



PAPER 1:

Reading and Writing Tasks

1 hour 10 mins



Reading

Part	Number of questions	Number of marks	Task type	What do candidates have to do?
1	5	5	Matching	Match five sentences to eight real-world notices.
2	5	5	3-option multiple choice	Read and identify appropriate vocabulary.
3	10	10	3-option multiple choice (five questions) AND matching (five questions)	Choose appropriate responses in verbal exchanges and continuous dialogue.
4	7	7	3-option multiple-choice questions or Right/Wrong/Doesn't say questions	Read one long or three short texts for detailed understanding and main idea(s).
5	8	8	3-option multiple-choice cloze	Read a factual text and choose the correct grammatical items to complete gaps.
6	5	5	Spelling	Identify and spell individual words from definitions.
7	10	10	Open cloze	Complete gaps in text using one word.
8	5	5	Information transfer	Read two short input texts and complete gaps in output text.
9	1	5	Guided writing	Write a short note, email or postcard of 25–35 words.
Total	56	60		

Writing

Preparing learners

Advice for teachers

Writers use the **grammatical syllabus** and the **vocabulary list** when preparing tasks so they are suitable for learners at A2 level, which is the level of *Cambridge English: Key*.

Whenever possible, the texts used in the Reading component are adapted from authentic reading texts. They may include:

- notices and signs (*Part 1*)
- packaging information (*Part 1*)
- notes, emails, cards, text messages, postcards (*Parts 1, 4, 5*)
- newspapers and magazines (*Parts 4, 5*)
- simplified encyclopaedias and other non-fiction books (*Parts 4, 5*)
- brochures and leaflets (*Parts 4, 5*)
- websites (*Parts 4, 5*).

Teachers may need to adapt texts to make them suitable for A2-level learners. The **vocabulary list** and the **language specifications** can help teachers to identify suitable language areas. The vocabulary list is updated annually.

Learners can get more information from the **Information for candidates guide**.

Teachers can find lesson plans and sample papers on the **Cambridge English website**.

The image displays a sample Cambridge English: Key reading paper. It is divided into two main sections: Part 1 and Part 4. Part 1, titled 'Questions 1 – 5', contains a list of five questions and a corresponding list of eight notices and signs (A-H). A pink arrow points from the word 'notice' to the 'MUSIC SHOP' notice (A). Another pink arrow points from the word 'sign' to the 'PIANO FOR SALE' notice (E). Part 4, titled 'Part 4', contains a reading passage about a family's journey. A pink arrow points from the word 'article' to the text of the article. The paper also includes a 'Notice' section at the top right and a 'Sign' section at the bottom right.

Tips for preparing learners for the Reading component

- ✓ Give learners a wide range of text types to read, both authentic and adapted. For example, notes and messages on social media websites, information leaflets, graded readers and articles.
- ✓ Help learners practise skimming and scanning both shorter and longer texts. Encourage learners to develop a habit of always skimming a text first to get a general understanding.
- ✓ Give learners practice reading texts with unfamiliar vocabulary, learning to ignore words which are not important for the task.
- ✓ Encourage your learners to read instructions carefully. Ask them to highlight key words, and use examples to help them understand what to do.
- ✓ Give learners practice doing timed exercises and exam tasks. They need to manage their own time in the Reading and Writing paper. Suggest that they spend about 40 minutes on the Reading component (leaving about 30 minutes for the Writing component).
- ✓ Help learners think about the different ways they read texts. For example, if they are reading an information leaflet then ask them to find some specific information. If they are reading a message, ask them to think how they would reply to it.
- ✓ Help your learners to work out the meaning of new words by using the rest of the text.



Completing the answer sheet (paper-based test only)

- All answers must go on an answer sheet.
- Candidates should use a pencil to complete the answer sheet.
- There is no additional time allowed for completing the answer sheet: candidates must do this within the 1 hour 10 minutes allowed for the test.
- For the Reading component, candidates shade a lozenge on the answer sheet to show their answer.
- For the Writing component, candidates write their answers on the correct part of the answer sheet.



Completing the computer-based test (computer-based test only)

- All answers are typed directly onto the computer.
- Candidates may take pens and pencils and a bottle of water into the exam room, but nothing else (including bags and anything electronic).
- Candidates should listen carefully to the instructions which the invigilator gives and follow the instructions on the computer screen.
- There are no examples in the Reading component, but candidates can access a help screen for information.
- There is a timer on the screen which tells candidates how much time they have left.
- Candidates may make notes on paper during the exam, for example, if they want to plan an answer for the Writing component. They must leave these notes on their desk at the end of the exam as these are collected by the invigilator.

Quick links to resources

Learners

cambridgeenglish.org/exams/key/preparation

- Information for candidates guide

Teachers

cambridgeenglish.org/exams/key/preparation

- Vocabulary list

cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/resources-for-teachers

- Free teaching resources
- Lesson plans

Language specifications: [Page 57](#)

Topics list: [Page 58](#)

Advice by task

Candidates should practise these exam strategies regularly in class.

