day, including hair decorations, eating bowls and children's games from centuries ago. Learn about how they hunted animals for food. Then visit the restaurant and gift shop on the fourth floor.
B	**Glaze House** Experience how people used to live at this 18th-century house, surrounded by a beautiful park, where you can have a picnic. The rooms are filled with thousands of ordinary objects such as a great collection of doll's houses, early puzzles and games, as well as clothes from the period!

Answer key

✘ Candidates might choose **A** as the text mentions *items from ancient times* and they might make a connection between *ancient* and *historical* in the question, but it is not a *historical building*.

✘ **A** also mentions *children's games* and the question asks for a place *to discover how children played in the past*. But this is only one of the family's preferences, they also want *to visit a historical building* and *spend time in the open air*.

✔ The correct choice is **B** as this includes all three of the family's preferences.

Part 2: Activity

Aims: To assess if your learners can read short descriptions of people and match information to short texts on a particular topic in a fun, interactive activity.

Preparation: Print the questions and the eight texts from a **B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper, Part 2**.

Steps:

1. Give one Part 2 (Questions 6–10) to each pair or small group of learners.
2. Ask them to highlight or underline three things the people want, as shown in the **Part 2: Task familiarisation** section.
3. Check learners have underlined the correct parts.
4. Then ask them to write the three items on a small piece of paper.
5. Learners then swap their paper with another group. While they are doing this, put the eight possible answer texts on the walls around the classroom.
6. Next, tell the learners to go around the classroom with their partner(s) and find the one text that best matches the three things that they want. One person from the pair or small group could make notes for the feedback stage.
7. Feedback by checking answers and asking the learners to explain why they chose the answer they did.

Further practice

Here is another **lesson plan** that gets learners thinking about the strategies needed to answer this type of question.

Part 3: Task familiarisation

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 3 and what is needed to get the correct answer; to read a longer text for detailed comprehension and global meaning.

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 3 without answers**.

Steps: You can use the answers and explanations below to show learners how this exam part works either before you do the Part 3: Activity or afterwards as further practice.

Here is an example of one question from Part 3.

Choose the correct answer.

Being a volunteer at a school computer programming club

By Tess Landen, age 15

One day, my little brother came home from primary school upset because the after-school computer club that he hoped to join was full. Since I'm studying computers in high school, I contacted the teacher in charge of the club, Mr Kane, and said I would help if other children, including my brother, could join. The reply was one word – yes! So, Mr Kane put up a notice saying that the club could take additional members, and I started helping the very next week.

The primary school has recently improved its computer room, which has facilities that are just the right size for kids. Even after a whole day at school, the kids were full of energy and were very creative when they were asked what they wanted their programmes to do. I did notice, however, that if something they were working on didn't make them laugh, they weren't so keen to do it.

11 Why did Tess become a volunteer at the computer programming club?

A in order to allow more students to attend it

B because they advertised for people to help

C because her little brother asked her to do it

D in order to please her high school teacher

Exam strategy

Remember that Questions 11–14 in the paper follow the same order as the information in the text, while the last question focuses on the general meaning of the whole text – the 'global meaning'.

Answer key

✘ **D** The text says Tess is studying at high school, but doesn't say *pleasing her teacher* so it is wrong.

✘ **C** The text mentions her brother as a reason why she volunteers, but not that the brother *asks* her.

✘ **B** Mr Kane put up a *notice* (similar to advertisement) but this is *after* Tess has agreed to help out.

✔ **A** is correct because the text says, *other children ... could join* and *take additional members*.

Top tip

Words from the multiple-choice options can be repeated in the text, but might not be the correct answer. e.g. in the Part 3: Task familiarisation, *brother* is in the text but *little brother* in option C. This can easily cause learners to choose the wrong option. One way to train learners not to simply match words from options to the text, is not to give them the multiple-choice options until they have thought about possible answers. **See step 4 in the Part 3: Activity.**

Further practice

Part 3 also requires learners to be able to identify people's attitude, opinion and feeling in a text. Here is a **lesson plan** to practise this.

Part 3: Activity

Aims: To train learners to avoid distractors; to practise justifying and explaining answers.

Preparation: Print out copies of the **Part 3: Activity example without multiple-choice options**.

Steps:

1. Put the title of the text on the board and ask learners to predict what the text will be about.
2. Then ask the learners to skim-read the text quickly, not worrying about any new unknown words, and check their predictions. Feedback with the class, checking any difficult vocabulary.
3. Tell them to turn their paper over and then tell their partner what they can remember about the text.
4. Give out the questions without the multiple-choice options and ask learners to read the first paragraph to find the answer to the first question. Encourage the learners to underline the words in the text which gave them the answer.

