

Assessing writing for Cambridge English Qualifications: A guide for teachers

Cambridge **C1 Advanced**
English Qualifications



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Who this guide is for

Teachers around the world spend many hours evaluating learners’ writing. This guide is for you. With lots of practical tips and real examples, it will help you to develop and assess learners’ writing skills in preparation for the C1 Advanced exam.

| About C1 Advanced | |
|--|---|
| <div><div>✓ Tests reading, writing, speaking and listening skills, plus use of English</div><div>✓ Shows that learners can:<div><div>• follow an academic course at university level</div><div>• communicate effectively at a managerial and professional level</div><div>• participate with confidence in workplace meetings or academic tutorials and seminars</div><div>• express themselves with a high level of fluency</div></div></div></div> | <div><div>✓ Comes after B2 First or B2 First for Schools and before C2 Proficiency</div><div>✓ Tests learners at CEFR Level C1</div><div>✓ Can be taken digitally or on paper</div></div> |

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.
- Discuss different approaches with learners in order to understand their preferences and needs, and to find out what approaches are most helpful to them.
- At the end of the guide, there are some real samples of assessed writing from the C1 Advanced exam. A top tip before you look at the real marks and comments: try applying the official assessment criteria to the written samples by yourself! Make a note of whether you gave similar marks or made similar comments.
- You can navigate the document by using the hyperlinks in the text and the buttons on each spread:




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.

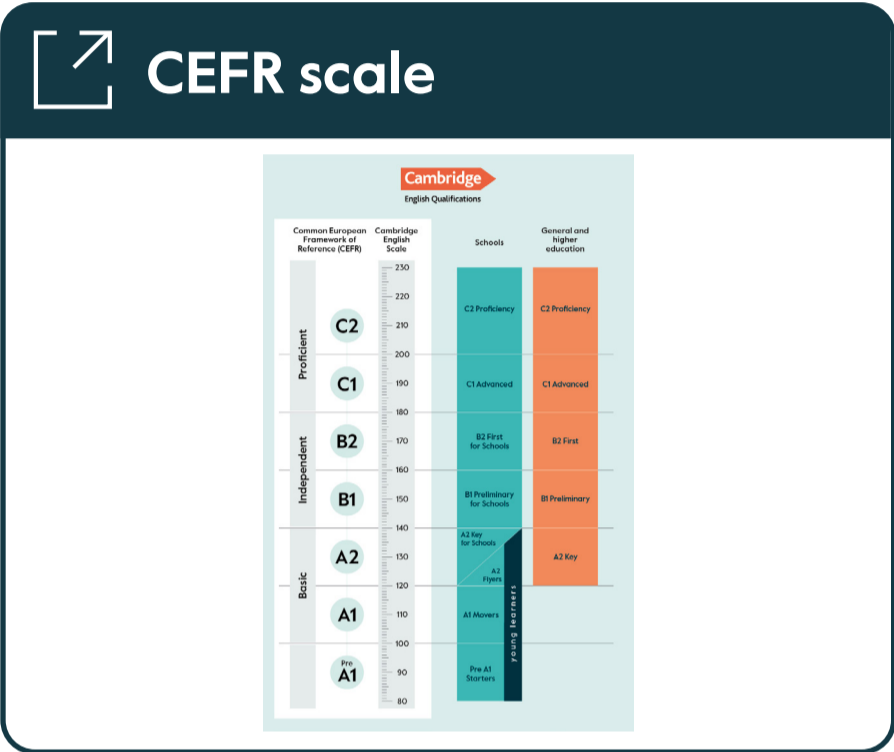
| Definition | Cambridge English writing examiners say ... | Teachers might say ... |
|--|--|--|
| A person who is learning English, usually in a classroom. | learner | student / learner / pupil |
| A person who takes an exam. (This is a more formal word because it refers to work done in the exam, not work done in the classroom.) | candidate | |
| The things considered when a piece of writing is marked for an exam. For the C1 Advanced exam, these are: Content, Communicative Achievement, Organisation and Language. | 1. Writing Assessment Scale 2. Writing Assessment subscales | 1. Assessment criteria 2. Assessment categories |
| Each piece of writing gets four sets of marks for each of the subscales, from 0 (lowest) to 5 (highest). | Bands (0–5) | marks / scores / grades |

These terms are commonly used to refer to Cambridge English Qualifications. There are also some other terms in this guide which are more widely used in the field of assessment. When these terms appear in this guide, you'll find an explanation nearby in a glossary box like this:



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.



Understanding the Cambridge English Writing Assessment Scale

Every Cambridge English Qualification targets a specific level of the CEFR and includes a range of tasks that are suitable for learners at this level.

The detailed **descriptors** in the Writing Assessment subscales are slightly different for each exam and are based on its target CEFR level. However, all Cambridge English Qualifications are designed to test a learner's ability to understand and use English effectively in real-life contexts, so the descriptors for different exams have some things in common.

For example, candidates at every level are expected to demonstrate good organisation in their written work, but examiners will expect to see progression and different levels of ability in each exam:

| | B1 Preliminary for Schools | B2 First for Schools | C1 Advanced |
|------------|---|---|---|
| Descriptor | The text is connected and coherent, using basic linking words and a limited number of cohesive devices. | The text is generally well organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices. | Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility. |



Key terminology

Descriptors are detailed notes to help examiners and teachers use the assessment subscales effectively to evaluate and grade a learner's writing. Descriptors for Bands 1, 3 and 5 indicate what a candidate is expected to demonstrate at lower, average and higher levels of ability.

These points are considered by Cambridge English when marking a piece of work:

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Content | ✓ The candidate answered the task. They have done what they were asked to do. |
| | ✗ The candidate did not include everything they were asked to. They have written something irrelevant. |
| Communicative Achievement | ✓ The writing is appropriate for the task. The candidate used a style which is appropriate for the specific communicative context. |
| | ✗ They have written in a way that is not suitable – for example, using a very formal style in an email to a friend or ending an article with 'Best wishes'. |
| Organisation | ✓ The writing is put together well. It is logical and ordered. |
| | ✗ It is difficult for the reader to follow. It uses elements of organisation which are not appropriate for the genre, like beginning an email with a title or forgetting to use headings for the sections in a report. |
| Language | ✓ There is a good range of vocabulary and grammar. They are used accurately. |
| | ✗ There are mistakes that could make the text difficult to understand or confusing for the reader. Some mistakes are unproblematic. |

A learner might be stronger in one area than another – for example, they might be good at fully answering the question (Content) but not very accurate in their use of grammar and vocabulary (Language). For this reason, each piece of writing is given a separate mark for each subscale, from 0 to 5. Together, these indicate the learner's areas of strength and weakness in the four different areas of assessment.

For example, if a candidate scores Band 5 for Content and Band 2 for Language, this suggests that they answered the question well and the reader would not feel that any information was missing, but that the use of grammar or vocabulary was not very accurate.

If a candidate scores Band 3 or above in the C1 Advanced exam, this generally indicates an ability of at least CEFR C1 level. Bands 1 and 2 indicate that the learner is still performing at B2 level.

| Bands | Subscales | | | |
|-------|-----------|---------------------------|--------------|----------|
| | Content | Communicative Achievement | Organisation | Language |
| | 5 | | | |
| | 4 | | | |
| | 3 | | | |
| | 2 | | | |
| | 1 | | | |
| | 0 | | | |

Learners' writing is assessed using these assessment scales, bands and descriptors. The quality and consistency of the marking is closely monitored, which means that learners around the world can feel confident that their exam results reflect their true ability to write in English.

How to assess and develop learners' writing skills in the classroom

It takes time and practice to develop good writing skills, and part of this development is regular formative assessment. Teachers can do this assessment, but learners can also assess their performance for themselves.

