

# Cambridge IGCSE<sup>®</sup> English as a Second Language 0510 (speaking endorsement) 0511\* (count-in speaking)

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## How to use this guide

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The guide describes what you need to know about your Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language examination.

It will help you to plan your revision programme for the examination and will explain what examiners are looking for in your answers. It can also be used to help you to revise by using the tick boxes in Section 4, 'What you need to do', to check what you have revised.

The guide contains the following sections:

### Section 1: How will you be tested?

This section gives you information about the different examination papers that you will take.

### Section 2: Examination advice

This section gives you advice to help you do as well as you can. Some of the ideas are general advice and some are based on the common mistakes that learners make in exams.

### Section 3: What will be tested?

This section describes the areas of knowledge, understanding and skills that the examination papers will test you on.

### Section 4: What you need to do

This section shows the syllabus in a simple way so that you can check that:

- You have practised each skill.
- You can understand and respond, in English, in a variety of contexts and situations.
- You are well prepared for the level of examination (Core curriculum or Extended curriculum) you will be taking.
- You have covered enough topics and themes to be able to show your skills in writing and speaking English.

### Section 5: Command words and further advice

This section shows you the importance of the command words and phrases that are used in examination questions. It also gives you additional hints and details, which will help you feel more confident when you take the examination.

### Section 6: Useful websites



## Section 1: How will you be tested?

You will take **three** parts:

- Reading and writing question paper
- Listening question paper
- Speaking test or tasks

There are two different options for Cambridge IGCSE:

### Syllabus 0510 (speaking endorsement)

The components for this syllabus are detailed below: you take two papers – the reading and writing paper, and the listening paper, which together make up your grade. You also take a speaking test or tasks, and are given a separate result for your speaking skills.

Let's look at the first two papers you will take. If your teacher thinks you should enter for the Core level of examination, you will take Papers 1 and 3. If your teacher thinks you should enter for the Extended level of examination, you will take Papers 2 and 4.

Your teacher will assess your skills towards the end of your Cambridge IGCSE course and will discuss with you which papers and which level of examination (Core or Extended) you should take. You may also wish to discuss the decision with your parents.

Paper number and level of examination	How long and how many marks?	What's in the paper? Which skills are being tested?	What's the % of the total mark?
Paper 1 Reading and writing (Core)  OR:↓	1 hour 30 minutes (70 marks)	Exercises 1 and 2 – Reading Exercise 3 – Reading and writing combined Exercise 4 – Making notes Exercise 5 – Summarising Exercises 6 and 7 – Writing	70%
Paper 2 Reading and writing (Extended)	2 hours (90 marks)	Exercises 1 and 2 – Reading Exercise 3 – Reading and writing combined Exercise 4 – Making notes Exercise 5 – Summarising Exercises 6 and 7 – Writing	70%
Paper 3 Listening (Core)  OR:↓	Approximately 40 minutes (30 marks)	Listening to and understanding short conversations and monologues, and longer interviews and talks.	30%
Paper 4 Listening (Extended)	50 minutes (40 marks)	Listening to and understanding short conversations and monologues, and longer interviews and talks.	30%

## Section 1: How will you be tested?

The third paper you take is **either** Paper 5 **or** Paper 6, which tests your speaking skills.

Paper number	How long and how many marks?	What's in the paper?	What's the % of the total mark?
Paper 5 Speaking  OR:↓	Up to 15 minutes 30 marks	A conversation with the teacher/Examiner about a topic on a card chosen by the teacher/Examiner.	A separate result for speaking is given.
Paper 6 Speaking coursework	Completed during your course. (30 marks)	Coursework – three different speaking activities, e.g. roleplay, telephone conversation, interview.  The tests will be conducted and marked by your teacher during your course.	A separate result for speaking is given.

These speaking tests do not contribute to your overall result, because they are marked separately, and you will be given a result as a grade of 1 (high) to 5 (low) for speaking.

You should ask your teacher if you are taking Paper 5 or 6.

## Syllabus 0511 (count-in speaking)

The components for this syllabus are detailed below. For count-in speaking the mark for your speaking test is included in your overall grade. 30% of your overall mark is shared between listening and speaking – 15% for each skill.