Note: taking each question one by one is a good way of making a longer text simpler and more manageable so learners don't feel overwhelmed by too much information; removing the options helps learners to not get tricked by any **distractors**.

5. They should then compare their ideas with a partner – encourage them to justify why they think that's the answer by referring back to the text, and then feedback with the class. Don't say at this stage if their ideas are right or not.
6. Give out the 4-option multiple-choice options to the first question and ask them to decide which one is closest to their original ideas.
7. Check the correct answer with the class, asking learners to explain their choices by referring back to the text.
8. Repeat steps 4 – 7 with the remaining four questions.

Part 4: Task familiarisation

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 4 and what is needed to get the correct answer; to practise reading a longer gapped text; to show understanding of how a coherent, well-structured text is formed and the attitudes and opinions expressed.

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 4**.

Steps: You can use the answers and explanations below to show learners how this exam part works either before you do the Part 4: Activity or afterwards as further practice.

Here is an example of two questions from Part 4 followed by the eight possible sentences.
The different coloured highlighting in the text matches the answers in options D and G.

For each question, choose the correct answer. There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.

Why I love ice hockey

When I was eight years old, some players from the local Sheffield Steelers ice hockey team visited my school. To get us interested in the sport, they gave out free tickets to one of their games. (16) **D** The match was amazing, and I immediately wanted to learn how to play. I started by playing hockey on rollerblades, but by 14 I was playing on ice. Now I play for a junior team in my city, and we're in the second highest league in the UK.

I don't think there's any other game as fast, physical or exciting as ice hockey. Once you're on the ice, you never stop skating. (17) **G** You need to be strong enough to keep playing because games last for 60 minutes. But you also need to have good skills to control your stick and hopefully score!

A For example, you're not allowed to hit someone from behind.

B I already knew I wanted to find a team to play with.

C Just last week, I crashed into a wall, but fortunately my helmet protected me.

D I was lucky enough to get some, and went with my family to watch them.

E I make sure my school friends get tickets every season.

F To play at this level, I've had to give up my other hobbies.

G Because of this, speed and fitness are very important.

H They change direction quickly to avoid hitting each other.

Answer key

16 ✔ Sentence **D** is about the same topic as the first paragraph. Look carefully at the reference words: we can see that *some* refers to *tickets* in the main text, while *them* refers to *Sheffield Steelers ice hockey team* in the text. None of the other answers would fit either in terms of the narrative or the grammar of the text.

17 ✔ The second paragraph talks about the physical qualities needed to play ice hockey and sentence **G** mentions *speed and fitness* so the explanation matches. The determiner *this* in sentence **G** refers to *Once you're on the ice, you never stop skating*. Again, none of the other answers would fit either in terms of the narrative or the grammar of the text.

Part 4: Activity

Aims: To raise awareness of how a coherent text is organised and how reference and linking words are used.

Preparation: Print one copy of a text per pair or small group of learners and cut into strips. For example, a **B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper**.

Steps:

1. Divide the class into pairs or small groups and give one cut-up text to each pair. Remind learners to note the topic of each paragraph as they read – so in the Part 4 task familiarisation example, the first paragraph is about how the writer became interested in the sport through watching a game. When learners are reading the eight possible answers they should look for a similar topic in the sentences.
2. Ask the learners to reassemble the text in the correct order. Remind learners to look carefully at the text both before and after the gap, making sure the answer fits. Point out that they need to pay close attention to reference words and determiners (e.g. *this*, *those*, *her*, *them*, etc.) and to linking devices, making sure any in the text match grammatically with the possible answers.
3. Tell learners to think about *why* they chose to put it together in that way and to underline the key words and phrases that helped them to decide.
4. Get the learners to compare their answers with another pair, explaining and justifying their choices.
5. Tell learners this technique will help them consider how a coherent text is organised, by paying attention to reference and linking words.

Top tip

Speed up

In the exam, learners will often need to read a text more quickly than usual. This is especially true with the longer texts in Parts 3 and 4. Get your learners to practise reading texts quickly by timing them. For example, give them three minutes to read around 300 words (just like a full Part 4 text), then give two minutes to read the same text, then try it in one minute. Encourage them to practise this at home.

Part 5: Task familiarisation

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 5 and what is needed to get the correct answer; to read a longer, gapped text; to show understanding of how a coherent, well-structured text is formed and the attitudes and opinions expressed.

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 5 without answers**.

Steps: You can use the answers and explanations below to show learners how this exam part works either before you do the Part 5: Activity or afterwards as further practice.

Here is an example and an analysis of the first two questions from Part 5.