To prepare for the C1 Advanced exam, learners should:

- Read widely to familiarise themselves with the conventions and styles of different types of writing (i.e. reports, proposals, reviews, letters and essays).
- Write 10-minute plans for a variety of questions in past papers, so that planning becomes automatic and quick.
- Look at model answers, such as those featured in coursebooks, to see what is expected at C1 level. This will help them to see how answers should be structured and to get an idea of the variety of grammatical structures and range of vocabulary that are required.
- Have chances to practise exam tasks with clear time limits and word limits, just like in the real exam.
- Practice typing on the computer or, if doing the paper-based exam, practice writing clearly.

They must also understand:

- what they're being assessed on in the exam
- their own strengths and weaknesses
- how they can improve any areas of weakness.

The key to this understanding is regular, effective assessment.

It's a good idea to use a mix of teacher assessment, peer assessment and self-assessment during an exam preparation course. This variety can make lessons more interesting and engaging, but it's also useful for learners to write for different audiences and to get feedback from different sources, as we all have different strengths and notice different things.



Key terminology

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.



Teacher assessment

★ Top tips

- Assessment isn't just about correcting mistakes, and three of the four Writing Assessment subscales in C1 Advanced are not about language accuracy. It's important to respond to what learners write, not just how they write it. This is particularly challenging at advanced levels, as learners may have studied for many years and be very self-conscious about their common mistakes or feel they haven't made much progress recently. It's easier to see your progress when you're a beginner!
- Formative assessment is about learning from feedback and not just about correcting mistakes. Encourage learners to use more sophisticated and complex language, as this is part of learning and communicating effectively. Credit is given when learners attempt to use more complex language, even if they make mistakes. **Activity 2** is one way that you could give feedback on such efforts.
- Hearing the teacher's voice can feel more personal and supportive than receiving written feedback in red pen. For example, you could make a short video or voice recording with your comments.
- Adopting different approaches to giving feedback is particularly helpful to support learners with specific learning needs, such as dyslexia.



 Activity 1

Assessment focus: Report writing (Part 2 task).

Aims: The Part 2 report is quite a challenging task, as little information is given in the prompt and it may feel somewhat abstract or remote to learners' real lives. This activity aims to help learners generate ideas from limited information in the task prompt and to organise these logically into a plan that will help them write their reports.

Steps:

1. Brainstorm with learners some recent changes at their school or workplace or in their local community. For example:
 - a new menu in the school/office cafeteria
 - a charity fundraising event held by the local school, mosque, etc.
 - a new playground for local children
 - recent painting/decoration of their classroom/office.
2. In small groups, learners discuss and debate their feelings about these changes. In the first instance, all ideas are valuable and welcome – get them to write each comment on a separate slip of paper.
3. After 10 to 15 minutes, learners should choose their best ideas and organise them into themes or headings for their report (for example: the choice of date for an event, the choice of venue, the feedback from attendees, etc.).
4. Learners now take a photo of the groups of ideas they made on the slips of paper, or write down a copy in their notebooks to use as a plan later when writing their reports.
5. Learners write their reports individually and submit to the teacher. You can give individual marks and feedback, but it's a good idea to look at the reports in groups so you can see where different students had different problems, such as forgetting to include section headings, including email/letter features or including far too many short sections. As the class started with the same task and each group will have agreed on the same group of ideas to include in the report, this can be a very useful opportunity for you to see where individual students need specific help.

 Adaptation – Activity 1

For step 2, get learners to write each idea on a sticky note. Then for step 3, they can stand up and do this step by sticking the notes on a wall and moving them around as they decide on the groups of ideas. This adds some physical energy to an otherwise quite simple activity, and is especially helpful for students with specific learning difficulties who may struggle to put ideas or information into a sequence.

 Activity 2

Assessment focus: Language range and accuracy.

Aims: Learners often 'play it safe' in the interests of accuracy and resist using new language. This activity encourages them to try using new language to communicate more effectively and to demonstrate that not all mistakes are 'bad', they are evidence of learning!

Steps:

1. Give learners **Sample answer 7** and the **corresponding task** from this guide. Tell them first to read it and respond to the ideas expressed in the text relative to the task.
2. Now they've thought about the ideas, it's time to look at the language. Give them 10–15 minutes to discuss in pairs:
 - What examples of good language (more advanced vocabulary and grammar) is there?
 - Are there any mistakes? Do they think these are errors or slips?*
 - What band would they give this answer for the Language subscale?
3. Now reveal the mark and commentary for this sample answer. Are the learners surprised? Why? Invite them to discuss this in detail, because it's very important they understand *before* the next step that a few mistakes are not necessarily a bad thing, even at advanced level.
4. Draw learners' attention to these important parts of the commentary and allow some time for them to discuss their thoughts and impressions.

A range of vocabulary, including some less common lexis, is used effectively ... although there are occasional instances of less appropriate usage resulting from ambition ... There are minimal slips ... but these do not impede communication.
5. Now give them this task, or any other C1 Advanced Writing task that you feel they need to practise, to write for homework. Tell them that when you collect their work, you will only be giving specific feedback on Language and the range and accuracy of the language choices they make. This will encourage them to be more ambitious in their writing.

 Key terminology

***Errors** are mistakes due to lack of knowledge. **Slips** are the kind of mistake everybody makes sometimes – we just forget something for a moment, or perhaps we write too quickly and not carefully enough!

Peer assessment

★ Top tips

- Remind learners to think of their reader. In the exam, this might be a newspaper editor, company director, college principal, club members, etc. In class, it might be their teacher or fellow classmates. When learners read each other's work, they get a better understanding of the concept of 'target reader' which is mentioned in the Communicative Achievement subscale.
- 3. At the college where you study English, you recently organised a special day to raise money for charity. The Principal of the college has asked you for a report about the day. In your report you should outline what activities were organised, evaluate the success of the day and make suggestions for future fundraising events.

Write your **report**.

This task has a clear target reader: 'the Principal of [your] college'.
- Some learners can feel nervous and uncomfortable about getting feedback from peers instead of a teacher. This is especially common in accuracy-focused or exam-focused contexts. Talk to learners about the benefits of peer assessment so they understand that it will help them develop their writing skills and that they will have other opportunities to get feedback from the teacher.
- Peer feedback is most effective when it's included as a regular part of a course. You could also consider including teacher feedback as a final step, after learners have had a chance to revise their writing based on peer feedback.
- Encourage learners to start with the 'big picture' before focusing on specific things to change or correct. Learners often notice mistakes immediately and forget that the general purpose of writing is to communicate! Invite them to think about content and organisation first, and to offer praise before criticism.

📖 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.



Activity 3

Assessment focus: Organisation.

Aims: To demonstrate how the Organisation subscale is assessed; to raise learners' awareness of the more subtle differences between bands at C1 Advanced level.

Steps:

1. In pairs, learners brainstorm elements of good organisation for a Part 1 essay task e.g. text is well organised, ideas are easy to follow, ideas are linked using cohesive devices, well-developed argument.
2. Pairs review their best ideas and agree on a writing checklist that they can use to help them plan, write and check their own work before submitting it.
3. Show learners the sample Part 1 essay task from **page 33** of this guide. Can they add anything more to their writing checklist which is specific to this task?
4. Now show them **sample answer 1**, **sample answer 2** and **sample answer 3**. Tell them that one answer received a Band 2 for Organisation, one received a Band 3 and one received a Band 4. Give them about 30 minutes to read all three essays and, in pairs, work with the writing checklist they created in step 2, and discuss which band they would give to each essay and why.
5. Now give learners the band and commentary for the Organisation subscale for each essay. They should spend about 10–20 minutes discussing the following:
 - Do they agree with the band and commentary? Why/why not?
 - If they were the teacher, what feedback would they give each candidate in order to improve their writing and get a higher mark for Organisation?
 - Can they see any problems in the sample responses that they have also experienced in their own writing? How will they improve these areas next time they write an essay?
6. Conduct feedback with the whole class, then agree and finalise the details of their writing checklist before setting this task for homework. (See the Adaptation box for an idea of how to give feedback on homework like this.)



