

Reading First: Eight practice tests for the Cambridge B2 First

Cambridge B2 First | Parts 5–7

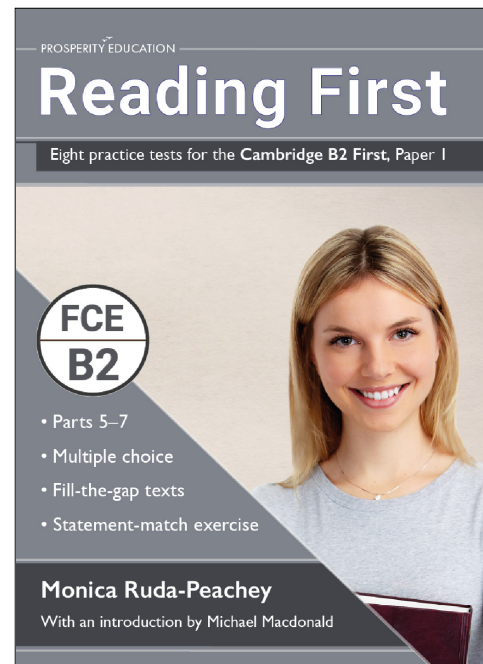
8 exam-styled practice tests

24 texts | 184 individual assessments

Answers included

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The Reading and Use of English paper, Parts 1–7, of the Cambridge B2 First exam is worth 40% of the total marks available, which is why candidates' competence in this section is all-important for overall success. Parts 5–7 test ability in reading for detail, purpose, opinion, tone, emotion and attitude, and repeated practice of the assessment format is key to achieving a passing grade.

This edition of sample tests has been written to closely replicate the Cambridge exam experience, and has undergone comprehensive review.

Write-in answer sheets, answer keys and a markscheme complete this large bank of high-quality practice material for students preparing for the Cambridge B2 First (FCE).

About the author

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You are going to read an extract from a novel in which a woman called Jade talks about a wedding. For questions 31–36, read the text and decide which answer fits best according to the text. In the separate answer sheet, mark the appropriate answer (A, B, C or D).

All the guests were going to be there soon, but Jade hadn't finished yet. She had been preparing this wedding for a while and wanted everything to be perfect. Although it wasn't her wedding, she felt just as nervous as a bride – it was her first project as a wedding planner. She could hardly contain her excitement in spite of everyone's doubt. Her family members had never believed that she would actually leave her stable 9–5 job to pursue such a financially unpredictable career until she announced it.

It was a sunny Sunday afternoon at her parents' house. Jade knew they would have all been there at that time. She and her brothers were chatting while watching TV; their mum and dad were playing cards, enjoying each other's company. Suddenly, Jade stood up and shyly but proudly shared her news: she had resigned from her well-paid job as a personal assistant to dedicate herself to becoming a wedding planner.

The whole family stood still. They all just sat there, staring at her and shaking their heads in disapproval. Her mother had a worried look in her eyes, while her father was clearly disappointed. Jade's brothers broke the silence by asking questions: *Do you know what you are doing? How are you going to find clients? Why do you think this is a good idea?* Their reaction didn't come as a surprise to Jade. Her family had never been supportive of her dreams and ambitions. They thought that work was all she cared about, but they wished she had a conventional lifestyle. She was 37 years old and not only did she have no intention of getting married, but she also had no wish to become a mother. Jade had rejected all the goals that her parents had set for her.

Line 23 But at that point, their opinion didn't matter. After all, they had never pushed themselves out of their comfort zones. None of them had ever tried anything new in their life because they had always played it safe. Her parents' disappointment, her brother's disbelief, her ex-employer's doubts were a distant memory. She knew what she wanted and she was going to achieve it. It wasn't going to be easy, and there were going to be ups and downs, but she was confident that her business would be a success. In that moment, all that mattered was the outcome of that wedding that Jade had been planning – together with the bride and the groom – for months. The flowers had already been arranged on the tables and all around the room by the florist, the delicious food was ready to be served by waiters wearing impeccable uniforms, and musicians, who were tuning their instruments, were ready to entertain the guests.