Paper number and level of examination	How long and how many marks?	What's in the paper? Which skills are being tested?	What's the % of the total mark?
Paper 1 Reading and writing (Core)  OR:↓	1 hour 30 minutes (70 marks)	Exercises 1 and 2 – Reading Exercise 3 – Reading and writing combined Exercise 4 – Making notes Exercise 5 – Summarising Exercises 6 and 7 – Writing	70%
Paper 2 Reading and writing (Extended)	2 hours (90 marks)	Exercises 1 and 2 – Reading Exercise 3 – Reading and writing combined Exercise 4 – Making notes Exercise 5 – Summarising Exercises 6 and 7 – Writing	70%
Paper 3 Listening (Core)  OR:↓	Approximately 40 minutes (30 marks)	Listening to and understanding short conversations and monologues, and longer interviews and talks.	30%
Paper 4 Listening (Extended)	50 minutes (40 marks)	Listening to and understanding short conversations and monologues, and longer interviews and talks.	30%

Paper number and level of examination	How long and how many marks?	What's in the paper? Which skills are being tested?	What's the % of the total mark?
Paper 5 Speaking  OR:↓	Approximately 15 minutes 30 marks	A conversation with the teacher/Examiner about a topic on a card chosen by the teacher/Examiner.	A separate result for speaking is given.
Paper 6 Speaking coursework	Completed during your course. (30 marks)	Coursework – three different speaking activities, e.g. roleplay, telephone conversation, interview.  The tests will be conducted and marked by your teacher during your course.	A separate result for speaking is given.

The reading and writing paper and the listening paper are exactly the same as for syllabus 0510. The Speaking test or coursework is the same too. The only difference is the way the final marks are allocated.

**Section 1:** How will you be tested?

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## Section 2: Examination advice

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This section gives you advice to help you do as well as you can. Some of the ideas are general advice and some are based on the common mistakes that learners make in exams.

### Reading and writing: Paper 1 (Core) Paper 2 (Extended)

#### Exercises 1 and 2

- Read quickly (skim) through the text – concentrate on finding the main idea in each paragraph. As you read, underline any names, numbers or dates. Use the pictures and other visuals to help you understand.
- Read the questions carefully and make a note of any questions that need two pieces of information in the answer.
- Underline the question word and think about what it means: ‘Where’ means ‘a place’; ‘How’ means ‘in what way’, and ‘Why’ means ‘look for a reason or cause’.
- Underline other important words in the question – nouns and verbs provide information that you might need to find in the text.
- Try to match the words in the question with the correct point in the text. This is called scanning. When you locate the sentence, read it more carefully to find the exact answer. If you can’t match any words, remember, the word in the question might be a synonym (a different word that has the same meaning) of the word in the text. If you still can’t locate the right answer, read up or down from the sentence you found, or make a guess.
- Don’t write full sentences in your answer. Keep your answers short – a date or number or a few words will be enough to get a mark. Too much writing can waste your time, and, if you give too much information, you might include wrong details which could mean you lose a mark.
- You can copy the words from the text – you don’t need to use your own words. If you write in your own words, you won’t lose a mark as long as you include all the correct information needed in the question.
- Look out for and learn the meaning of signpost phrases such as ‘apart from’, or ‘rather than’, or ‘According to the graph’, and make sure you understand what they refer to.
- Remember that the questions follow the order of the text in Exercises 1 and 2. The only exception to this is in Paper 2 (Extended) – in Exercise 2 you need to look back at the whole text to find answers to the last question.

#### Exercise 3

- The first thing to remember is that this exercise is not only a test of reading and comprehension, but also a test of writing. This means that you must be completely accurate in spelling.
- Handwriting is important too, because you often have to write names, addresses, or other proper nouns. Examiners are looking for the correct use of capital letters, so you must make these completely clear when you write.
- If you have to write an answer on the line, remember to make it a short answer.
- Do you know how to use the instructions ‘Tick’, ‘Underline’, ‘Circle’, and ‘Delete’? If not, ask your teacher to explain.

## Section 2: Examination advice

- Remember that you're completing this exercise as if you are the person in the text, so you must use 'I' or 'we'. Answers with 'he', 'she', or 'they' will get no marks.
- The last section of this exercise is different:  
Extended – one sentence – make sure it is: a) within the word limit, b) completely accurate and c) relevant (it answers the question).  
Core – two sentences – make sure they are: a) completely accurate and b) relevant (they answer the question).
  - What does accuracy mean?
  - Start your sentence with a capital letter.
  - Finish your sentence with a full stop.
  - Write a full and complete sentence, using a subject and verb.
  - Don't start your sentence with 'and', 'but' or 'because'.