Adaptation – Activity 3

This activity could also provide useful structure and simplicity for teacher assessment. After learners have written a practice response for a Task 1 essay, ask them to give you their own checklist (like the one they produced in step 2), or work with the class checklist from step 6. Tell them you'll use this checklist when marking their work and that you won't give feedback on anything else. This helps them focus on developing just one of the assessment subscales and they can take a temporary break from worrying about the others!

 Activity 4

Assessment focus: Content for Part 2 review task.

Aims: To raise learners’ awareness of distinctive features of the genre; to identify useful language for writing a review; to encourage learners to engage with authentic materials outside class.

Steps:

1. In pairs, learners choose two things from popular arts culture that they are familiar with but which they are likely to have different opinions on, and for which they could easily find reviews online – for example, a classic film and its recent remake, or two pieces of popular music, or two books by the same author. (You could use the sample **Part 2** task from this guide as a prompt if your students have trouble thinking of anything.)
2. Give the students time to discuss their opinions about these two things in their pairs. For example:
 - Why did/didn’t they like it?
 - Did it remind them of anything else they’ve read/seen/listened to? How?
 - Which would they recommend to a friend and why?
 - What adjectives could they use to describe it?They should divide a piece of paper into two columns and take notes of useful ideas and language from their discussion for each of the things they’ve chosen.
3. Now send them online to find authentic reviews of the things they’ve chosen. They can do this in class if they have internet access, or they can find a review for homework and bring it to the next class. They should compare these reviews with their own ideas and make a note in their notebooks of any useful language the writers use which they’d like to incorporate into their own active vocabulary.
4. Bring the class back together and look at some typical features of reviews, such as:
 - semi-formal style
 - the functions of describing, explaining, giving positive/negative opinions and making recommendations
 - complex sentence structures
 - use of appropriate adjectives

 Activity 4

5. For homework, learners write their own reviews individually, **comparing** the two things they chose, **explaining** their own preference and making a **recommendation** to the reader. They should pay attention to the genre features of a review (language and style) and consider editing their work, and, if necessary, creating a second draft before the next class.
6. In the following class, learners swap reviews with their partner and give each other feedback on:
 - how successfully they addressed the task (‘compare, explain, recommend’)
 - any useful or interesting language
 - whether these reviews have made them reconsider their original opinions and why!

Self-assessment

★ **Top tips**

- Include self-assessment as a regular part of your course. For example, circle mistakes in learners’ writing and ask them to find the corrections themselves. Talk to learners about why it’s helpful to take personal responsibility for their own learning.
- If doing the paper-based test, get learners to count the number of words in their writing every time they do exam practice. It can waste valuable time during the real exam if they stop to count all the words in what they’ve written, so they need to know what 220–260 words typically looks like in their own handwriting. For some learners, this will fill a whole page but for learners with smaller handwriting it could be only half a page! In the digital exam, the words typed on the screen are counted automatically.
- At advanced levels, learners should be using language they already know in new ways or contexts – for example, less common expressions with high-frequency prepositions and adverbs like ‘around’ or ‘out of’, or inversion structures used for emphasis in addition to more familiar question forms (‘Not only did we ...’, ‘little did they know ...’). **Activity 6** includes more examples and will help support learners in doing ‘new things with “old” language’.

 **Key terminology**

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.



Activity 5

Assessment focus: Content and Communicative Achievement subscales.

Aims: To practise planning and preparing for Part 1 Writing (essay task); to review recommended advice for this part of the exam.

Steps:

1. Give learners the sample **Part 1 essay task** from this guide and allow them 45 minutes to write a response. Don't discuss or advise any special preparation yet.
2. Collect the learners' responses and tell them you'll return them later.
3. Now give learners the following three 'tips' to evaluate:
 - Read the opening paragraphs and instructions in Part 1 very carefully to make sure that you know what your role is and who you are writing to.
 - Plan your answer. Remember, you should use all the input information.
 - Copy key information from the input. Copying this information will result in more marks than using your own words.

Instruct learners to read and evaluate the three 'tips' very carefully (because some of the advice is not good!). Allow them time to discuss what they would change and why. (A full list of tips is available online in the **C1 Advanced FAQs**.)
4. Give learners the sample Part 1 essay task again. They should now spend 10–15 minutes preparing their ideas for the essay. Encourage them to read the task carefully and follow these four simple steps:
 - i. Circle **who** they are writing to.
 - ii. Circle **which information** they want to include.
 - iii. Make a **simple mind map** of their ideas.
 - iv. Check they have **not copied** the language from the input in their mind map.

Remind them that they should probably not spend 15 minutes planning in the exam, but that this is a practice activity, so they can take more time. The more often they practise the planning phase, the more quickly they will be able to plan in the exam.
5. Discuss the importance of planning and preparation for good Part 1 writing.
6. For homework, learners should re-write their essay, but this time using their plan.
7. **Follow-up:** Collect learners' essays and give them marks – but only for Content and Communicative Achievement, since these were the specific focus areas of this activity.



Answer key to step 3

- Read the opening paragraphs and instructions in Part 1 very carefully to make sure that you know what your role is and who you are writing to.
- Plan your answer. Remember, you do not necessarily need to use all the input information. Usually, part of the task is to select the appropriate information.
- Don't copy the information from the input (Part 1) in the words given. Copying the information will not result in more marks; instead you should write the information in your own words, or write your own ideas in your own words.



Adaptation – Activity 5

You could use this activity for peer teaching and peer assessment. Learners can make a plan in pairs, then write their essays separately. In the following class, ask pairs to look again at their original essay plan before they swap essays. Get them to read each other's essays and:

1. Check how closely the essay answered the question and followed the original plan.
2. Identify points for their partner to improve next time, in terms of Content and Communicative Achievement.
3. Identify something good in their partner's work that they want to 'steal' for the next time they write a Part 1 essay.

Students can also use the website **'Write and Improve'** to get feedback on their essays.

1. Students type their essays into the Write and Improve platform.
2. The platform will give them feedback on their essays.
3. Students can use the feedback to rewrite their essays.

Activity 6

Assessment focus: Language.