See these tasks in full from page 20.

Reading Part 1

Questions 1 – 5

Which notice (A – H) says this (1 – 5)?

For questions 1 – 5, mark the correct letter A – H on your answer sheet.

Example:

- 0 We can sell you a ticket if you want to go to a concert.

Answer: 0

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- 1 If you want to learn to play this, call this number.
- 2 Buy these here and listen to them while you are travelling.
- 3 You do not have to pay to go to these concerts.
- 4 You will learn about the history of music in this class.
- 5 Your age is not important for these lessons.

A	MUSIC SHOP New and used CDs – great for the car!
B	Play the Guitar Classes for children and adults Beginners welcome
C	Pop group needs new singer Call Andy on 020 8746 9902
D	Live music here every Friday – get your free ticket today!
E	PIANO FOR SALE LOOKS AND SOUNDS BEAUTIFUL – ONLY £300
F	Piano lessons (only for people who can read music) Phone 020 4998 3664
G	Buy concert tickets here – Pop, Rock – even classical piano!
H	New Course! 1000 years of Music 12.30, Mondays and Wednesdays

THE TASK

- In this part, candidates have eight signs or notices. There are also five sentences. Candidates have to choose which sentence matches each text.

HOW TO APPROACH THE TASK

- Candidates should read each short text and decide what situation it would appear in.
- They can use the visual information (layout, location, etc.) to help identify the context.
- Candidates should read the five sentences.
- They should compare each sentence with each text before choosing an answer.

ASSESSMENT

- This part tests understanding of various kinds of short texts.

Reading Part 2

Questions 6 – 10

Read the sentences about going camping.
Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space.

For questions 6 – 10, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.



Example:

0 Adrian and Martin their school holiday last week.

A opened B joined C began

Answer: 0

A	B	C
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6 They to go camping for their holiday.

A decided B thought C felt

7 They wanted to somewhere near the sea.

A stand B put C stay

8 It three hours to drive to the campsite.

A had B took C got

9 They put their tent in a of the field.

A centre B corner C back

10 They some postcards to their friends.

A bought B chose C sent

THE TASK

- In this part, candidates read six sentences about the same topic or storyline, including a completed example sentence at the beginning. Candidates have to complete gaps in the remaining five of these sentences. There are three multiple-choice options for each gap.

HOW TO APPROACH THE TASK

- Candidates should skim all six sentences to find out the topic and general meaning. The overall context of the sentences may help them to find the correct answer.
- They need to work through the five questions, reading the whole sentence to choose the correct word to complete the gap.
- After choosing an answer, they should check the other two options and decide why they are wrong.
- Once all the gaps are completed, candidates should read all the sentences again to make sure they make sense.

ASSESSMENT

- This part tests understanding of vocabulary.

Reading Part 3

Questions 11 – 15

Complete the five conversations.
For questions 11 – 15, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.

Example:

0 
 A New York
 B School
 C Home
 Answer: 0 ☐ A ☒ B ☐ C

- 11 I'm sorry we don't have your size.
 A What a pity!
 B I hope so.
 C I'll take it.
- 12 How long are you going to stay in Bangkok?
 A For another three weeks.
 B For the last three weeks.
 C It took three weeks.
- 13 See you tomorrow.
 A That's all right.
 B I can't see.
 C Don't be late.
- 14 Can I leave early?
 A Before 4.30.
 B Yes, that's fine.
 C Not at all.
- 15 I don't like this programme.
 A I'll turn it on.
 B Let's turn it off then.
 C You didn't take it off.

Questions 16 – 20

Complete the conversation between two friends.
What does Anita say to Kim?

For questions 16 – 20, mark the correct letter A – H on your answer sheet.

Example:

Kim: What are you going to do at the weekend, Anita?
 Anita: 0 H
 Answer: 0 ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☒ H

- Kim: Well, I'm going to go to London. Would you like to come as well?
 Anita: 16
 Kim: Yes. I need to study on Sunday. Great! It'll be good to go together.
 Anita: 17
 Kim: First, I'd like to go shopping.
 Anita: 18
 Kim: Oh, I can help you choose them. Is there anything else you want to do?
 Anita: 19
 Kim: OK. There's a good one in Oxford Road. It always has the newest films.
 Anita: 20
 Kim: I'm not sure, but I'll phone and ask. I know we'll have a good day.
- A Me, too. I need some books for school and a pair of shoes.
 B Yes, I have to work on Saturday.
 C I'd love to. I suppose you want to go on Saturday?
 D Fine. Do we need to book tickets?
 E I have some money for a new jacket.
 F What do you want to do there?
 G Yes, I'd like to go to a cinema afterwards.
 H I don't know.

THE TASKS

- ▷ This part of the test has two tasks based on conversations.
- ▷ In the first task, candidates have to choose one of three options to complete five 2-line conversational exchanges.
- ▷ In the second task, they have to match options to complete a longer dialogue.

