



Cambridge Assessment
English

B2 FIRST DEVELOPING WRITING SKILLS

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Aims of the seminar

- Overview of B2 First writing tasks
- Features of the writing types
- Assessment criteria
- Preparation activities



B2 First writing tasks

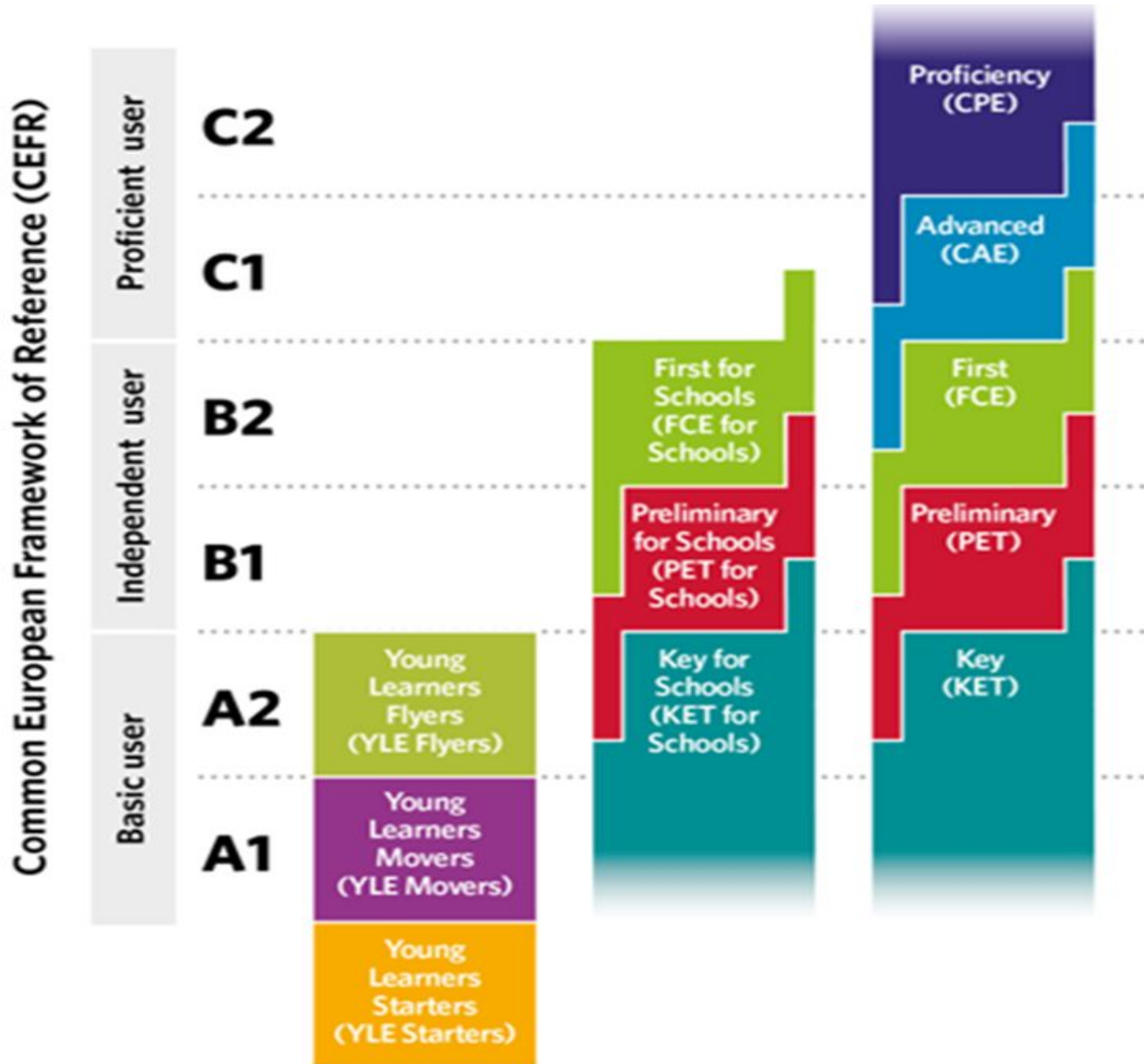
Overall timing: 1 hour 20 minutes

Two parts:

- Part 1: compulsory essay question
- Part 2: one task from a choice of four questions

Each answer should be between 140 and 190 words

Each part has equal marks (20)





Writing CAN Dos at B2

I can write clear, **d**_____ text on a wide range of subjects related to my **i**_____.

I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving **r**_____ in support of or against a particular point of view.

I can write letters highlighting the **p**_____ significance of events and experiences



Writing CAN Dos at B2

I can write clear, **detailed** text on a wide range of subjects related to my **interests**.

I can write an essay or report, passing on information or giving **reasons** in support of or against a particular point of view.

I can write letters highlighting the **personal** significance of events and experiences





Writing • Part 1

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in **140 – 190** words in an appropriate style **on the separate answer sheet**.

- 1 In your English class you have been talking about education. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay for homework.

Write your essay using **all** the notes and giving reasons for your point of view.



