

## B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading Part 4

### Description

This lesson plan has been created to help students prepare for B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading part 4. This lesson plan can be delivered face to face or online. The 'online options' column gives teachers ideas how the stages could be adapted for teaching online.

In this lesson learners are given opportunities to consider and discuss their understanding of the relationship between people, the natural world, and steps that can be taken to protect the environment. Learners explore, apply, and then reflect upon a series of strategies for successful completion of B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading part 4. These involve skim reading, intensive reading and recognising features of a cohesive text.

---

**Time required:** 60 minutes (can be extended or shortened as required)

---

**Materials required:**

- Adapted version of B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading part 4, opening paragraph
- B1 Preliminary for Schools sample task (see below)
- Online collaborative tool (googledoc/Padlet) to record key learning points from the lesson
- Prepared presentation/PowerPoint slides

---

**Aims:**

- To discuss environmental conservation and how it relates to their own lives
- To develop the skill of skimming a reading text for important information
- To recognise features of a cohesive text
- To develop strategies for the B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading part 4.

---

### Procedure

Lesson Stages	Online options
Welcome students	Ask learners to say hello to confirm they can see and hear you.
<b>Lead in</b> Show learners a selection of images related to environment / climate change, ask them to consider: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What do they all have in common? (the topic)</li> <li>2. Which could be the odd one out? Why?</li> </ol>	Learners in smaller classes may share ideas using their microphone and benefit from the speaking practice.

After giving individual thinking time, prompt learners to share and justify their answers. Note that there are no 'correct' answers to this activity. The objective is for learners to consider and discuss the relationships between the images.

*Suggested images:*



Allowing learners in larger classes to share ideas through the platform's chat function enables everyone to participate.

You could use any images relating to the topic.

Allow learners to individually consider the questions;

- What do schools currently do to protect the environment?
- What else could schools do to protect the environment?

Allocate pairs and instruct learners to list as many ideas as possible for question 2 (within a time limit).

Get feedback from pairs with fewest ideas first, then ask others to add any extras. Acknowledge particularly interesting, thoughtful and funny contributions in particular.

If possible, enable learners to share ideas in groups through online collaborative tools (for example, by creating googledocs for each group).

Otherwise, guide learners to individually share their ideas using the platform's chat function.

### Preparing to skim

Explain that learners will read a 250-word text about trees, written by Mark Rotheram. They must find out who Mark Rotheram is, and why he's writing about trees – but they only have 30 seconds to read it.

Before looking at the text, present learners with the following questions:

Will you need to...

- understand every detail of the text? (no)
- get a general understanding of the text? (yes)
- read every word of the text, slowly and carefully? (no)
- look at the title, the sentences at the start of paragraphs, and let your eyes move over the whole text, looking for frequently occurring words or themes? (yes)

What do we call this reading skill? (skimming)

Allow learners to consider the questions individually before discussing them in pairs.

Ask learners when they skim read in their first language.

If you are able to safely manage breakout rooms, then consider grouping learners. Otherwise pose the questions one by one and guide learners to individually share their ideas with the platform's chat function.

Share a link to a collaborative tool (for example a googledoc or Padlet), and nominate a learner to summarise the main features of skim reading on it. This forms a record of the lesson's key learning points.

### Skim reading

Display text for 30 seconds as learners skim.

Learners to share their answers – and where they were found, in pairs.

Teacher to elicit answers:

- Mark Rotheram is a 13-year-old pupil.
- Mark and his classmates planted trees as part of a green project at school suggested by his teacher.

This information was found in

- the title
- opening sentences of each paragraph
- frequent references to 'planting trees' throughout the text.

Clarify that when skimming, these are the areas where key information can often be found.

Either display the text for a limited time using your platform's screen-share function – or share it with them beforehand.

### Identifying features of a cohesive text

Explain that the text is from Reading part 4 of the B1 Preliminary for Schools exam. Elicit what learners know about this paper.

If necessary, clarify that in this task candidates have to complete a text. This demonstrates an understanding of how a well-structured, cohesive text is formed (which will also help their writing).

Focus learners on the following adapted version of the text:

**Planting trees**  
by Mark Rotheram, aged 13

This spring, our teacher suggested we should get involved in a green project and plant some trees around the school. Everyone thought it was a great idea,

Instruct learners to consider the following questions in pairs:

- What is the topic? (*conservation - tree planting*)
- How do people in the text feel about planting trees? (*positive, they think it's a good idea*)
- What do you expect them to do next? (*start planting trees - or something in support of that*)

Manage feedback. Ask learners to choose the best ending from the following options:

- a) however we started looking online for the best trees to buy.
- b) so we went to the cinema.
- c) so we started looking online for the best trees to buy.

Ask questions one by one, giving learners individual thinking time before prompting them to share answers with the platform's chat function. This allows everyone to actively participate.

Nominate a learner to summarise the features of cohesive texts on the online record of the lesson's key learning points.