HOW TO APPROACH THE TASKS

- ▷ For the first task, candidates should read the first part of each conversation first. They should not look at the options yet.
- ▷ They need to consider what possible responses could be.
- ▷ Now they should look at the options.
- ▷ Candidates need to choose one response, then read the exchange again to check it makes sense.
- ▷ For the second task, candidates should read the whole long conversation first. They should not look at the options yet.
- ▷ They need to consider what possible responses could be.
- ▷ Now they should compare the responses and choose one response for each gap.
- ▷ Candidates should read the whole conversation again and check that it makes sense.

ASSESSMENT

- ▷ This part tests understanding of the language of the routine transactions of daily life.

Reading Part 4

Questions 21 – 27

Read the article about a sailing trip.

Are sentences 21 – 27 'Right' (A) or 'Wrong' (B)?

If there is not enough information to answer 'Right' (A) or 'Wrong' (B), choose 'Doesn't say' (C).

For questions 21 – 27, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.

Round the World

Jonathan and Claire Spencer both had very busy jobs and didn't have enough time to spend with their young children. They wanted to change this and, because their hobby was boats, they decided to sail round the world together.



It took six years to prepare everything for the trip. First, they bought a new boat. Then, both adults had to take advanced sailing lessons and learn all about the sea and the weather. Jonathan also did several courses in repairing engines and Claire spent an hour in a restaurant learning to cut up fish.

In October, they took a one-year break from their jobs and sailed away from England with their two children. The next year, in August, their long journey ended in Australia.

The boat was quite small, but Jonathan and Claire took a teacher for the children with them. None of them found the trip boring because there were three computers, many CDs, a television and a DVD player on the boat.

The family loved being at sea and seeing the stars in the sky. But, most of all, Jonathan and Claire enjoyed spending time with their children while they were still young.

Example:

0 Before their trip, Jonathan and Claire Spencer spent a lot of time working.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

Answer:

0	A	B	C
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21 The Spencers were soon ready to travel round the world.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

22 Jonathan learnt to do the work of a mechanic.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

23 Claire knew a lot about cooking before the trip started.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

24 The trip took longer than twelve months.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

25 When the trip ended, Jonathan and Claire decided to stay in Australia.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

26 There was a lot for the children to do on the boat.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

27 For Jonathan and Claire, the best part of the trip was being with their family.

A Right B Wrong C Doesn't say

THE TASK

- In this part, candidates have a longer text, for example, a simplified newspaper or magazine article. There are seven multiple-choice questions with three options, A, B and C.
- They may be 3-option multiple-choice comprehension questions.
- They may be Right/Wrong/Doesn't say questions.

HOW TO APPROACH THE TASK

- Candidates should skim the text to find out the topic and general meaning.
- They need to look at the questions and consider whether they are multiple-choice questions or Right/Wrong/Doesn't say questions.
- Next candidates should read the text more carefully.
- They need to look at each question, then compare each option with the text before choosing one.
- Candidates should check the choice of answer carefully with the text again.
- For multiple-choice questions, after choosing an answer, they should check the other two options and decide why they are wrong.
- For Right/Wrong/Doesn't say questions, candidates should check carefully whether the information required is actually in the text.

ASSESSMENT

- This part tests understanding of the main ideas and some details of longer texts.

Reading Part 5

Questions 28 – 35

Read the article about penguins.
Choose the best word (A, B or C) for each space.

For questions 28 – 35, mark A, B or C on your answer sheet.

PENGUINS

There (0) seventeen different types of penguins. They can be (28) forty centimetres to more than one metre tall. They all (29) in the south part of the world. In winter, they swim (30) long way to find warmer weather.

In spring, (31) penguins come together on the beaches of Antarctica. The female penguin has one or two eggs. She puts (32) eggs on the ground and sits there to keep (33) warm. But she doesn't sit all the time because penguins can move with one egg between their legs.

(34) the female penguin is sitting on the eggs, the male penguin brings her food. He also (35) this after the baby penguins are born.



Example:

0 A is B are C be

Answer:

0	A	B	C
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- | | | | |
|----|---------|--------|-----------|
| 28 | A from | B by | C between |
| 29 | A lives | B live | C lived |
| 30 | A one | B the | C a |
| 31 | A lots | B much | C many |
| 32 | A her | B hers | C she |
| 33 | A it | B them | C their |
| 34 | A When | B How | C Who |
| 35 | A does | B do | C doing |

THE TASK

- In this part, candidates read a short text with eight numbered spaces and an example, and answer 3-option multiple-choice questions.

HOW TO APPROACH THE TASK

- Candidates should skim the text to find out the topic and general meaning.
- They need to work through the eight questions, reading the whole sentence to choose the correct word to complete the gap.
- After choosing an answer, candidates should check the other two options and decide why they are wrong.
- Once all the gaps are completed, they should read the whole text again to make sure it makes sense.

ASSESSMENT

- This part tests understanding of grammatical items (for example, verb forms, determiners, pronouns) as well as structural relationships at the phrase, clause, sentence or paragraph level.