

Prepare for exam success: B1 Preliminary for Schools self-access learning

Reading

Summary

- Build your food-related vocabulary.
- Find out more about how we read different types of texts.
- Develop and practise your reading skills.
- Reflect on your progress and make an action plan.

Get started

Test yourself!

- Take your notebook and go to your kitchen.
- What food items can you find? Do you know their names in English? Note down all the words that you know.
- Now, look up 5 new food words in the dictionary and add them to your list.



Tip! Learn the English words for the things around you.

In the B1 Preliminary for Schools exam, you write or speak about yourself or people and places you know. Building up a list of useful vocabulary related to *your* favourite food or the food typically eaten in *your* country helps you to answer questions on the topic of food.

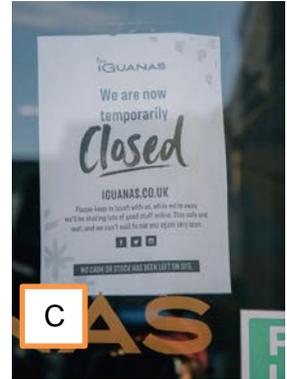
Start word lists for these other common topics:

- My home
- My neighbourhood
- My school

Use **Cambridge Dictionary +Plus** to create and save your word lists. Then use the quiz function to help you memorise your new words.

¹ Photo by Annie Spratt on Unsplash

Prepare 1: Build your vocabulary



Task 1: Match the words to the pictures then check your answers in the Answer Key.

1. an online **recipe**
2. a food **label**
3. a **closed** sign
4. food **magazines**
5. a **dessert** menu

Tip! Use a dictionary to find out more than the meaning of new words.

Listen and repeat the pronunciation.

Note the syllables and stress:

● ● ●
recipe

Meaning of **recipe** – Learner's Dictionary

recipe
noun

US UK /ˈresipi/

B1 [C]

a list of foods and a set of instructions telling you how to cook something:

• a **recipe for carrot cake**

Write down the part of speech. The dictionary will tell you if a noun is uncountable or a verb is irregular. Recipe is a countable noun, so we can say 'a recipe' or 'recipes'.

The example sentence often shows which prepositions, e.g. *for*, you can use with a word.

Task 2: Go to the **Cambridge Learner's Dictionary**.

² Photos by Jon Tyson, Lubo Minar, Spencer Davis, Annie Spratt, Christian Lambert on Unsplash

³ <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>

- Look up the words **label**, **closed**, **magazine**, **dessert** and **menu**.
- Write in your notebook:
 - 1) the part of speech
 - 2) the syllables and stress.
- Listen and repeat the pronunciation.
- Record your pronunciation, then listen and compare it with the dictionary pronunciation.
- Write a sentence for each word in your notebook. Practise saying the word in a sentence.

Prepare 2: Develop your reading skills

When we read well in our own language, we read different texts in different ways. For example, when we read a food label, we look for specific information such as the number of calories. We don't start at the beginning of the food label and read each word carefully to the end. We run our eyes over it quickly to find the information we need.⁴



Task 1: Look at the table below. Match the type of text to:

- 1) Why we read the text.
- 2) How we read the text.

Example: *A food label – 2) to check it doesn't contain nuts – b) quickly, I am looking for something specific.*

Type of text	1) Why we read the text	2) How we read the text
a menu	1. To check I have all the ingredients in my cupboard	a) Quickly, I just want to get a general idea about it.
a recipe	2. To check it doesn't contain nuts – I'm allergic to them.	b) Quickly, I am looking for something specific.
a food label	3. To see if they have any vegan dishes.	c) Carefully, I want to understand all the details.
a magazine article	4. To find out the opening times.	
a sign in a restaurant	5. To find out what it is about and if it seems interesting.	
	6. To follow the instructions.	
	7. It seems interesting and I want to find out more.	

Check your answers in the Answer Key.