Aims: For learners to reflect on and expand their range of active vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Steps:

1. Discuss why keeping a reflective language journal can be very useful for language learning. Some ideas might be:
 - to maintain motivation over a long period
 - to keep a record of things learners don't see/hear very often, so they don't forget them
 - to identify common challenges that they face, so they can begin to think about how to overcome them
 - to give them daily practice of writing so it becomes more natural and comfortable.
2. Get learners started with three to four examples of high-frequency vocabulary or grammar structures. Invite them to write each one at the top of a clean page, leaving space to add notes and examples later. (Ideally, these would be things that you know are coming up later in your course syllabus, which are already familiar to your students but now appear in new or less familiar contexts.) For example:

| Word/structure | Common/familiar usage | Less common/advanced usage |
|------------------|--|--|
| never (adv.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have never been skiing. • I never drink coffee. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Never say never.' • 'Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine ...' • 'Nevertheless, ...' • 'Never (never, never, never) ever!' |
| open (adj./adv.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The shop is open. • Keep an open mind. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • open access (adj.) • open-ended (adj.) • a tin opener • to greet someone with open arms • 'Open as usual' (during a crisis or construction) |
| Past participles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loved • learned | Adjectival use with different pronunciation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • beloved (3 syllables) • learned (2 syllables) In participle clauses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Frightened by the noise, he rushed behind the sofa.' • 'A small cat, unseen and unheard by anyone, crept into the classroom.' |

Activity 6

3. Encourage learners to spend 15 minutes every day looking at the material they've studied and identifying any examples of 'old' language appearing in a 'new' way, then record this in their journals. They should include:
 - the word/structure **in the context** in which they heard/read it (a full example sentence)
 - **how** it is used (the surrounding language, such as dependent prepositions or gerund/infinitive patterns, etc.)
 - the **pronunciation** of the word/structure (especially any stress or intonation features that are different from how the word/structure is used in other contexts)
 - a **translation(s)** of the whole phrase in their L1, which may help them better appreciate the infrequent or specific nature of this particular usage (compared to its everyday usage).
4. Invite learners to share their reflective diaries with you regularly, for example every Monday. Without regular attention, diary projects may begin well but quickly get forgotten. Regular attention provides three key opportunities:
 - By keeping diaries, learners are effectively collecting a rich bank of vocabulary that could be exploited as a resource for classroom warmers, fillers and vocabulary games.
 - Learners are all keeping their own individual diaries, with vocabulary they personally find interesting or important, which could support peer teaching.
 - If you notice any efforts to use this more sophisticated language in their written work, you can praise them for their ambition and creativity!

How to assess writing for C1 Advanced

The texts and tasks in Cambridge English Qualifications are designed to reflect real-world communication and to test learners’ true abilities in English, so preparing learners for the Writing test shouldn’t be very different from developing and assessing their writing skills in general. But of course, the tasks, timings and assessment scales for an exam are very specific and learners should have plenty of practice before they take the real exam.

The C1 Advanced Writing paper has two parts and lasts for 1 hour and 30 minutes in total. Candidates have to show that they can write different types of text in English.

| | Part 1: Writing an essay | Part 2: Writing a letter/email, a proposal, a report or a review |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| How many tasks are there? | One. The candidate must answer this task. | Three. The candidate must choose one task to answer. |
| How many marks are there? | 20 (maximum) | 20 (maximum) |
| What do candidates have to do? | Write an essay of 220–260 words. They must base their essay on two points given in the input text, explaining which of the two points is more important and giving reasons for their opinion. They are assessed on their language choices and how they use the language to express their opinion. | Write 220–260 words. Candidates are expected to show awareness of the style and tone required by a task type. Depending on the question, candidates will have to describe, evaluate, hypothesise, persuade, express opinion, compare, give advice, justify or judge priorities. There is no right or wrong answer. Candidates are assessed on the appropriate use of language according the genre of the task type. |

Writing Assessment subscales for C1 Advanced

As with other Cambridge English exams, candidates’ writing for C1 Advanced is assessed in terms of Content, Communicative Achievement, Organisation and Language. The detailed band descriptors are as follows:


| C1 | Content | Communicative Achievement | Organisation | Language |
|----|--|--|--|--|
| 5 | All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed. | Uses the conventions of the communicative task with sufficient flexibility to communicate complex ideas in an effective way, holding the target reader’s attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes. | Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility. | Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, effectively and precisely. Uses a wide range of simple and complex grammatical forms with full control, flexibility and sophistication. Errors, if present, are related to less common words and structures, or occur as slips. |
| 4 | Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5. | | | |
| 3 | Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed. | Uses the conventions of the communicative task effectively to hold the target reader’s attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate. | Text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect. | Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, appropriately. Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility. Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication. |
| 2 | Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3. | | | |
| 1 | Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed. | Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader’s attention and communicate straightforward ideas. | Text is generally well organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices. | Uses a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately, with occasional inappropriate use of less common lexis. Uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication. |
| 0 | Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed. | Performance below Band 1. | | |

These subscales and descriptors were designed to be used when marking Cambridge writing exams, so some of the specialist terminology may be unfamiliar to you. Below, you can see what these descriptors mean in practice. For each subscale, there's an explanation of the descriptors, followed by a real example of an exam task, a candidate's response and the comments given.

At the end of this section, you can find seven sample responses written by real candidates in the C1 Advanced exam, along with full comments and band scores.

Content

| Band | Content | What does this mean? |
|------|--|---|
| 5 | All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed. | <div>The writer included everything that the task required them to include.</div> <div>Who would read this text? (For example: an academic tutor, a boss or a peer.)</div> |
| 3 | Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed . | Would the reader have all the information they need? The task always tells the candidate what information to include. Some of these content requirements do not need much development (for example, state what ...) and some parts require more development (for example, describe ... or explain ...). |
| 1 | Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed. | <div>The writer included something that wasn't necessary or related to the task.</div> <div>The writer clearly didn't understand something in the task. (For example: a Part 1 task asked the candidate to discuss the issue of local authorities giving money to museums, sports centres and public gardens, but instead they wrote about fundraising for such organisations.)</div> |
| 0 | Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed. | |

 **Did you notice?**

Look again at the descriptors for each band. You can see that they include similar sentences but with slightly different words, such as *minor irrelevances*, *irrelevances*, *totally irrelevant*. This should help you to compare the bands more easily when you're looking at a piece of writing and trying to decide which mark to give it. For example:

The task requires the candidate to discuss **two things** in their answer, **state which is more important** and **give their reasons**.

Writing Part 1

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **220–260** words in an appropriate style **on the separate answer sheet**.

1. Your class has listened to a discussion about the role of journalists in society. You have made the notes below.

Aspects of the role of journalists in society:

- provide information
- influence opinion
- inspire action

Some opinions expressed in this session

'A good journalist will simply set out the facts accurately.'

'A good article won't change my views on a subject.'

'Many successful campaigns have resulted from stories in the press.'

Write an essay for your tutor discussing **two** of the aspects of the role of journalists in your notes. You should **say which aspect of their role you think is more important, giving reasons for your opinion**.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion, but you should use your own words as far as possible.

Look at Sample answer 3 on **page 38**.

Although the candidate scored poorly on the other three subscales, they scored a Band 5 for Content because the question was answered with all three points clearly addressed, so the target reader is **fully informed**.

(You can read the full comments below the candidate's answer.)

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How to assess writing for
C1 Advanced

Communicative Achievement

| Band | Communicative Achievement | What does this mean? |
|------|--|--|
| 5 | Uses the conventions of the communicative task with sufficient flexibility to communicate complex ideas in an effective way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes . | These include genre, format, register and function. For example, a personal letter should not look like a formal report, and an email to a teacher would probably be more formal and polite than an email to a close friend! |
| | | Complex ideas are abstract rather than straightforward ideas, or cover a wider subject area. The candidate uses more rhetorical resources in order to bring them together, and express them. |
| | | The communicative purpose of the piece of writing is specified in the task, for example make a complaint, suggest alternatives , etc. |
| 3 | Uses the conventions of the communicative task effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate. | This is a good thing! It means the reader is interested, not distracted, and it's not difficult for the reader to understand the text. |
| 1 | Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward ideas. | Straightforward ideas are usually concrete, limited in subject and are expressed using simpler language structures. |

✓ A real example: Part 2 review

2. You see this announcement in an international music magazine:

Music of your homeland

We would like to know which pieces of music readers feel represent their country well. Send us a review about two popular pieces of music from your country, comparing them, explaining which ways they reflect the positive aspects of your country's culture, and recommending which one a visitor to your country should definitely listen to.

We will publish the best review.

Write your **review**.

