



How can I improve my reading?



A brief guide with tips for improving reading in English

Contents



1 • Introduction

This guide provides tips and general advice to help prepare for a Cambridge English Qualification such as A2 Key or A2 Key for Schools, B1 Preliminary or B1 Preliminary for Schools.

PARENTS

The guide contains some practical steps to help your child improve their reading in English and develop their reading skills and strategies in a reading test.

STUDENTS

The guide contains some practical steps to help you improve your reading in English and develop your reading skills and strategies in a reading test.

2 Reading in general





Read as much as possible.

Try to read in English as often as possible. A little bit every day or two helps a lot. Go back and re-read texts a second time and a third time. This helps to familiarise you with the use of English in real sentences and expressions.



B

Read for fun.

Reading is at its most enjoyable when the flow is uninterrupted, when you get absorbed in a good story or an interesting article, when time flies by. It's no different when you read in a another language. If a text is too difficult, if there are too many words or phrases you don't understand, then reading becomes difficult, it stops being fun. Where possible, don't just read for study and work purposes, read things that interest you too.





Keep on reading.

It's natural to stop in a text at a word or expression we don't understand and freeze. Unfamiliar words can disrupt the flow of reading and understanding. Don't stop! When you arrive at an unfamiliar word then skip it and keep reading. When you get to the end of the passage, read it a second time using the same technique. The context with the words you do understand should help you to unlock the general meaning of the whole text. You can revisit words you don't know later and look them up in a dictionary or ask someone.



Reading improves everything.

Lots of research has been carried out on reading in a foreign language and it clearly shows that reading practice doesn't just improve reading. It also helps you to get better at English in writing, speaking and listening as you become more familiar with words and how words are used in context.



Reading is infectious.

If your children see you reading, the chances are they are going to pick up the habit themselves, in any language!

3 · Reading in exams





Be prepared.

Know exactly what each type of question is asking you to do. Is it a multiple choice? Is it filling in the gaps of a text? How many words do you have to write? How much time do you have? It's a good idea to underline important words in any exam question to help you focus on the instructions.





Speed up.

In exam situations you will often need to read a text more quickly than before. Practise reading texts quickly: you can time yourself. For example, give yourself 3 minutes to read 300 words, then give yourself 2 minutes to read 300 words, then try in 1 minute. You can repeat this idea with the same text at first, but then try it with different texts as you get better at it.



Don't freeze.

Remember, in an exam you aren't allowed to ask someone or look up a new word.

If you don't know a word, and you can't guess a general meaning from the other words around it, then skip it, don't waste time!



Make predictions.

When a question gives you multiple answers to choose from, try to answer the question without looking at the answers first. Then look at the answers and check if one matches your prediction.



Practise.

There are lots of materials available to help you prepare for Cambridge English Qualifications such as A2 Key or B1 Preliminary. Get as much practice as you can with different question types from the reading paper. You can find information on our books from Cambridge University Press in www.cambridge.org and links to extra resources, sample tests, and more from Cambridge Assessment English in www.cambridgeenglish.org

PARENTS

It's really important that a student is familiar with the exam format.

You can help by assisting with homework, and checking they understand what they have to do. Make sure they have time to study and time to rest!

4 • A reading tip for the updated 2020 exams

New exam formats will start being used from January 2020 for A2 Key and A2 Key for Schools and B1 Preliminary and B1 Preliminary for Schools.
 The Reading and Writing paper in A2 Key and A2 Key for Schools will be shortened from 9 parts to 7 parts.

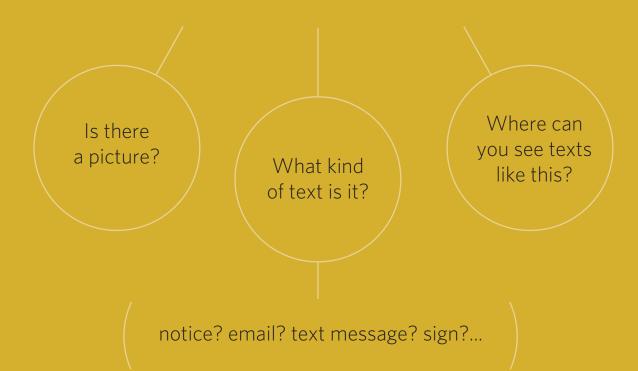
READING PART 1

- △ What is it?
 - Six short texts with multiple choice sentences.
- B What do you have to do?
 Read each text and choose the correct sentence: A, B or C.
- >> This tip is for the updated Reading and Writing Part 1. The activity in this tip also works with B1 Preliminary and B1 Preliminary for Schools Reading Part 1.

Follow these three, simple steps to help answer Reading Part 1



First look at the six texts quickly. Don't read the A,B,C sentences yet





Now, try to think of one sentence that gives the purpose of the text

What's the main purpose of the text?

What is the text telling you?



Finally, read the sentences A, B and C and choose the answer

Which sentence describes the text best?





For more tips and lessons on reading for exams visit practicemakesperfect.cambridge.org

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