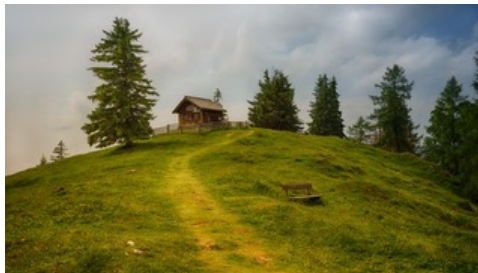
Only the cake was missing... The wedding cake hadn't been delivered yet! Jade immediately called the bakery to find out what had happened. There had been an accident on the road that slowed down the traffic – the cake was on its way. While she was on the phone, the delivery van arrived at the venue. There it was! The cake had finally arrived and Jade heaved a sigh of relief. She couldn't even begin to imagine what would have happened if the cake hadn't turned up. Without a doubt, the bride would have been in tears, the groom would have been extremely angry and Jade's career would have ended in a flash.

Everything was finally ready. As the musicians started to play their cheerful music, the guests began to arrive. Everyone was talking, but the atmosphere was tense. Some seemed shocked, some seemed upset, in contrast with the music. Something must have happened at the ceremony and she hadn't been informed. Jade had desperately tried to find the bride and groom, but there was no sign of either of them. There was the mother of the bride, crying on her husband's shoulder. There was the father of the groom shouting at his one and only son. Something must have gone terribly wrong. Selfishly, Jade thought about the effect that might have had on her business. Would they have recommended her services to other clients? Luckily, they had already settled the payment, so she didn't need to worry about the money.

- 31** In the first paragraph, why is Jade nervous?
- A** Because she is the bride at this wedding.
 - B** Because she has left her job.
 - C** Because she is starting her own business.
 - D** Because her family doesn't support her financially.
- 32** In paragraph 2, Jade makes her announcement on a Sunday afternoon because:
- A** her family members hardly ever see each other.
 - B** her family members are all together.
 - C** her brothers are in a good mood.
 - D** her mum and dad aren't busy.
- 33** In the third paragraph, Jade's family doesn't support her dreams because they:
- A** want Jade to have a traditional lifestyle.
 - B** want Jade to spend more time with them.
 - C** think Jade works too much.
 - D** believe Jade is too ambitious.
- 34** In line 23, 'played it safe' means:
- A** they prefer playing cards instead of going to work.
 - B** they want to live in a comfortable area.
 - C** they are always careful, avoiding risks.
 - D** they don't want to leave a safe environment.
- 35** In the fifth paragraph, why does Jade call the bakery?
- A** To defend her reputation.
 - B** To reassure the bride and the groom.
 - C** To find out who was involved in the accident.
 - D** To assess the location of the cake.
- 36** In paragraph 6, as they arrive, the guests look:
- A** as cheerful as the music.
 - B** tired from the long ceremony.
 - C** ready to eat the delicious food.
 - D** unhappy and confused.

You are going to read a newspaper article in which the writer talks about the lives of hermits. Six sentences have been removed. For questions 37–42, read the text and choose from options A–G the sentence that fits each gap. There is one extra sentence that you do not need to use.

Who Needs Modern Society?



A quick look into the lives of those choosing to avoid human connection

In this day and age, it is not uncommon for people to feel overwhelmed by their everyday life. [37] On the other hand, there is a small number of people, called hermits, who decide to abandon modern society completely, separating themselves from the rest of the world. However, when we think of a hermit, we often envisage a wise old man living in a cave, but that is hardly ever the case. The truth is that no two hermits are alike.

There are various reasons why some individuals choose this unconventional lifestyle. Often, technology, stress and work overload can be factors that contribute to becoming a recluse. [38] Another difference can be noticed regarding their background, which is not necessarily a religious one. Modern hermits come from all walks of life. Just like any of us, most of them had a conventional lifestyle – some used to be teachers, social workers, business people.

The main aspect that differentiates one hermit from another is the level of isolation they choose to embrace. While some of these individuals live in complete isolation, others meet family and friends occasionally to maintain some sort of human connection. Some hermits keep up to date with the world around them by surfing the internet and making contact with others by communicating on social platforms.

Regardless of the type and level of isolation, basic human needs have to be met to ensure survival. [39] Some of those who reject every aspect of modern society often choose to build their own

house, usually a basic shelter made of wood far from urban areas. Others live in caravans or in small rustic cottages. When it comes to feeding themselves, most hermits grow their own vegetables and keep chickens for eggs, while some forage berries and mushrooms that grow in the wild.

Although they lead a very simple life, being a hermit can be financially challenging. [40] Modern hermits are very resourceful in finding creative ways to pay for their household expenses. Some choose to work from home, providing proof-reading and editorial services, engaging in craft work or web design. The internet offers plenty of work opportunities that don't require leaving the house. Another way to self-support a reclusive lifestyle is by taking on casual or part-time employment away from home that occupies only a small proportion of their time. [41] In fact, it is quite common to take advantage of savings or state pensions to finance a reclusive lifestyle.