Music of my homeland: 'The River'

Did you know that in China traditional music enjoys just as much popularity as modern Pop music? As someone who usually listens to the younger generation—radio, I could hardly believe the parallel success of the two completely different styles of music – until I listened to the traditional song 'The River' for the first time.

Unlike the current number one single 'little red apple' in the modern charts, which is full of positive energy and easy to dance to, 'The River' provides a deep insight into the Chinese history and its culture. Just by listening to this traditional and sentimental song one gets the feeling of being lifted into another space and time, when thousands of years ago the Chinese farmers were working hard in the rice fields, surrounded by the astonishing sound of massive river waves. If one closes the eyes, one can almost see the idyllic nature of giant China, in front of oneself, long before the Industrial Revolution and wars.

And if you are not a fan of traditional music, don't be put off by its title. 'The River' provides more than simply the description of nature, but it also throws an interesting light on the mentality of the Chinese: the strong mind, the persistence, the never-ending motivation, that still can be seen today. In conclusion, 'little red apple' is for me a good and popular song in China, which can easily cheer you up, representing the positive attitude of the Chinese. But if you want to turn away from Westernized music, 'The River' is definitely the Chinese song that I would recommend to anybody who wants to visit my homeland and to learn about the Chinese culture from its earliest stages.

Comments on Communicative Achievement:

The review is written in a natural, confident style and by addressing the reader directly, the tone is engaging throughout: *Did you know that ...; one gets the feeling of; And if you are not a fan of*. Straightforward and complex ideas, for example when considering the connection between the two pieces of music (first paragraph) and describing the effect of listening to 'The River' (second paragraph) are communicated effectively.

Band: 4

? Why not Band 5?

This is a very good response to the task overall. To get a higher mark for Communicative Achievement, the candidate could have used **genre conventions** which are more suitable for a review (avoiding those which are more suited to an essay, such as *In conclusion*) and better fulfilled the **communicative purposes** of **comparing**, **explaining** and **recommending** by making more direct links between the two pieces of music, instead of talking mainly about one piece ('The River').

Organisation

| Band | Organisation | What does this mean? |
|------|---|--|
| 5 | Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility. | Cohesive devices include linking words and other phrases that connect ideas and words within a text, such as pronouns (<i>she, theirs</i> , etc.), substitution (<i>the last one, this</i> , etc.), relative clauses (... <i>which is why</i> ...) and so on. |
| 3 | Text is well organised and coherent , using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect. | Easy to understand because the ideas and sentences are generally well connected. Organisational patterns are ways of connecting sentences which help the reader understand the writer's intended meaning and flow of ideas. This includes things like starting a new paragraph with a direct question to the reader, arranging sentences in an order which leads from simpler to more exciting ideas, etc. |
| 1 | Text is generally well organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices. | Linking words are used, rather than phrases, pronouns and substitution etc. and show an explicit connection between ideas and sentences, such as <i>for example, because, finally</i> and so on. |

✓ A real example: Part 2 report

3. At the college where you study English, you recently organised a special day to raise money for charity. The Principal of the college has asked you for a report about the day. In your report, you should outline what activities were organised, evaluate the success of the day and make suggestions for future fundraising events.

Write your **report**.

After the event I organised with the other school representatives, in order to raise funds for charity, it can be said that **it** was a success. **This even** made a really good image for the school, **even because** most of the students came.

The event took place last saturday afternoon, and every member of the school was invited with the family and friends who desires to participate. Being close to the Christhmas period we organised invited people to bring clothes, toys, books and everything they would like to donate to less fortunate people. All **those things** were **then** given to me as a charity associati association that help people of the city and even of other countries such as Romania and Brazil.

Af **Beyond of this** we even sold creative christmas object that two classes made during a workshop in the last month. For entertaining everybody with something useful two associations and a society and the other one came to present **themselves and their activities**. After this **people** were free to make offers and the amazing thing is that most of the **participants** gave us donated something.

This day shoud to be considered a real success because of the high number of people who came, which is around 500 five hundreds. The positive thing is that **everyb** everyone participated actively and happily in a way I have rarely seen. Many objects and **money moneys** were donated and **this** improved the life of many people with little effort.

Concluding I suggest to do **this event** every year around the Christmas Christhmas period bea because is a way of doing something positive in an easy and happy way. Not only because many people came, but also because we helped many unlike families.

Comments on Organisation:

The text is well organised and coherent. Although there are no headings, which are usually used to organise a report, the sections are clearly introduced and focus on one aspect of the task at a time. There is a variety of **linking words and cohesive devices**, but there is **some awkwardness at times**, for example the first line of the text and **even because; Beyond of this**.

Band: 2

Language

| Band | Language | What does this mean? |
|------|--|--|
| 5 | Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, effectively and precisely. | This means the writer is clearly in control of their grammar – they are not making lucky guesses! The candidate consistently uses a variety of vocabulary appropriately, as well as using simple and complex grammar appropriately, throughout. |
| | Uses a wide range of simple and complex grammatical forms with full control , flexibility and sophistication. | |
| | Errors , if present, are related to less common words and structures, or occur as slips . | Errors are usually repeated mistakes, where it's clear the candidate is unable to be consistently accurate in using a particular item of vocabulary or grammatical structure. But a slip is when the candidate has clearly learned a vocabulary item or grammatical structure and uses it accurately most of the time, but still makes an occasional mistake. |
| 3 | Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis , appropriately. | Less common lexis is vocabulary which enables the candidate to express ideas more succinctly and precisely, but which is not common vocabulary because it expresses quite specific ideas or concepts. |
| | Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility . Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication. | |
| | | Flexibility means the writer can adapt their choice of words and style, rather than using the same form over and over. This allows a writer to communicate more effectively and efficiently. |
| 1 | Uses a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately , with occasional inappropriate use of less common lexis. | Vocabulary is appropriate when it fits the context of the task and the other words around it. For example, if a candidate writes <i>Big snow makes getting around the city difficult</i> in an article, the expression <i>getting around the city</i> suits the style of an article but <i>big snow</i> is not appropriate, because the usual expression is <i>heavy snow</i> . |
| | Uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication . | |
| | | <i>Big snow</i> is a good example of an error which does not impede communication. The reader can probably understand what the writer means, but they might be distracted for a moment while they think about it. |

✓ A real example: Part 2 essay

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **220–260** words in an appropriate style **on the separate answer sheet**.

1. Your class has listened to a discussion about the role of journalists in society. You have made the notes below:

| | |
|--|--|
| Aspects of the role of journalists in society: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide information• influence opinion• inspire action | Some opinions expressed in this discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">'A good journalist will simply set out the facts accurately.''A good article won't change my views on a subject.''Many successful campaigns have resulted from stories in the press.' |
|--|--|

Write an essay for your tutor discussing **two** of the aspects of the role of journalists in your notes. You should **say which aspect of their role you think is more important, giving reasons for your opinion**.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion, but you should use your own words as far as possible.

It is clear for everyone that this century is **the era of mass media**. There are plenty of supporters of the theory of media being »the forth power«. But we should discuss the role of a journalist in this world of information.

First of all, the main purpose of journalism is to provide a society with the news. Mass media is able to connect main social institutions, that is why without the news our society is not able to function. But at the same time we should **look after the quality of information**: it should be reliable, **trust-worthy** and presented in a neutral way. Nowadays at **the golden age of tabloids**, when this **principle** seems to be forgotten we need to bring back to life the image of an honest journalist who is a **servant of society**.

Though today journalism is seen as **an evil instrument of manipulation** it has not always been like that. At the beginning of the twentieth century there was the start of the **investigative journalism**. The correspondents tried to change the world, fighting against illegal or **immoral actions** of a government. With the help of these **brave soldiers of pen** there were numerous cases when social **catastrophies** were prevented.

