



The new *Cambridge English: First* Writing task

The *Cambridge English: First for Schools* task is similar but the subject of the essay will reflect the younger candidates taking the exam.

In the [new exam specification for 2015](#) there is a new Writing task. The compulsory part 1 question is now an essay rather than an email or letter. The word count has increased to 140 - 190 words. Here's an example:

In your English class you have been talking about the environment. Now, your English teacher has asked you to write an essay. Write an essay using all the notes and give reasons for your point of view.

Every country in the world has problems with pollution and damage to the environment. Do you think these problems can be solved?

The task will have two given prompts which supply ideas clearly linked to the question.

Notes

Write about:

1. **transport**
2. **rivers and seas**
3. (your own idea)

Candidates also need to think of a third idea of their own. The third idea is in addition to any overall conclusions.

Teaching tips for Writing Part 1

- 1 It's vital that candidates read the rubric, essay question and prompts very carefully in order to understand what they are expected to do. Successful essays address the question or statement in a clear or logical way. It's important that candidates keep to the focus of the topic in question and that all their ideas and opinions are relevant to the question.
- 2 Students need to become experienced at discussing the advantages and disadvantages of aspects of all kinds of topics at B2 level. Being able to support an opinion with reasons and examples is another skill required when writing an effective essay. The two given prompts help to guide and develop the essay and clearly relate to the question or statement. Candidates also need to think of a third idea of their own which is distinct from the two given prompts. Brainstorming ideas for different topics will be very useful practice for this. If any of the three essay prompts is missed out, then the target reader will not be fully informed and the candidate will be penalised.

For more tips download Cambridge English: First (FCE) from 2015 Teaching Tips. How do you prepare your students for writing essays? [Send us your tips.](#)