Avoiding face-to-face human connection for long periods of time might seem challenging to us, but it brings some advantages. [42] In addition, it provides opportunities for physical and mental relaxation, away from people's negativity.

All in all, becoming a recluse is a choice that requires hard work and dedication. While spending some time alone going on a spiritual or relaxing retreat might be appealing for many, long periods of isolation are often difficult to endure for most of us.

- A** Many modern hermits use funds and assets acquired before entering a life of solitude for the purpose of supporting it.

- B** However, religious, spiritual and moral beliefs are frequently the cause of this unusual choice.

- C** Solitude plays a key role in the life of a hermit, who might feel lonely sometimes.

- D** Hermits have to work hard to get what we often take for granted, such as a roof over our heads and food on our tables.

- E** First of all, it is believed that being alone increases creativity and sharpens the ability to focus.

- F** To escape this fast-paced living, most of us can have a relaxing break in the countryside, go on holiday, or take up a hobby to reduce our stress levels.

- G** The biggest obstacle to an isolated life is figuring out how to sustain it.

You are going to read four people's accounts of recent restaurant experiences. For questions 43–52, read the text below and, in the separate answer sheet, choose the correct paragraph (A–D).

The 'pleasure' of eating out

Dining out should be an enjoyable experience, not a stressful one!

- A** As soon as we walked through the doors of this newly decorated restaurant, I knew I had picked the wrong place for a romantic evening with my girlfriend. Both floors of the restaurant were incredibly busy, as there were several birthday parties going on. The noise levels were so high that we could hardly hear each other speak. Extra tables were added to make room for more customers and I had to move my chair every time a waiter needed to reach another table! A busy restaurant is usually a sign of good food. Unfortunately, this wasn't the case. Our meal wasn't bad, but it definitely wasn't memorable either. The food was very basic and the portions were quite small. We also waited 20 minutes for our bill, but I finally had a nice surprise – it was very cheap, and that's why this restaurant is so popular.
- B** Don't be fooled by its elegant furniture and glamorous design – service in this restaurant is a true disappointment. It was a special event for me and my family, so I wanted everything to be perfect. I had already paid a deposit to ensure our evening would run smoothly. Having booked our table weeks in advance, I was confident that it would be ready on our arrival. Instead, we had to wait almost an hour to be seated. The waitress brought us our drinks, but at that point we were really hungry and we quickly placed our food order. We were looking forward to our dinner, which was very good, but again, we had to wait about 45 minutes to be served. I won't be eating there again, even though the food is nice.
- C** My best friend knows about my passion for exotic food and took me for a meal at this glorious restaurant. Its neon green and yellow sign above the door wasn't exactly appealing, giving it a cheap and cheerful kind of look, but I didn't let it stop me and I went in. Well, I'm so glad I did! The atmosphere was friendly and relaxed. The waiting staff wore their traditional oriental costumes, instead of boring uniforms. Our waiter took the time to introduce himself and tell us about the history of the restaurant. He had to translate the menu for us, as it was written in a language we couldn't read. You couldn't fault the service, nor the quality of the food. Although some western options were available, I wanted to try their most traditional cuisine. Each dish was beautifully presented and cooked to the highest standards. This was a fantastic all-round dining experience that I won't forget!
- D** It was my mum's 60th birthday and there were 25 people at our table. The service was good and the food was lovely. We were all having a great time! I was going to settle the bill at the end of our meal. To make the payment more manageable, I had already paid a large deposit to the manager when I booked our table. As planned, when we were ready to leave, I wanted to pay. Checking the bill, I noticed that it was much more expensive than expected. I explained about the deposit we had already paid, but the staff knew nothing about it. I asked to speak to the manager, but I was told he had resigned and had left just that week. It became clear to me that the manager had run away with my deposit money. The assistant manager, however, was very sympathetic towards my situation. We didn't have to pay for the missing sum in the end.