To sum up I would like to say that there is much more behind journalism than simply telling the news. In my opinion journalists should inspire people to change the society for the better.

Comments on Language:

A range of vocabulary, including some less common lexis appropriate to the topic, is used **generally effectively**: *the era of mass media*; *the golden age of tabloids*; *principle*; *servant of a society*; *an evil instrument of manipulation*; *investigative journalism*; *immoral actions*; *brave soldiers of pen*; *catastrophies*, although there are occasional instances of **less appropriate usage**: *look after the quality of information*; *trust-worthy [information]*.

A range of simple and complex grammatical forms is used with control and flexibility. There are slips, for example with the use of articles, but these do not impede communication.

Band: 4

? Why not Band 5?

This is a very good response to the task overall. To get a higher mark for Language, the candidate would have shown fewer **errors** (such as *forth*, *twentyeth*) and **slips**, used language in a consistently **appropriate** way and would have demonstrated **full control**, **flexibility** and **sophistication** in their use of simple and complex grammatical forms (for example, the second and third sentences in the third paragraph could be connected into one longer sentence; and the clause beginning *that is why* should be the start of a new sentence or changed to *which is why*).

Try it yourself!

Now, you'll find seven sample answers from real C1 Advanced candidates, including the ones we looked at above. These include the band scores and full comments given by real Cambridge English writing examiners. Together, these will help you understand what to expect from learners with stronger, weaker and average abilities.

But first, why not try marking these samples yourself using the Writing Assessment Scale? It's a good idea to practise, because using these scales when marking your own learners' writing will help you to:

- analyse their strengths and weaknesses when they practise writing
- form an impression of how ready they are to take the Writing part of the C1 Advanced exam.

You'll find a **blank, photocopyable teacher assessment template** at the end of this guide which you can print and use for assessing any of the samples below. You should also refer to the detailed C1 Advanced band descriptors on **page 23**.

Sample tasks with comments

Part 1



Task: Part 1 – essay

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **220–260** words in an appropriate style **on the separate answer sheet**.

1. Your class has listened to a discussion about the role of journalists in society. You have made the notes below:

Aspects of the role of journalists in society:

- provide information
- influence opinion
- inspire action

Some opinions expressed in this discussion:

- 'A good journalist will simply set out the facts accurately.'
- 'A good article won't change my views on a subject.'
- 'Many successful campaigns have resulted from stories in the press.'

Write an essay for your tutor discussing **two** of the aspects of the role of journalists in your notes. You should **say which aspect of their role you think is more important, giving reasons for your opinion**.

You may, if you wish, make use of the opinions expressed in the discussion, but you should use your own words as far as possible.



Top tip

Before you read the comments below, try making your own assessment using the official subscales. Then, compare your assessment with the band scores and comments.

 Task: Part 1 – essay

Sample answer 1

It is clear for everyone that this century is the era of mass media. There are plenty of supporters of the theory of media being »the forth power«. But we should discuss the role of a journalist in this world of information.

First of all, the main purpose of journalism is to provide a society with the news. Mass media is able to connect main social institutions, that is why without the news our society is not able to function. But at the same time we should look after the quality of information : it should be reliable, trust-worthy and presented in a neutral way. Nowadays at the golden age of tabloids, when this principle seems to be forgotten we need to bring back to life the image of an honest journalist who is a servant of society.

Though today journalism is seen as an evil instrument of manipulation it has not always been like that. At the beginning of the twentyeth century there was the start of the investigative journalism. The correspondents tried to change the world, fighting against illegal or immoral actions of a government. With the help of these brave soldiers of pen there were numerous cases when social catastrophies were prevented.

To sum up I would like to say that there is much more behind journalism than simply telling the news. In my opinion journalists should inspire people to change the society for the better.

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|--|
| Content | 5 | All content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed about two aspects of the role of journalists (providing information and inspiring action) and which of these the writer considers most important: <i>there is much more behind journalism than simply telling the news. In my opinion journalists should inspire people to change the society for the better.</i> |
| Communicative Achievement | 3 | The conventions of essay writing are used effectively. There is a clear development of the topic from introduction through to conclusion and the style is consistently appropriate, using an objective tone, which holds the reader's attention throughout. Straightforward and some more complex ideas, for example when discussing people's attitudes to journalism, are communicated. |
| Organisation | 4 | The text is well organised and coherent. The writer uses a variety of cohesive devices with flexibility to connect ideas both within and across sentences: <i>that is why; Nowadays, when this principle seems to be forgotten; an honest journalist who is a servant of a society; With the help of these brave soldiers of pen; To sum up</i> , and move the argument forward. Organisational patterns are used to generally good effect, for example the use of inversion for emphasis: <i>that is why without the news our society is not able to function; Though today journalism is seen as ... it has not always been like that.</i> However, more attention to punctuation would improve the overall effect of the text. |
| Language | 4 | A range of vocabulary, including some less common lexis appropriate to the topic, is used generally effectively: <i>the era of mass media; the golden age of tabloids; principle; servant of a society; an evil instrument of manipulation; investigative journalism; immoral actions; brave soldiers of pen; catastrophies</i> , although there are occasional instances of less appropriate usage: <i>look after the quality of information; trust-worthy [information]</i> . A range of simple and complex grammatical forms is used with control and flexibility. There are slips, for example with the use of articles, but these do not impede communication. |



Task: Part 1 – essay

Sample answer 2

When you read an article in the newspaper, you either want to inform yourself about the issue or the title and topic seem interesting enough to warrant you to read it. Clearly, newspapers or television news are our main source of information in our society, which are written or presented by journalists. Journalists are people, as we all are, and therefore have an opinion on everything they experience, especially when they do research on the topic they are writing about.

The main goal of presenting valuable information to the public is often overshadowed by the inability to exclude their own opinion on the matter. Surely, the expression of opinion is often desired in some newspapers, but it should not be done at the cost that some journalists deliberately exclude important facts on the issue or change certain statements.

Naturally, no one can write any kind of text completely void of opinion. Though, it is not necessary to push our society via articles or other means towards a singular opinion, which can be considered wrong sometimes due to the lack of valuable information.

A good article has to be something we can gather complete and correct information from with little input on what the author thinks. Otherwise, people would be inclined to believe that opinion completely and would instantly adept it without establishing their own one.

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|--|
| Content | 5 | All of the content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed. There is information about two aspects of the role of journalists: providing information and influencing opinion. The writer supports the idea that providing information is more important as negative ideas are put forward about how journalists sometimes influence opinions. |
| Communicative Achievement | 3 | The conventions of an essay have been used effectively to hold the target reader's attention. The writer has taken a clear stance on the topic while conceding that the issue is not straightforward, therefore expressing more complex ideas: <i>Journalists are people, as we all are, and therefore have an opinion; Surely the expression of opinion is often desired in some newspapers, but it should not be done at the cost that some journalists deliberately exclude important facts.</i> |
| Organisation | 3 | The text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect. The writer uses concession to support the argument, admitting first that there are pressures on journalists to express opinions before insisting that the need for objective information overrides these pressures: <i>The main goal of presenting valuable information to the public is often overshadowed by the inability to exclude their own opinion on the matter; A good article has to be something ... Otherwise ...</i> |
| Language | 4 | A range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, is used effectively and precisely: <i>do research; overshadowed by; deliberately exclude; completely void of; gather complete and correct information.</i> A range of grammatical forms is used with control and flexibility: <i>seem interesting enough to warrant you to read it; people would be inclined to believe.</i> There are occasional errors, but these might be slips and they do not impede communication: <i>singular opinion; adept.</i> |

Task: Part 1 – essay

Sample answer 3

There are a lot commonly known aspects about the role of a Journalist in Society. In this Essay I will discuss two of them.