⁴ Photo – author's own

Tip! Use different reading strategies in the B1 Preliminary for Schools exam.

In B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading, you read short texts e.g. signs or labels, and longer texts e.g. magazine articles.

Practise reading different kinds of texts in English to help you develop your reading skills. Here are two suggestions:

- British Council Learn English Teens: find articles, reviews and stories at Intermediate level **here**.
- Graded readers are novels and short stories adapted for language learners. Ask about them in your local bookshop or library or ask your teacher.

Sometimes you can find an answer quickly in the text by looking for key words from the question or words with a similar meaning. Sometimes you need to read more carefully to find the answer.

Task 2: Tick the reading strategies that might be useful when you are reading a text for the first time:

- Read the text very carefully from the beginning.
- Read the questions and underline key words.
- Look at the title of an article first and read the first sentence of each paragraph to get a general idea of what it is about.
- Look for key words, or words with similar meaning to help you find answers in the text.
- Say the words aloud to yourself as you read.

Check your answers in the Answer Key.



Take a short break if you need one.

Practice

Task 1: Read quickly for specific information.

- Look back at your notes on 'Get Started'. What ingredients do you have in your kitchen?
- Read the Recipe for Banana Pancakes quickly and make two lists like this in your notebook.

Ingredients I have	Ingredients I need
• • •	• • •

- Remember, you don't need to read every word. You are just looking for the ingredients you need. Set a timer for 30 seconds. Can you find the information this quickly?

Top tip! Try to guess the meaning of words you don't know from the context

For example, in the text below think about the meaning of:

- *self-raising flour* and *baking powder*

I don't know the exact meaning of these words but from the context I can guess:

- they are ingredients
- maybe dry ingredients
- self-raising flour must be a kind of flour
- if you know parts of the words e.g. 'self,' 'raise' and 'baking' this could help you guess the meaning too.

This is enough information to complete Task 1. Of course, if you want to make the recipe you should look these words up in a dictionary.

Banana Pancakes recipe



⁵

Ingredients

2 soft bananas	130ml milk
1 large egg	35g melted butter
130g self-raising flour	1 tsp* vanilla flavouring
2 tsp* baking powder	a small pinch of salt
35g sugar	
	*tsp = teaspoon

Method

First, mash up the bananas a little. Beat them together with the egg, milk, melted butter and vanilla.

In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking powder, sugar and salt.

Now, add the dry ingredients to the banana mixture. Stir together gently.

The final mixture should be quite thick with bits of banana in it.

Melt some butter in a frying pan on a medium heat.

Add a few tablespoons of the pancake mix to form small pancakes. You should be able to fit around three in a pan.

Fry until brown on both sides.

Serve with sliced banana, blueberries and honey.

Task 2: Read more carefully to understand the details.

⁵ Photo by [nikldn](#) on [Unsplash](#)

1. Read the statements below and underline the key words. The first statement has been done for you.

- Use cold butter for the recipe. T/F
- Mix the dry and wet ingredients separately before you combine them. T/F
- The pancake mix should be very smooth. T/F
- Fry the pancakes at a high temperature. T/F
- You can cook about three pancakes at the same time. T/F



6

2. Read the Banana Pancakes recipe again more carefully to decide if the statements are true or false. Time yourself doing this task, so you can measure your progress.

3. Underline the parts of the text where you found the answers.

Check your answers in the Answer Key.

⁷Task 3: Show the recipe to a family member who does the cooking in your house:

- Explain the recipe in your own language if they don't speak English.
- Ask them questions 1 and 2 below
- Write their answers in English in your notebook.

1) Would you like to make this recipe? Why / why not?

2) Do you ever cook from recipes? Why / why not?



Task 4: Now write the answers to these questions about you.

1) Do you know how to cook simple things like instant noodles or scrambled eggs? Or can you cook more complicated dishes?

2) What would your perfect meal be?