<p>d) so we had started looking online for the best trees to buy.</p> <p>Ask pairs to share their answers, and reasons for rejecting the other options. Elicit answers from pairs. Clarify the following reasons for rejecting the incorrect options (<i>a, b and d</i>).</p> <p>Features of cohesive texts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Things mentioned in the text should be connected and referred to in a logical way (consistent use of pronouns and conjunctions). In the example 'however' is incorrectly used to connect two complimentary ideas.</li> <li>b) Topics should be continued or developed (unless the start of a new paragraph).</li> <li>d) The language used (grammar in this case) should be consistent with times/mood referred to in the text (use of past perfect suggests the students looked online for trees before making the decision to do so).</li> </ul> <p>Elicit from learners whether they skimmed the text, or read it in detail? (<i>they read it in detail, or 'intensively'</i>)</p> <p>Which parts of the text did they need to read intensively? (<i>the text before and after the gap - and the options</i>)</p>	
<p><b>Intensive reading and exam practice</b></p> <p>Instruct learners to use the same process to fill the next gap. Tell learners they will need to explain how they decided the other options were incorrect.</p> <p>After a few minutes, ask learners to raise their hand if there are any options they can confidently eliminate. Manage feedback, prompting learners to justify their answers, and asking other learners whether they agree or not (and why) before clarifying answers yourself.</p> <p>Repeat this process with the remaining sentences.</p>	<p>Learners could either complete this during the current 'live' lesson, or do it individually before the next lesson when answers are shared and feedback provided.</p>
<p><b>Exam strategies</b></p> <p>Guide learners to reflect upon Reading part 4 of the B1 Preliminary for Schools exam, by discussing the following questions:</p> <p>1. Should you quickly read through the main body of the text first? Why?</p> <p><i>Yes. Reading through the base text first gives candidates a sense of what it is about, how the ideas are developed, how many key characters there are, etc. Getting this initial feel for the text will help candidates be more aware of the text as a whole.</i></p>	<p>Ask these questions one at a time, giving learners time to think individually before sharing their ideas in a group chat box.</p> <p>As the teacher clarifies answers, nominate a learner to summarise the exam strategies on the online</p>

<p>2. What reading approach should you take for this task?</p> <p><i>After initially skimming the text, this task requires intensive reading for detail. Candidates will have to read the text both before and after each gap carefully before arriving at an answer.</i></p> <p>3. If the sentence you choose fits the information before the gap, then it's the correct answer.</p> <p><i>No. When you are selecting a sentence to fill a gap, make sure that you look carefully at the information before and after the gap.</i></p> <p>4. Once you've completed all the gaps, should you read through the whole text again?</p> <p><i>Yes. This is an important way of checking that the text flows coherently as a whole.</i></p> <p>5. Do you think this part of the test will take longer to complete than others?</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>record of the lesson's key learning points.</p>
<p><b>Extension task: personalising the topic</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How have you protected the environment in the past?</li> <li>2. What changes have you made (or been forced to make) that are good for the environment?</li> <li>3. If you could make, or change one law to protect the environment, what would it be?</li> </ol> <p>Allow learners to consider the questions individually. Allocate pairs and instruct learners to share ideas and agree upon one future change that would make.</p> <p>Monitor pairs carefully, noting any particularly interesting, thoughtful or funny contributions. Nominate learners to share their ideas.</p>	<p>If possible, enable learners to share ideas in groups through online collaborative tools (for example, by creating googledocs for each group).</p> <p>Otherwise, guide learners to individually share their ideas using the platform's chat function.</p>

**Materials****Questions 16 – 20**

Five sentences have been removed from the text below.

For each question, choose the correct answer.

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

### Planting trees

*by Mark Rotheram, aged 13*

This spring, our teacher suggested we should get involved in a green project and plant some trees around the school. Everyone thought it was a great idea, so we started looking online for the best trees to buy. **16**  If we wanted them to grow properly, they had to be the right type – but there were so many different ones available! So our teacher suggested that we should look for trees that grew naturally in our part of the world. **17**  They'd also be more suitable for the wildlife here.

Then we had to think about the best place for planting the trees. We learnt that trees are happiest where they have room to grow, with plenty of space for their branches. The trees might get damaged close to the school playgrounds, for example. **18**  Finally, we found a quiet corner close to the school garden – perfect!

Once we'd planted the trees, we knew we had to look after them carefully. We all took turns to check the leaves regularly and make sure they had no strange spots or marks on them. **19**  And we decided to check the following spring in case the leaves turned yellow too soon, as that could also mean the tree was sick.

We all knew that we wouldn't be at the school anymore by the time the trees grew tall, and that was a bit sad. But we'd planted the trees to benefit not only the environment, but also future students at the school. **20**  And that thought really cheered us up!

- A** So we tried to avoid areas where students were very active.
- B** However, our parents did offer to help with the digging!
- C** That could mean the tree had a disease.
- D** But we soon found that choosing trees was quite complicated.
- E** It can be quite good for young trees, though.
- F** We knew they'd get as much pleasure from them as we had.
- G** But at least we were doing it in the right season.
- H** That way, the trees would be used to local conditions.

Answer Key:

PART 4	KEY
16	D
17	H
18	A
19	C
20	F