For each question, choose the correct answer.

Coconuts

Despite its name, the coconut is actually a fruit, not a nut. It comes from a tree **(21)** …… as a coconut palm. These are often found near beaches along the **(22)** …… of many warm countries and islands. When coconuts fall from the trees and into the sea, they **(23)** …… on the water. They are then carried by the sea to other beaches, where the coconuts sink into the sand and new trees start growing. This **(24)** …… why coconut palms are such a common sight next to the sea.



21	**A** known	**B** called	**C** named	**D** mentioned
22	**A** borders	**B** sides	**C** edges	**D** coasts
23	**A** lift	**B** float	**C** rise	**D** hold
24	**A** says	**B** tells	**C** explains	**D** describes

Answer key

21 ✔ In option **D**, *mentioned* means referred to something briefly without going into detail – which doesn't fit this context. The other three choices are closer in meaning but ✘ **B** and ✘ **C** don't go with *as* in this context. ✔ **A** is the correct answer because *known* and *as* go together as a phrase; it also implies that there are other names for the tree (e.g. a scientific name).

22 ✔ The answer must **collocate** with *countries and islands*, so ✘ **B** and ✘ **C** are not possible. ✘ **A** *borders* goes with *countries* but not with *islands*. ✔ With option **D**, *coasts* can be used for both countries and islands, so **D** is correct.

Top tip

As Part 5 of the B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper is mainly a test of vocabulary, it is important for learners to develop good habits for recording and learning new vocabulary.

- Make sure your learners keep a vocabulary notebook – it is a good idea to organise this by topic – and note the part of speech and write an example sentence that uses the word.
- Learners need to pay attention to **collocations**. Whenever they see a new word, get them to look for other words that collocate. Just like crossing a busy street, learners need to look left and look right, so look at words before and after the new word to see what other words go with it and make a note!
- Review the new vocabulary frequently – try ending a lesson or starting the next one with a quick game to do this. Part 5 Activity is a fun game to try in class.

Part 5: Activity

Aims: To help learners review and remember new vocabulary.

Preparation: Make a list of vocabulary you want your learners to revise.

Steps:

1. Divide learners into groups of 4–6. Each group chooses one student who will start.
2. Secretly show a word to the learners who are starting. Don't let anyone else in the group see. You could ask them to close their eyes or turn their backs.
3. Roll a dice, or roll a virtual dice (if you have a smartboard). The number determines how the learners will convey the meaning of the word for their group to guess:

   1 or 2: they have to **describe** the word.

   3 or 4: they have to **mime** the word.

   5 or 6: they have to **draw** the word.

Adaptation

To add challenge, include phrases and sentences. Let learners think of their own words. For extra support, write a selection of words on the board for learners to choose from.

Further practice

There are many more ideas for working with vocabulary on our website, such as these **posters and activities** around the topics of technology, space and travel.

Part 6: Task familiarisation

Aims: To demonstrate the format of Part 6 and what is needed to get the correct answer; to read a shorter text and complete six gaps with one word; to show knowledge of grammatical structures, phrasal verbs and fixed phrases.

Preparation: Print out copies of **Part 6 without answers**.

Steps: You can use the answers and explanations below to show learners how this exam part works either before you do the Part 6: Activity or afterwards as further practice.

Here is an example from Part 6, with the answers and analysis of the first two questions.

For each question, write the correct word.

Write one word for each gap.

Trip to the Globe Theatre

I had a great time last Friday. I went to London with my class (27) …*to*…… watch a play called Romeo and Juliet at the Globe Theatre. The theatre was built in 1997 and is an almost exact copy of a wooden theatre (28) … *that / which* … stood in the same place over 370 years ago.

Answer key

27 ✔ The answer is *to* because it forms part of the infinitive *to watch*, which is used to explain the reason why the writer went to London. Sometimes called the 'infinitive of purpose', this grammatical point is often tested in Part 6.

28 ✔ The answer in the gap forms part of a defining relative clause: either *that* or *which* are the correct relative pronouns to complete this structure as they can be used with things (in this case a wooden theatre).

Notice

While the multiple-choice cloze text in Part 5 focuses mainly on vocabulary, the open cloze text in Part 6 focuses more on grammar, phrasal verbs and fixed phrases.

Part 6: Activity

Aims: To raise awareness of and to practise identifying the typical parts of speech and grammar structures that are often tested in Part 6.

Preparation: Print out this **lesson plan** from our website.

