



Does exam practice make perfect?  
Depends on the practice

appi 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual  
Conference, 2018

Stuart Vinnie

Exam practice - what are our concerns?

[redacted] OF  
EXAM PRACTICE  
AND GENERAL  
ENGLISH

MOTIVATION OF  
LEARNERS

MOTIVATION OF  
[redacted]

[redacted] OF SKILLS  
AND LANGUAGE  
WORK

CLASSROOM  
[redacted]  
ACTIVITIES

TIME

EXAM [redacted]

[redacted]  
MATERIALS

OTHER ..?

INTEGRATION OF  
EXAM PRACTICE  
AND GENERAL  
ENGLISH

MOTIVATION OF  
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TIME

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MATERIALS

OTHER ..?

# Example 1

# PART 1 Multiple-choice cloze task focus:

<p><i>Test 5</i></p> <p><b>READING AND USE OF ENGLISH</b> (1 hour 15 minutes)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Part 1</b></p> <p>For questions 1–8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).</p> <p>Mark your answers <b>on the separate answer sheet</b>.</p> <p><b>Example:</b></p> <p>0 A closed    B contained    C surrounded    D shut</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"><tr><td>0</td><td>A</td><td>B</td><td>C</td><td>D</td></tr><tr><td></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td><td><input type="checkbox"/></td></tr></table> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lighting a town</b></p> <p>The Norwegian town of Rjukan lies along the floor of a narrow valley, (0) ..... by sheer mountains. Because of its location, the town, with its 3,400 (1) ....., has in the past lived in shadow for half the year. During the day, from late September to mid-March, the town gets no direct natural sunlight at all. Its residents all agreed this (2) ..... that the town was incredibly depressing during the winter months.</p> <p>However, that all changed in 2013 with the (3) ..... of a system of mirrors whose design Martin Anderson, an artist, had first (4) ..... up with some 12 years earlier. With financial (5) ..... from the local government and from several prominent business people, Anderson's idea became a (6) ..... Today, high on the mountain opposite the town, (7) ..... three large solar-powered, computer-controlled mirrors (8) ..... the precise movement of the sun across the winter sky, reflecting its rays onto the town's market square and flooding it in bright sunlight.</p>	0	A	B	C	D		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><i>Reading and Use of English</i></p> <p>1 A totals    B populations    C numbers    D inhabitants</p> <p>2 A meant    B explained    C showed    D made</p> <p>3 A ending    B conclusion    C completion    D result</p> <p>4 A brought    B come    C caught    D got</p> <p>5 A budget    B cost    C expense    D investment</p> <p>6 A reality    B truth    C principle    D practicality</p> <p>7 A find    B sit    C stay    D hold</p> <p>8 A passing    B following    C proceeding    D continuing</p>
0	A	B	C	D							
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>							

# PART 1 Multiple-choice cloze task focus:

Test 5

READING AND USE OF ENGLISH (1 hour 15 minutes)

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3 A ending B conclusion C completion D result

4 A brought B come C caught D got

5 A budget B cost C expense D investment

6 A reality B truth C principle D practicality

7 A find B sit C stay

8 A passing B following

1. What does the learner have to do in this task?

2. What do you think this is actually testing?

## PART 1 Multiple-choice cloze task focus:

Part 1 consists of a text in which there are **eight gaps (plus one gap as an example)**. Candidates have to choose which one of the **four words or phrases in (each) set** fills the gap correctly. Candidates are required to draw on their **lexical knowledge and understanding of the text** in order to fill the gaps. Some questions test at a phrasal level, such as **collocations and set phrases**. Other questions test **meaning at sentence level or beyond**, with more processing of the text required. A lexicogrammatical element may be involved, such as when candidates have to choose the option which fits correctly with a following **preposition or verb form**.

**Source:** Cambridge English first for Schools Handbook for Teachers, 2016

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1. What does the learner have to do in this task?

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3. Ideas for scaffolding?

# A

- late
- guaranteed
- small
- showing off

# B

- previous
- authorised
- rapid
- working out

# C

- closing
- enabled
- narrow
- setting down

# D

- final
- caused
- short
- turning up

## PART 1 Multiple-choice cloze task focus:

Dr Joseph Bell was a distinguished Scottish doctor and professor at Edinburgh University in the (1) ..... nineteenth century. He had remarkable powers of observation and deduction. This (2) ..... him to accumulate useful information about patients in a very (3) ..... space of time. He was very good at (4) ..... where his patients were from by identifying small differences in their accents. He could also ...

## PART 1 Multiple-choice cloze task focus:

Dr Joseph Bell was a distinguished Scottish doctor and professor at Edinburgh University in the (A) **late** nineteenth century. He had remarkable powers of observation and deduction. This (C) **enabled** him to accumulate useful information about patients in a very (D) **short** space of time. He was very good at (B) **working out** where his patients were from by identifying small differences in their accents. He could also ...