⁶ Photo by **nikldn** on **Unsplash**

⁷ Photo by **Hadis Malekie** on **Unsplash**

Reflect

Thinking about your strengths and weaknesses can help you to plan how to use your study time.

Choose the answer that is true for you.



- 1) How many new words were there in the text?
a) *none* b) *a few* c) *a lot*
- 2) How many answers did you get right?
a) *none* b) *a few* c) *most or all of them*
- 3) How long did Task 1 take you?
a) *30 seconds* b) *just under a minute* c) *longer than a minute*
- 4) How long did Task 2 take you?
a) *less than 3 minutes* b) *3 to 4 minutes* c) *more than 4 minutes*

What do you need to work on?

If you chose b) or c) for question 1: work on building your vocabulary.

If you chose a) or b) for question 2: work on building your vocabulary and using the strategies in the lesson to do exam practice tasks.

If you chose b) or c) for questions 3 and 4: work on improving your reading speed.

Action Plan

Look at your answers from the Reflect section to help you to make an Action Plan.

1. Copy this table in your notebook.

I need to work on...	I will...	By [date]
<i>Example:</i> <i>Building vocabulary</i>	<i>Start word lists for these common topics: my home, my neighbourhood, my school. Use Cambridge Dictionary + Plus to create and save my word lists.</i>	<i>By the end of this week.</i>

2. Now look at the list of ideas for further study below and **choose at least two** that would help you improve your reading skills and vocabulary. Add them to your Action Plan.

Ideas for Further Study

- Go to the **Cambridge Learner's Dictionary** and look up all the new words from this lesson. Write the meaning, part of speech and word stress in your notebook. Write an example sentence for each word.

- Go to **BBC Good Food** and find another recipe in English. Ask a parent if you can make it.
- Look at these three articles quickly to find out which one you are most interested in reading.
 - **12-year-old chef releases vegan cookbook**
 - **Eight things you'd never believe are made out of food**
 - **How does food impact the environment**
- Choose one of the above articles to read in more detail. Here are some ideas for tasks you could give yourself:
 - Think of a title for each paragraph.
 - Write a summary of each section.
 - Write down the three most interesting things you learned from the article.
 - Write five questions about the article for your study partner to answer.
- Do this **practice exercise** to learn more vocabulary about how food tastes.
- Download the B1 Preliminary for Schools Exam Lift App **here** to find useful games to build vocabulary and improve your reading speed.
- Download a B1 Preliminary for Schools exam paper **here** and time yourself doing a reading task. Remember to use the strategies outlined in **Prepare 2** Task 2.

Answer key

Prepare 1: Task 1

1. e 2. d 3. c 4. b 5. a

Prepare 2: Task 1

A menu – 3) b)

A recipe – 1) a), 2) b) and 6) c)

A food label – 2) a) and perhaps 6) c) if the label gives instructions on how to cook the product

A magazine article – 5) a) and 7) c)

A sign in a restaurant – 4) b)

Prepare 2: Task 2

Useful reading strategies	
a) Read the text very carefully from the beginning	x wrong – read quickly to get a general idea or look for key words from the question
b) Read the questions and underline key words	√ correct
c) Look at the title of an article first and read the first sentence of each paragraph to get a general idea of what it is about	√ correct
d) Look for key words, or words with similar meaning to help you find answers in the text	√ correct
e) Say the words aloud to yourself as you read	x wrong - if you want to read quickly and understand the meaning of the text it isn't a good strategy. It can be useful if you want to work on your pronunciation.

Practise: Task 2

- Use cold butter for the recipe. F ...*melted butter*...
- Mix the dry and wet ingredients separately before you combine them. T
In a separate bowl, mix the flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Now, add the dry ingredients to the banana mixture.
- The pancake mix should be very smooth. F *The final mixture should be quite thick with bits of banana in it.*
- Fry the pancakes at a high temperature. F ...*on a medium heat*...
- You can cook about three pancakes at the same time. T *You should be able to fit around three in a pan.*