Steps:

1. Tell learners that they will need a lot of practice in identifying and completing the parts of speech and grammatical structures that are tested in Part 6. To help them practise, first, go through this **lesson plan** that gets learners to think about how to approach this open cloze task. In it they are encouraged to think what kinds of words fill the gaps and how to get clues from the text about which answer is correct.
2. When learners are familiar with open cloze texts, it can be fun to get them to make their own and test each other. Choose a typical topic at the B1 Preliminary for Schools level and ask your learners to write, in pencil, a short text (5 or 6 sentences) e.g. 'my dream home'.
3. If they have access to phones, they can take a photo of the complete sentences; if not they should make a note of the answers, before erasing some of the words.
4. Focus on one or two grammatical structures that are typically tested in Part 6 – articles and auxiliary verbs for example, and ask the learners to erase them.
5. Learners then swap papers and try to complete each other's texts, before checking their answers with their partners.

Top tip

Giving learners some autonomy over making the task can really help with motivation as well as raising their awareness of the grammatical structures and skills needed to do well in this part of the B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading paper.

Appendix

Part 1: Task familiarisation

Here is an example text from Part 1.



Here is an example of one question from Part 1.

For each question, choose the correct answer.



Zara intends to

A look after her brother.

B take part in a sport.

C hang out with friends.

Part 2: Task familiarisation

Here is an example of one description followed by two possible matches from Part 2.

The young people below all want to visit an interesting museum.

Decide which museum would be the most suitable for the people below.



Yuki and Hitashi are keen to discover how children played in the past. Their parents want to visit a historical building, but also spend time in the open air.

O' Farrell's

This museum has a fantastic collection of items from ancient times. See the things people used every day, including hair decorations, eating bowls and children's games from centuries ago. Learn about how they hunted animals for food. Then visit the restaurant and gift shop on the fourth floor.

Glaze House

Experience how people used to live at this 18th-century house, surrounded by a beautiful park, where you can have a picnic. The rooms are filled with thousands of ordinary objects such as a great collection of doll's houses, early puzzles and games, as well as clothes from the period!

Part 3: Task familiarisation

Here is an example of one question from Part 3.

Part 3

Choose the correct answer.

Being a volunteer at a school computer programming club

By Tess Landen, age 15

One day, my little brother came home from primary school upset because the after-school computer club that he hoped to join was full. Since I'm studying computers in high school, I contacted the teacher in charge of the club, Mr Kane, and said I would help if other children, including my brother, could join. The reply was one word – yes! So, Mr Kane put up a notice saying that the club could take additional members, and I started helping the very next week.

The primary school has recently improved its computer room, which has facilities that are just the right size for kids. Even after a whole day at school, the kids were full of energy and were very creative when they were asked what they wanted their programmes to do. I did notice, however, that if something they were working on didn't make them laugh, they weren't so keen to do it.

11 Why did Tess become a volunteer at the computer programming club?

A in order to allow more students to attend it

B because they advertised for people to help

C because her little brother asked her to do it

D in order to please her high school teacher

Part 3: Activity – example without multiple-choice options

You can use this sample Part 3, without multiple-choice options for the **Part 3: Activity, step 4**. (The text and questions, which come from **our website**, with multiple-choice options are on the following pages.)

Part 3

Questions 11–15

For each question, choose the correct answer.

Play to win

16-year-old Harry Moore writes about his hobby, tennis.

My parents have always loved tennis and they're members of a tennis club. My older brother was really good at it and they supported him – taking him to lessons all the time. So I guess when I announced that I wanted to be a tennis champion when I grew up I just intended for them to notice me. My mother laughed. She knew I couldn't possibly be serious, I was just a 4-year-old kid!

Later, I joined the club's junior coaching group and eventually took part in my first proper contest, confident that my team would do well. We won, which was fantastic, but I wasn't so successful. I didn't even want to be in the team photo because I didn't feel I deserved to be. When my coach asked what happened in my final match, I didn't know what to say. I couldn't believe I'd lost – I knew I was the better player. But every time I attacked, the other player defended brilliantly. I couldn't explain the result.

After that, I decided to listen more carefully to my coach because he had lots of tips. I realised that you need the right attitude to be a winner. On court I have a plan but sometimes the other guy will do something unexpected so I'll change it. If I lose a point, I do my best to forget it and find a way to win the next one.

At tournaments, it's impossible to avoid players who explode in anger. Lots of players can be negative – including myself sometimes. Once I got so angry that I nearly broke my racket! But my coach has helped me develop ways to control those feelings. After all, the judges have a hard job and you just have to accept their decisions.

My coach demands that I train in the gym to make sure I'm strong right to the end of a tournament. I'm getting good results: my shots are more accurate and I'm beginning to realise that with hard work there's a chance that I could be a champion one day.