**Some parents teach their children at home rather than sending them to school.
Is this a good or a bad thing for the children?**

Notes

Write about:

1. having a parent as a teacher
2. making friends
3. (your own idea)



Writing part 1

1. What is the title of the essay?
2. Do candidates have to agree with the statement in the essay title?
3. Who is the essay for? What register should it be in?
4. How many content points do candidates need to include?
5. Are all the content points given in the task?
6. Do candidates need to give reasons for their opinions?



Writing part 1

1. What is the title of the essay?
2. Do candidates have to agree with the statement in the essay title? **NO**
3. Who is the essay for? What register should it be in? **NEUTRAL/ SEMI-FORMAL**
4. How many content points do candidates need to include? **THREE**
5. Are all the content points given in the task? **NO**
6. Do candidates need to give reasons for their opinions? **YES**



Essay check list

- ✓ I have a short introduction and a conclusion
- ✓ I have paragraphs (3-5)
- ✓ I have covered three points.
- ✓ I have given reasons to support my opinion
- ✓ My register is neutral/ semi-formal
- ✓ I have used linkers
- ✓ I have used vocabulary related to the topic
- ✓ I have used complex grammar



Writing part 2

- Article
- Email/letter
- Essay
- Story
- Review



Part 2 task

topic

context



You see this advert in an international fashion magazine:

Reviews Wanted

Teenage Clothes Shop

We are looking for reviews of a clothes shop for teenagers where you live. Your review should include information about what the shop looks like, the kind of clothes it sells and the shop assistants. Would you recommend this shop to other people your age?

The best reviews will be published in next month's magazine.



Write your **review**.

target reader

purpose



5 Answer the following question based on the title below.

Macbeth by William Shakespeare

Your English class has had a discussion about the story of *Macbeth*. Now your teacher has given you this essay for homework:

Which character do you find most interesting in *Macbeth* and why?

Write your **essay**.



Essay

is always written for a teacher.

It should answer the question given by addressing both content points and providing a new content point of the writer's own.

It should be well organised with an introduction and an appropriate conclusion and should be written in an appropriate register and tone.



Story

is usually written for an English language magazine or website for teenagers.

The main purpose is to engage the interest of the reader.

Effective answers have a clear storyline which links coherently to the first sentence, successfully uses the prompts provided and demonstrates a sound grasp of narrative tenses.



Review

is usually written for an English language magazine, newspaper or website.

The main purpose is to describe and express a personal opinion about something which the writer has experienced (e.g. film, holiday, product, website) and to give the reader a clear impression of what the item discussed is like.

Description and explanation are key functions for this task and will normally include a recommendation to the reader.



Article

is usually written for an English language magazine or website, and the reader is assumed to have similar interests to the writer.

The main purpose is to interest and engage the reader, so there should be some opinion or comment.



Letter

is written in response to the situation outlined in the question.

Cambridge English: First for Schools will require a response which is consistently appropriate in register and tone for the specified target reader.

Candidates can expect to write to, for example, an English-speaking friend or colleague, a college principal or a magazine editor.



Assessment criteria

Content

Communicative achievement

Organisation

Language



Assessment criteria

Content How well the candidate has fulfilled the task.

Communicative achievement How appropriate the writing is for the task and whether the candidate has used the appropriate register.

Organisation The way the candidate puts together the piece of writing; is it logical and ordered? Are the ideas linked together well?

Language Focuses on vocabulary and grammar, including range and how accurate it is.



B2 sample task (part 2, an email)

Write an answer to one of the questions 2 – 4 in this part. Write your answer in 140 – 190 words in an appropriate style on the separate answer sheet. Put the question number in the box at the top of the answer sheet.

- 4 You have received this email from your English-speaking friend David.

From: David

Subject: touring holiday

Some college friends of mine are visiting your area soon for a week's touring holiday. They would like to travel around and learn about your local area and its history.

Can you tell me about some of the places they could visit? What's the best way to travel around – car, bike or coach?

Thanks,

David

Write your email.



Examiner's comments

Communicative Achievement:

Informal, friendly, enthusiastic but polite tone, appropriate for task. Email conventions used appropriately, and standard phrases for emailing a friend. Straightforward ideas are communicated.

Organisation:

Well organised and coherent, using input email well to structure response. A variety of linking words and cohesive devices (e.g. substitution and referencing) are used across sentences to connect simple ideas.

Language:

A range of everyday vocabulary is used, relevant to the topic. A range of simple and some complex grammatical forms are used with a good degree of control, e.g. modals, present and past tenses. There are some errors and some spelling mistakes but these do not impede communication.



B2 sample script – marks



- Content: all relevant to task (5)
- Communicative Achievement: B2 (3)
- Organisation: B2+ (4)
- Language: B2 (3)



Activity 1

1. Think of a subject you would like to talk about. Write it on a piece of paper. E.g. shopping
2. In groups of 4-5 pass your paper to the person sitting on your right. When you receive your partner's papers you should write down a question you would like to be answered about the subject.
3. Finally, the paper with 3 questions on it gets back to the original person.
4. The person has to write a text which answers all the questions organized in a logical way.



Activity 2

Kill the text

People see adverts for junk food such as burgers and chocolate bars on their TV screens every day. Although there are problems with people eating too much junk food, banning adverts for it is not necessarily the answer.

In turns replace one/two words from the initial text with it's synonyms, continue till you get a completely re-written text with the same idea.



Pick a number of emojis and send them to your partner, ask them to write a story based on the pictures.



Questions?



Thank you!

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