The first point is to provide Information. An Journalists job is it to provide Informations as well as facts about a special topic. He has to do it in the way that the reader will get no difficulties to understand it and build his own opinion. It is also important to write from a neutral point of view to let the not influence the readers opinion. The article should only be about the topic and nothing else otherwise the reader could be distracted confused. The Journalist also has to include all the to known facts and Informations to let the reader know everything about what he is reading.

The other point I want to talk about is the Journalists influence on the readers opinion. A well written article about a Topic shouldn't change the readers view on the subject. Also significant is to give the consumer room to made up his own opinion, the writer can do this with In the way he writes and with the formulation of and construction of his article. Sometimes It is right essential that the writer gives his own opinion about the topic he is writting and sometimes it is important to influence the writers opinion, with facts the reader may not know for example.

Finally From my point of view providing Information is the more Important aspect. A reason therefor is that even if the article influences the readers mind about it the Journalist provides Informations and that's the essential point. Another point that lets me think this way is that providing to write about something includes giving facts and Informations about it, and that's why he writes the article and the reader reads it.

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|--|
| Content | 5 | All content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed. Two roles of journalists in society are discussed, providing information and influencing opinions, with the former being chosen as the most important aspect of the role. |
| Communicative Achievement | 2 | The conventions of an essay, such as setting out the parameters of the discussion in the first paragraph and the use of an objective, neutral tone, are used effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward ideas. There is an attempt to communicate more complex ideas, but this is sometimes unsuccessful due to language slips: <i>it is essential that the writer gives his own opinion about the topic he is writting and sometimes it is important to influence the writers [reader's] opinion, with facts the reader may not know.</i> |
| Organisation | 2 | The text is well organised and coherent. There is good structure to the text, which develops logically, and a variety of linking words and cohesive devices are used to connect the ideas within and across paragraphs: <i>The first point; It is also; otherwise; The other point; Sometimes; From my point of view; therefor; even if; Another point.</i> |
| Language | 2 | There is a range of vocabulary, including some less common lexis and collocations, which is used appropriately: <i>commonly known aspects; neutral point of view; influence ... opinion; well written; give the consumer room to; formulation and construction.</i> There is a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms used with a good degree of control: <i>should only be about; could be confused; can do this In the way he writes.</i> However, there are errors with tenses, punctuation and spelling but these do not impede communication: <i>is it to provide; get no difficulties; readers; to made up; writting; writers; informations.</i> |

 Task: Part 2 – report

3. At the college where you study English, you recently organised a special day to raise money for charity. The Principal of the college has asked you for a report about the day. In your report, you should outline what activities were organised, evaluate the success of the day and make suggestions for future fundraising events.

Write your report.

Sample answer 4

REPORT – THE CHARITY DAY

INTRODUCTION

The principle aims of this report is to provide information about The Chariety Day which took place on the last Sunday. It was organized to support The Centre for parentless children in Chicago.
^ (CPC)

WHAT WAS HAPPENING THERE?

The purpose of the event was to raise money for the CPC. Visitors could try numerous activities they might not have a chance to try normally. Activities offered included:

- horseback riding
- curling
- golf
- fencing

and many other.

WHAT WAS SUCCESSFUL?

It made us very happy that all all the people who came could find something they liked. Either adults accompanying their songs and daughters or children just entering an elementary school had a lot of fun. The most favoured activity was definitely curling. Visitors of all ages kept coming and purchasing tickets allowing them to participate in the game.

A group of people willing to donate money to the CPC is also hoeld for to be a great success since The Charity Day's aim was to support the CPC as much as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Although As far as reaching the day's target is concerned, I must state that the event was has been the most successful fundraising action at our school this year. However, not everything went well during the day. Plans were not thinking about the possibility of rain and when it began to rain in the morning, it seemed just a few people would turn up and have fun in at the playground of the school. Fortunately, it stopped 20 minutes later and the weather was pleasant for the rest of the day. Therefore, both dry and wet scenarios have to be designed next time.

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| Content | 5 | All of the content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed about all aspects in the task: the activities arranged, an evaluation of the day and suggestions for future events. |
| Communicative Achievement | 3 | The conventions of a report, such as a neutral tone throughout and clear headings, are used effectively to hold the target reader's attention and clearly communicate the specific aspects of the task, outlining the activities, evaluating the success of the day, making suggestions for future events: <i>The principle aim of this report is to; The purpose of the event; Activities offered included; I must state that the event has been the most successful fundraising action at our school this year; both dry and wet scenarios have to be designed next time.</i> |
| Organisation | 3 | The text is well organised and coherent. There is a variety of suitable cohesive devices and organisational patterns such as sub-headings, punctuation and bullet points, which are used to generally good effect: <i>Introduction; What was happening there?; Activities offered included; all the people who came; The most favoured activity; What was successful?; Recommendations; However; when it began.</i> |
| Language | 3 | A range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, is used appropriately: <i>took place; curling; fencing; allowing them to participate in the game; turn up.</i> A range of simple and complex grammatical forms is used with control and flexibility: <i>It was organized to support; adults accompanying their songs and daughters or children just entering an elementary school; it seemed just a few people would turn up and have fun.</i> There are occasional errors, but these do not impede communication: <i>Plans were not thinking about.</i> |



Task: Part 2 – report

Sample answer 5

After the event I organised with the other school representatives, in order to raise funds for charity, it can be said that it was a success. This even made a really good image for the school, even because most of the students came.

The event took place last saturday afternoon, and every member of the school was invited with the family and friends who desires to participate. Being close to the Chrsthmas period we organised invited people to bring clothes, toys, books and everything they would like to donate to less fortunate people. All those things were then given to me as a charity associati association that help people of the city and even of other countries such as Romania and Brazil.

Af Beyond of this we even sold creative christhmas object that two classes made during a workshop in the last month. For entertaining everybody with something useful two associations and a society and the other one came to present themselves and their activities. After this people were free to make offers and the amazing thing is that most of the participants gave us donated something.

This day shoud to be considered a real success because of the high number of people who came, which is around 500 five hundreds. The positive thing is that everyb everyone participated actively and happily in a way I have rarely seen. Many objects and money moneys were donated and this improved the life of many people with little effort.

Concluding I suggest to do this event every year around the Christmas Chrsthmas period bea because is a way of doing something positive in an easy and happy way. Not only because many people came, but also because we helped many unlike families.

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| Content | 5 | All content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed about the points in the task. There is information about the activities which took place, an evaluation of the day and suggestions about future similar events. |
| Communicative Achievement | 3 | The conventions of a report, such as a neutral tone throughout, are used effectively to hold the target reader's attention. There is a reflective tone, and functional language is used to describe and evaluate the events on the day. Straightforward and some complex ideas are communicated: <i>it can be said that it was a success; This day shoud to be considered a real success because of; The positive thing is that.</i> |
| Organisation | 2 | The text is well organised and coherent. Although there are no headings, which are usually used to organise a report, the sections are clearly introduced and focus on one aspect of the task at a time. There is a variety of linking words and cohesive devices, but there is some awkwardness at times, for example the first line of the text and <i>even because; Beyond of this.</i> |
| Language | 2 | There is a range of vocabulary used appropriately for the task: <i>donate; less fortunate people.</i> A range of simple and complex grammatical forms is used with control: <i>who desires to participate; Being close to; those things were then given to; to be considered; everyone participated actively and happily in a way I have rarely seen.</i> Errors are present, including tense control and plural agreement, but these do not impede communication: <i>object; This day shoud to be; many unlike families.</i> |



Task: Part 2 – review

2. You see this announcement in an international music magazine:

Music of your homeland

We would like to know which pieces of music readers feel represent their country well. Send us a review about two popular pieces of music from your country, comparing them, explaining which ways they reflect the positive aspects of your country's culture, and recommending which one a visitor to your country should definitely listen to.