### Exercise 4

- Use the same skills for reading and understanding as you did in Exercises 1 and 2.
- Try to connect the headings with parts of the text, so that your answers correspond to the right heading. Correct answers in the wrong place don't get any marks.
- Notice the bullet points at the beginning of each line and write short answers that fit the space on the line – remember this is a note-taking exercise.
- Although your answer must be short, make sure you include all the key information.

### Exercise 5

In this exercise you need to write a summary based on the text you have read.

In a summary you should:

- Keep to the word limit – before the examination, check how many words you write on a line, then you'll know approximately how many lines you will need.
- Include all the key facts relating to the subject of your summary. This will mean looking again at the entire text and underlining relevant points.
- Try to connect your ideas into a paragraph using linking words.
- If you use your own words instead of copying from the text, you have more chance of getting a higher mark for language.

### Paper 1 (Core)

- Use your notes from Exercise 4, but you might not need all of them.
- Don't just make a list of the points in your notes. Try to write connected sentences. Linking words will help you do this.
- Keep on the topic and use your own words if you can.

## Paper 2 (Extended)

- Read the instructions carefully – do you need to summarise the whole text or just part of it? Don't waste time reading unnecessary parts of the text.
- Practise synonym (different words that have the same meaning) exercises to help you use your own words.
- Practise connecting phrases to create sentences, and connecting sentences to create paragraphs.

## Exercises 6 and 7 – General advice

These exercises ask you to write in two different styles – usually an informal piece and an opinion piece of writing.

Make sure you:

- Write at least the minimum word length.
- Use paragraphs to show your different ideas.
- Keep to the topic – it's easy to wander away from the subject. Remind yourself by looking again at the question.
- Try to write fluently – use words and phrases to connect your thoughts.
- Don't use mobile/cell text language – this is a test of English language.

### Exercise 6

- Think about who you are writing to.
- Try to write as if you are talking to this person and you'll automatically use the right tone and register.
- Don't forget any of the bullet points – you'll lose marks if you do.
- Write a paragraph for each bullet point – it will give your writing good balance.
- It's a good idea to give your writing a start and a finish. If you don't, it can become more like a story, and you might lose the tone.
- Try to make your writing enjoyable to read.
- If you like using idioms, be careful not to use too many. It can make your writing sound unnatural.

### Exercise 7

- Decide right at the start if you're going to write about the topic from two sides (for and against) or from just one (your opinion).
- If you write a two-sided (balanced) piece of writing, don't forget to include your opinion in the last paragraph.
- If you want to write only from your own point of view, include it in the first paragraph.
- You can use the phrases and opinions given in the question, but if you want to get higher marks, you must develop these ideas and not just copy them.
- Try to think of your own ideas on the topic.
- Remember to organise your writing: include an introduction, one paragraph for each idea in the middle section, and a conclusion.
- Try to keep a few minutes at the end to read through and check your spelling and grammar.

## Listening: Paper 3 (Core) Paper 4 (Extended)

### General advice

- Make sure you read the introduction to each question, as this often provides clues as to what will happen in the exercise.
- Anticipate (predict) who's going to speak; where they are; what they're going to talk about.
- Remember, part of the skill of listening is to be able to predict what might be said next ('pre-listening')
- You hear everything twice – concentrate all the time and make notes or underline words to help you.
- Be careful with numbers – if you write a number in your answer, you might need to include a unit – is it kilos, \$, metres, tonnes?
- Notice any question that needs two details to get one mark or two marks, and make sure you separate the answers clearly.
- In gap-filling exercises, use your knowledge of grammar to help you work out what kind of word could fit in the gaps (could it be a noun, verb, adverb?)
- For longer answers, make sure you have communicated the idea clearly. If you don't know a word, try to write exactly what you hear.