**A** totals

**A** meant

**A** ending

**A** brought

**A** budget

**A** reality

**A** find

**A** passing

**B** populations

**B** explained

**B** conclusion

**B** come

**B** cost

**B** truth

**B** sit

**B** following

**C** numbers

**C** showed

**C** completion

**C** caught

**C** expense

**C** principle

**C** stay

**C** proceed

**D** inhabitants

**D** made

**D** result

**D** got

**D** investment

**D** practicality

**D** hold

**D** continuing



Complete the sentences with a word from the box.

played listened watched painted ~~walked~~ cleaned



1 I .....walked..... to the park yesterday morning.

2 Meg ..... the piano yesterday morning.



3 I ..... a picture yesterday afternoon.

4 Meg ..... her bike yesterday afternoon.



5 Meg and her mum ..... to some music on Sunday.



6 Meg and her mum ..... TV on Monday.



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## Example 2

# Listening: PART 1 Multiple choice

**LISTENING** (approximately 40 minutes)

**Part 1**

You will hear people talking in eight different situations.

For questions 1–8, choose the best answer (A, B or C).

1 You hear two people talking about some music they're listening to.

What does the man say about the song?

- A It cheers him up.
- B It reminds him of his family.
- C It inspired him to take up a musical instrument.

2 You hear part of a radio programme in which a teacher is talking about her own education.

Why did she become a teacher?

- A She enjoyed her own time at school very much.
- B She was encouraged to do so by colleagues.
- C She wanted others to have the same opportunities as her.

3 You hear a woman telling a friend about a new job she has.

What problem does she have with the job?

- A being asked to do tasks she's not suited for
- B being too busy at certain times of day
- C being disrespected by some customers

4 You hear two students talking about an architecture course.

What do they agree about?

- A There is too much work on the course.
- B Their fellow students are creative people.
- C The course is taught in an interesting way.

5 You hear two students talking about the chemistry laboratories at their college.

What does the woman say about the laboratories?

- A The equipment in them should be updated.
- B They are not large enough.
- C They need redecorating.

6 You hear a woman talking about a place she used to visit as a child.

What point is she making?

- A She might be disappointed if she returned there.
- B She prefers more sophisticated holidays now.
- C The place appeals more to children than adults.

7 You hear a runner telling his friend about a sports injury he has.

What did his doctor advise?

- A keep going with some training
- B introduce other sports very gradually
- C start running very slowly

8 You hear a woman talking about her favourite radio programme.

What does she say about the stories in the programme?

- A The creative element in them is what makes them work.
- B They tend to vary in how interesting they are.
- C They contain messages we can all learn from.

# Listening: PART 1 Multiple choice

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- A
  - B
  - C
1. What does the learner have to do in this task?
2. What do you think this is actually testing?

## Listening: PART 1 Multiple choice

This part tests candidates' ability to listen for gist, detail, function, purpose, attitude, opinion, genre, agreement, etc. in a series of unrelated short texts. The eight questions in this part of the paper are each preceded by a context sentence which is read out on the recording. The candidates then have time to read each question before hearing the recording twice.

**Source:** Cambridge English first for Schools Handbook for Teachers, 2016

## Listening: PART 1 Multiple choice

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1. What does the learner have to do in this task?
2. What do you think this is actually testing?
3. Ideas for scaffolding?

Source: Cambridge English first for Schools Handbook for Teachers, 2010

- 8 You overhear two friends talking about their holidays. How does the boy feel about his holiday?
- A surprised about how much he enjoyed his holiday
  - B disappointed that the family's plans had to change
  - C pleased that he was able to learn a new skill

## Dialogue building ...

GIRL:

BOY:

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GIRL: How was your holiday, Ben? You went to New York, didn't you?

BOY:

GIRL:

BOY:

GIRL:

BOY:

Question 8

*Eight. You overhear two friends talking about their holidays.*

[pause]

tone

Girl: How was your holiday, Ben? You went to New York, didn't you?

Boy: Actually, my dad decided against that in the end. We went to the mountains instead. My parents said they wanted some fresh air and a more active holiday.

Girl: Well, that sounds good too.

Boy: Mm. I was quite disappointed at first but I came round to it a bit when they said I could have some skiing lessons if I wanted. And now I'm so glad we went. I can't wait to go again.

Girl: Oh, I didn't know you could ski.

Boy: I couldn't. But I can now. My instructor was great.

[pause]

*That is the end of Part One.*

*Now turn to Part Two.*

[pause]



**7** You hear two friends talking about a news story about a baby monkey.  
What do they agree about?

Man: Did you see that news item about that really unusual monkey?

Woman: You mean the baby one born in the French zoo? It was the cutest thing I've ever seen! I wish I could have seen it.

Man: I don't know where they left it.

Woman: It is a shame.

Man: Yes, but it was a good thing.

Woman: I'm not so sure.

Man: It's not the same.

[pause]

tone

[The recording is repeated.]