11 Harry thinks he said that he was going to be a tennis champion in order to …

12 How did Harry feel after his first important competition?

13 What does Harry try to remember when he's on the court?

14 What does Harry say about his behaviour in tournaments?

15 What might a sports journalist write about Harry now?

Part 3: Activity – questions with multiple-choice options and answer key

You can use Questions 11–15 with the multiple-choice options for the Part 3 Activity, step 7.

11 Harry thinks he said that he was going to be a tennis champion in order to

A please his parents.

B get some attention.

C annoy his older brother.

D persuade people that he was serious.

12 How did Harry feel after his first important competition?

A confused about his defeat.

B proud to be a member of the winning team.

C ashamed of the way he treated another player.

D amazed that he had got so far in the tournament.

13 What does Harry try to remember when he's on the court?

A Don't let the other player surprise you.

B Follow your game plan.

C Respect the other player.

D Don't keep thinking about your mistakes.

14 What does Harry say about his behaviour in tournaments?

A He broke his racket once when he was angry.

B He stays away from players who behave badly.

C He tries to keep calm during the game.

D He found it difficult to deal with one judge's decisions.

15 What might a sports journalist write about Harry now?

A

Harry needs to believe in his own abilities and stop depending on good luck when he plays.

B

Harry has really grown up since his first tournament and discovered that tennis is a battle of minds not just rackets.

C

Harry looked exhausted when he finished his last match so maybe he should think about working out.

D

Harry could be a great player but he needs to find a coach to take him all the way to the big competitions.

Part 3	Key
11	B
12	A
13	D
14	C
15	B

Part 4: Task familiarisation

Here is an example of two questions, followed by the eight possible sentences, from Part 4.

For each question, choose the correct answer.

There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.

Why I love ice hockey

When I was eight years old, some players from the local Sheffield Steelers ice hockey team visited my school. To get us interested in the sport, they gave out free tickets to one of their games. **(16)** The match was amazing, and I immediately wanted to learn how to play. I started by playing hockey on rollerblades, but by 14 I was playing on ice. Now I play for a junior team in my city, and we're in the second highest league in the UK.

I don't think there's any other game as fast, physical or exciting as ice hockey. Once you're on the ice, you never stop skating. **(17)** You need to be strong enough to keep playing because games last for 60 minutes. But you also need to have good skills to control your stick and hopefully score!

A For example, you're not allowed to hit someone from behind.

B I already knew I wanted to find a team to play with.

C Just last week, I crashed into a wall, but fortunately my helmet protected me.

D I was lucky enough to get some, and went with my family to watch them.

E I make sure my school friends get tickets every season.

F To play at this level, I've had to give up my other hobbies.

G Because of this, speed and fitness are very important.

H They change direction quickly to avoid hitting each other.

Part 5: Task familiarisation

Here is an example of the first four questions from Part 5.

For each question, choose the correct answer.

Coconuts

Despite its name, the coconut is actually a fruit, not a nut. It comes from a tree **(21)** …… as a coconut palm. These are often found near beaches along the **(22)** …… of many warm countries and islands. When coconuts fall from the trees and into the sea, they **(23)** …… on the water. They are then carried by the sea to other beaches, where the coconuts sink into the sand and new trees start growing. This **(24)** …… why coconut palms are such a common sight next to the sea.



21	**A** known	**B** called	**C** named	**D** mentioned
22	**A** borders	**B** sides	**C** edges	**D** coasts
23	**A** lift	**B** float	**C** rise	**D** hold
24	**A** says	**B** tells	**C** explains	**D** describes

Part 6: Task familiarisation

Here is an example, with two questions from Part 6.

For each question, write the correct word. Write one word for each gap.

Trip to the Globe Theatre

I had a great time last Friday. I went to London with my class **(27)** …… watch a play called Romeo and Juliet at the Globe Theatre. The theatre was built in 1997 and is an almost exact copy of a wooden theatre **(28)** …… stood in the same place over 370 years ago.

Extra resources

Lesson plans and resources for teachers

- A variety of free resources for preparing learners for Cambridge English Qualifications
- Free sample exams and other preparation resources that you can give your learners.
- Webinars for teachers on different levels and different topics
- B1 Preliminary for Schools vocabulary list
- B1 Preliminary for Schools Handbook for Teachers
- Blog posts on Cambridge English Qualifications, different levels and exams, different skills, technology and much more.
- Kahoot! quizzes:
  - See some ready-made kahoots for your learners
  - Watch our How to use kahoots webinar ...
  - ... or see How to play a kahoot as a challenge.
- Graded readers: Cambridge University Press has a range of books with graded language levels for you or your learners to buy.

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