Which paragraph mentions a restaurant that:

is not suitable for a quiet and private dinner?

| | |
|----|--|
| 43 | |
|----|--|

gives a negative first impression from the outside?

| | |
|----|--|
| 44 | |
|----|--|

wasn't prepared for the customers?

| | |
|----|--|
| 45 | |
|----|--|

had a very slow service?

| | |
|----|--|
| 46 | |
|----|--|

was uncomfortable and overcrowded?

| | |
|----|--|
| 47 | |
|----|--|

was let down by a former member of staff?

| | |
|----|--|
| 48 | |
|----|--|

made a positive, long-lasting impression on the writer?

| | |
|----|--|
| 49 | |
|----|--|

served Asian food?

| | |
|----|--|
| 50 | |
|----|--|

showed understanding towards a customer's issue?

| | |
|----|--|
| 51 | |
|----|--|

served average food?

| | |
|----|--|
| 52 | |
|----|--|

Name _____

Date _____

Part 5

6 marks

Mark the appropriate answer (A, B, C or D).

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

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 31 | A | B | C | D | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 34 | A | B | C | D | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 32 | A | B | C | D | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 35 | A | B | C | D | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 33 | A | B | C | D | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

| | | | | | |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 36 | A | B | C | D | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |

Part 6

7 marks

Add the appropriate answer (A–G).

| | | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|
| 37 | | 38 | | 39 | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|

| | | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|
| 40 | | 41 | | 42 | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|

Part 7

10 marks

Add the appropriate answer (A, B, C or D).

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|
| 43 | | 44 | | 45 | | 46 | | 47 | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|
| 48 | | 49 | | 50 | | 51 | | 52 | |
|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|

| Part 5 | Key words from the questions | Clues from the text |
|--------|--|---|
| 31 | C ...first paragraph...nervous / ...starting her own business | ...first project as a wedding planner / ...leave her stable 9–5 job to pursue such a financially unpredictable career |
| 32 | B In paragraph 2...announcement...Sunday / ...members...together | ...knew they would have all been there at that time. |
| 33 | A ...third paragraph...family...doesn't support her dreams / ...Jade...traditional lifestyle | ...family had never been supportive / ...they wished she had a conventional lifestyle. |
| 34 | C ...line 23...'played it safe' / careful, avoiding risks | ... they had never pushed themselves out of their comfort zones. / They had never tried anything new in their life... |
| 35 | D ...fifth paragraph...call the bakery / ...location of the cake | ...what had happened. / ...slowed down the traffic – the cake was on its way. |
| 36 | D In paragraph 6...arrive, the guests / unhappy and confused | ...atmosphere was tense / ...Some seemed shocked, some seemed upset, in contrast with the music. |

| Part 6 | Key words from the questions | Clues from the text |
|--------|--|--|
| 37 | F ...escape this fast-paced living...most of us...break...holiday...hobby...to reduce stress | ...overwhelmed...everyday life / On the other hand...a small number of people...abandon modern society completely... |
| 38 | B However, religious spiritual and moral beliefs are frequently the cause | Often, technology, stress and work overload...factors that contribute... |
| 39 | D ...have to work hard...roof over our heads and food on our tables | ...basic human needs have to be met / ...choose to build their own house / ...feeding themselves... |
| 40 | G The biggest obstacle...how to sustain it. | ...financially challenging / ...finding creative ways to pay / ...work from home... |
| 41 | A Many...funds and assets acquired before...solitude | ...quite common...savings or state pensions...reclusive... |
| 42 | E First of all...increases creativity...sharpens ...focus | ...some advantages / In addition...physical and mental relaxation |

| Part 7 | Key words from the questions | Clues from the text |
|--------|--|--|
| 43 | A ...not suitable...quiet and private | ...wrong place for a romantic... |
| 44 | C ...negative first impression...outside | ...neon...sign above the door wasn't...appealing...cheap and cheerful...look. |
| 45 | B ...wasn't prepared... | ...confident...would be ready...arrival. / Instead...wait almost an hour to be seated. |
| 46 | B ...slow service | ...were really hungry / ...wait about 45 minutes to be served. |
| 47 | A ...uncomfortable and overcrowded | ...incredibly busy / ...noise levels were so high / Extra tables were added...had to move my chair every time ... |
| 48 | D ...let down...former member | Manager...resigned and left / ...run away with my deposit money. |
| 49 | C ...positive, long-lasting impression | ...fantastic...experience...won't forget! |
| 50 | C ...Asian food | ...waiting staff...traditional oriental costumes. |
| 51 | D ...understanding...customer's issue | ...very sympathetic...my situation. / ...didn't have to pay ...missing sum. |
| 52 | A ...average food | ...a sign of good food. / Unfortunately, this wasn't the case. / ...meal wasn't bad...wasn't memorable / ...food was very basic ..portions...small |