[pause]

**7** You hear two friends talking about a news story about a baby monkey.  
What do they agree about?

**A** that the monkey is in the best environment for it

**B** that the monkey deserves better treatment

**C** that it is sad this species of monkey is endangered



**E** Listen and tick the box.  
23

**1** Which job does Harry want to do one day?



A



B



C

**2** What is Clare reading about now?



A



B



C

**3** When will the family go on holiday?



A



B



C

# Does exam practice make perfect? Depends on the practice



- Practice makes perfect - about 10,000+ hours - Malcom Gladwell (*Outliers*: 2008, Back Bay Books)
- ~~Repetitive skill and drill practice,~~ *Deliberate* practice: quality not quantity - K. Anders Ericsson (*Peak: Secrets from the New Science of Expertise* 2017 Eamon Dolan/Mariner Books)

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SHARE YOUR TIP →

Top Tips **♥ Your Favourites**

**Learning objective**

Speaking YLE Starters Helping the ss get familiar with the Speaking Test. Maria Sánchez @ ELC Don Benito

**Tip**

Print out a poster size version of the speaking test and place it on a magnetic board. Cut out some images from flashcards or magazines and laminate them. Stick a magnetic strip at the back of the poster and of each item and practise with the ss by giving instructions to place items on dif. places.

maria sanchez, The English Learning Center

**Learning objective**

Learning Objective: Upgrading the output language skills: Writing (a story), Speaking (telling a story) Paper: PET Writing Part 2 or FCE Writing Part 2

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## Lesson Plans

This year we are celebrating 5 years of official exam preparation materials! As a thank you to all of you, our valued teachers, we are developing free lesson plans for you to use in your classes. Each one includes part of an official practice test and shows how you can exploit the material in class to maximum effect.

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Get some more inspiration...  
TEACHER TIPS →

Cambridge English: First for Schools  
*First for Schools Listening Lesson Plan 2*

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH Language Assessment Part of the University of Cambridge

### Cambridge English

Cambridge English: First for Schools

**Lesson Plan: Listening**

This lesson plan accompanies *Cambridge English: First for Schools 2* Listening Test 8 Part 3, Questions 19-23.

This lesson is suitable for students at the beginning or in the middle of their *Cambridge English: First for Schools* course.

**Lesson Goals**

- To familiarize students with this part of the Listening Paper
- To introduce and put into practice strategies to help students to complete this part of the exam with more confidence
- To encourage students to think logically before, during and after the listening task

Activity (see brackets for resources required)	Time needed	Interaction
Warmer	5-10 mins	
Generating interest in the topic	2 mins	T-S
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write the following questions on the board:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What hobbies or interests do you enjoy?</li> <li>Are you a member of a club or team?</li> <li>Can you sing/dance/play a musical instrument?</li> <li>Do you have a special talent?</li> <li>Have you ever participated in a sports event, musical, dance or an entertainment event?</li> <li>Have you been to a sports concert, or to play, musical or similar? Did you enjoy it?</li> <li>Do you like speaking/singing in public?</li> <li>Would you like to be part of a dramagroup?</li> </ul> </li> <li>Students discuss the questions</li> </ul>	8 mins	Ss-Ss
	20-25 mins	

# Top tips ..?

1

Tip

*I project any of the use of English exercises on the whiteboard and give all my students a mini-whiteboard. The students then write what they think is the answer to the question on the mini-whiteboard and all show their answers at the same time. We then check the answer and proceed to the next.*

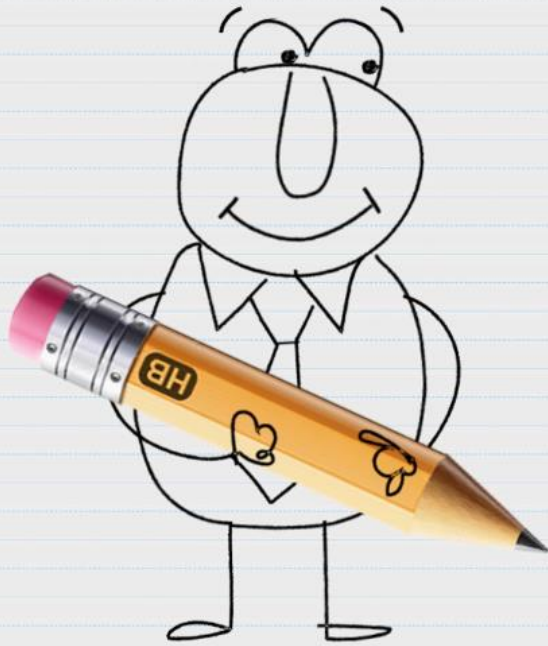
# Top tips ..?

2

## Tip

*Make copies of any part 3 from any PET exam book and crumple them up to make paper balls, like in the pic. Ask your SS to pick up a paper ball, write down the words they get to see and compare their answers with a neighbour. Ask them to make guesses about what the text could be about.*

# Practice Makes Perfect



Teacher Tips

By teachers,  
for teachers



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