We will publish the best review.

Write your **review**.

Sample answer 6

At first I was doubting a lot about wich two songs should I pick for representing my Spain, my homeland, but I have decided to select two regional ones.

The first of it is "Ikusi Mendizaleak". It talks about the place where I was born the Basque Country. The tradition of the song Almost all people here knows it so I think it can be representative for this norther Spain teritor territory. The song talks about a group of people that go to the mountains and see beautifull places with green grass and a lot of forests. It is a great description of Basque Country wich is full of precious, natural places and mountains so worthy to visit. Also it talks about how even at though you can be tired and the path can be hard you can never give up untill you make it to your objective, wich I think is a great and strong message.

The second song I have chosen for representing my homeland is about Seville wich is 1000km far away from the Basque Country. I can't remember the song title but here in Spain we all know it. It starts with "Sevilla tiene un color espc especial" this meaning Seville has a special colour. It describes the beautifull places the city has and how special th these are for their people. Also talks about how the people there locals are different from the rest of Spain and how happy and well they live.

To summarise if you ever wanted to go to the north of Spain you should definitely listen to the first one and if you wanted to go South to the second, both of them are marvelous places to visit and stay!

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| Content | 5 | All content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed. There is information about two pieces of music and how they relate positively to the country of origin, particularly in terms of the characteristics of the people living in different regions. A clear recommendation is made, referring to where the reader may want to visit. |
| Communicative Achievement | 3 | The conventions of a review are used effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas. The tone is positive and encouraging: <i>It is a great description; is a great and strong message; how special these are for their people; you should definitely listen.</i> |
| Organisation | 3 | The text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect: <i>At first; so I think it can be; even though you can be tired ... you can never give up; The second song; both of them.</i> There is a clear structure to the text through the use of paragraphing and each paragraph has a clear focus and internal structure. |
| Language | 2 | A range of everyday vocabulary, and some less common lexis, is used appropriately: <i>my homeland; representative; make it to your objective.</i> A range of simple and some complex grammatical forms is used with a good degree of control: <i>Also it talks about how even though you can be tired and the path can be hard you can never give up until you make it to your objective.</i> There are some errors: <i>The first of it is; beautifull; wich is 1000km far away from; Also talks about</i> , but these do not impede communication. |

Task: Part 2 – review

Sample answer 7

Music of my homeland: 'The River'

Did you know that in China traditional music enjoys just as much popularity as modern Pop music? As someone who usually listens to the younger generation–radio, I could hardly believe the parallel success of the two completely different styles of music – until I listened to the traditional song 'The River' for the first time.

Unlike the current number one single 'little red apple' in the modern charts, which is full of positive energy and easy to dance to, 'The River' provides a deep insight into the Chinese history and its culture. Just by listening to this traditional and sentimental song one gets the feeling of being lifted into another space and time, when thousands of years ago the Chinese farmers were working hard in the rice fields, surrounded by the astonishing sound of massive river waves. If one closes the eyes, one can almost see the idyllic nature of giant China, in front of oneself, long before the Industrial Revolution and wars.

And if you are not a fan of traditional music, don't be put off by its title. 'The River' provides more than simply the description of nature, but it also throws an interesting light on the mentality of the Chinese: the strong mind, the persistence, the never-ending motivation, that still can be seen today.

In conclusion, 'little red apple' is for me a good and popular song in China, which can easily cheer you up, representing the positive attitude of the Chinese. But if you want to turn away from Westernized music, 'The River' is definitely the Chinese song that I would recommend to anybody who wants to visit my homeland and to learn about the Chinese culture from its earliest stages.

| Subscale | Mark | Commentary |
|---------------------------|------|---|
| Content | 5 | All content is relevant to the task. The target reader is fully informed about the two pieces of music and there is a clear recommendation of which one a visitor to China should listen to. |
| Communicative Achievement | 4 | The review is written in a natural, confident style and by addressing the reader directly, the tone is engaging throughout: <i>Did you know that ... ; one gets the feeling of; And if you are not a fan of.</i> Straightforward and complex ideas, for example when considering the connection between the two pieces of music (first paragraph) and describing the effect of listening to 'The River' (second paragraph) are communicated effectively. |
| Organisation | 3 | The text is well organised and coherent. The ideas are connected within and across sentences and paragraphs using a variety of cohesive devices: <i>As someone who; of the two completely different styles of music; And if you are not ... ; don't be put off by its title; which can easily cheer you up.</i> Sentences are generally long and complex and there is some use of organisation patterns, for example ordering information in sentences to create anticipation: <i>As someone who ... until I listened to ... ; Unlike the current number one ... 'The River' provides ...</i> |
| Language | 4 | A range of vocabulary, including some less common lexis, is used effectively: <i>a deep insight into; sentimental song; idyllic; throws an interesting light on the mentality; persistence; never-ending motivation,</i> although there are occasional instances of less appropriate usage resulting from ambition: <i>parallel success; astonishing sound; giant China.</i> A range of simple and complex grammatical forms is used with control and flexibility. There are minimal slips, for example with the use of articles and the incorrect spelling of <i>persistence</i> , but these do not impede communication. |

Extra resources

Lesson plans and resources for teachers

- Free resources for preparing learners for Cambridge English Qualifications
- Official preparation materials for the CEFR C1-level Cambridge English Qualifications

Webinar recordings about teaching writing and giving feedback

- Preparing your students online for Writing papers in Cambridge English Qualifications
- Different ways to give useful feedback on writing
- Writing at CEFR Level B2 and above

Test and Train

Available across all digital devices Test & Train delivers unique, easy-to-use practice through short, sharp workouts to maximise performance on exam day.

cambridge.org/testandtrain

Write & Improve

- For learners
- For teachers and classes

Write & Improve uses technology developed at the University of Cambridge to mark English writing accurately in seconds. Learners submit their work and Write & Improve will give it a mark and show them the parts of their text that may need improvement.

Learn more about research into second language learning

Cambridge University Press has published over 20 free and easy-to-read research papers about second language learning and teaching. Some papers which are especially relevant to this guide are:

- Giving feedback to language learners
- Motivational aspects of using near peers as role models
- Test anxiety in adult learners

Blank template to help teachers to assess learners' writing using the Writing Assessment Scale

A4 and US letter versions of this form are attached to this PDF, for you to print.

| C1 Advanced Writing paper – teacher assessment | |
|--|---|
| Task: | |
| Candidate: | |
| Content | Has the candidate answered the task? Have they done what they were asked to do? (Or have they missed anything from the question which they should have included? Have they written something irrelevant?) |
| Band: | Comments: |
| Communicative Achievement | Is the writing appropriate for the task? Has the candidate used a style which is appropriate for the specific communicative context? (Or have they written in a way that is not suitable – for example, using a very formal style in an email to a friend or ending an article with 'Love'?) |
| Band: | Comments: |
| Organisation | Is the writing put together well? Is it logical and ordered? (Or is it difficult for the reader to follow? Does it use elements of organisation which are not appropriate for the genre, like beginning an email with a title or starting every sentence in an article on a new line instead of using paragraphs?) |
| Band: | Comments: |
| Language | Is there a good range of vocabulary and grammar? Are these used accurately? (Or are there mistakes? Do these cause any confusion for the reader?) |
| Band: | Comments: |

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