### Paper 5 Speaking

- Remember that the warm up part of the test is not marked. The teacher/examiner will start with a general, informal, chat just to get you settled down and comfortable. This should be your aim in the warm up – to calm yourself down and get ready.
- It might be useful if you mention your particular interests (hobbies, things you like doing, current issues that are on your mind, things you feel strongly about), during the warm up. One of the topic cards might be a good choice for you – but remember, it's not you but the examiner who chooses the topic card.
- You should know exactly how the speaking test will run. The examiner will explain this at the beginning. If not, please ask the examiner to explain what will happen during the test. You will need to ask this before the examiner gives you the topic card.
- You will have some time (2–3 minutes) to look at the topic card and think about what you want to say in the conversation. You can't make any notes here, but you can ask any questions at this point. You can plan to include three or four talking points of your own (i.e. that are not suggested on the card). This will help to make the conversation more interesting, and it might lead to a higher mark. In other words, you can talk about more than the five or six points listed on the card – you can take the conversation into other areas of the same topic.
- Don't worry about the topics that might come up, before the examination. The topics are chosen so that conversations can be developed easily – you don't need to have any expert knowledge of any of the topics. It is not necessary, therefore, to try and revise any topics which you think might be used. The test is not about how much you know about a topic, it is about how well you can have a conversation about it.
- The test is not about delivering a speech. If you find that you are doing this, something is wrong, and you should try to return to having a genuine conversation with the examiner. Your examiner will be listening carefully and should stop speeches taking place.

- Your examiner will be listening for:
  - 1) Structure – using spoken language, sentences and phrases, accurately.
  - 2) Vocabulary – using a wide range of words.
  - 3) Fluency – a two-way conversation, perhaps extending the prompts/ideas that the examiner has introduced.
- The key to success in this test is to be relaxed. If you feel that you have enjoyed a ‘good chat’ with the examiner – a chat based on and keeping to the topic – then it’s likely that you have performed well.

If you read these tips a few times before you take your Cambridge IGCSE examination, hopefully your confidence will increase.



## Section 3: What will be tested?

The syllabus sets out the skills that will be tested in the exam papers. In Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language, there are four main skills – two which test how well you understand and receive information (reading and listening), and two which test how well you are able to communicate, or pass on, information (writing and speaking). This might be information you have just received, or it might be new and original information.

The skills are as follows:

Skill	What you need to be able to do
Reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and retrieve facts and details</li> <li>• understand and select relevant information</li> <li>• recognise and understand ideas, opinions and attitudes and the connections between related ideas</li> <li>• understand what is implied but not actually written, e.g. gist, relationships, writer's purpose/intention, writer's feelings, situation or place.</li> </ul>
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate clearly, accurately and appropriately</li> <li>• convey information and express opinions effectively</li> <li>• employ and control a variety of grammatical structures</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of appropriate vocabulary</li> <li>• observe conventions of paragraphing, punctuation and spelling</li> <li>• employ appropriate register/style.</li> </ul>
Listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and retrieve facts and details</li> <li>• understand and select relevant information</li> <li>• recognise and understand ideas, opinions and attitudes and the connections between related ideas</li> <li>• understand what is implied but not actually stated, e.g. gist, relationships between speakers, speaker's purpose/intention, speaker's feelings, situation or place.</li> </ul>
Speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicate clearly, accurately and appropriately</li> <li>• convey information and express opinions effectively</li> <li>• employ and control a variety of grammatical structures</li> <li>• demonstrate knowledge of a range of appropriate vocabulary</li> <li>• engage in and influence the direction of conversation</li> <li>• employ suitable pronunciation and stress patterns.</li> </ul>

In addition to the main skills outlined above, you will also be tested on how accurate and consistent your English is. The exam will assess your English according to:

- how well you can control your grammar and structures. This is important in writing as well as speaking.
- the range of vocabulary you use. You will be tested on your understanding and whether you can use words accurately and/or appropriately, in both writing and speaking.

### Section 3: What will be tested?

- how accurately you spell.
- your use of sentences, paragraphs and punctuation in longer pieces of writing.
- your awareness of 'register' in formal and informal situations, for example, the different ways that you would write to your friend and to your headteacher; and the language you need when you are discussing or arguing about a topical subject.

## Section 4: What you need to do

The best way to approach the content of your Cambridge IGCSE English course is to make sure that you have practised English in a wide variety of contexts, that you understand the different ways that English can be used, and can respond appropriately.

You might have textbooks and work books that form the basis of your lessons. These cover a wide range of topics and preparation exercises for the examination. There are other approaches to learning English, however; use a variety of books, articles, newspapers, magazines, as well as the internet; also use as many recordings (to test listening) and conversation or discussion activities (to test speaking) as possible. Success in learning English is certainly linked to using a variety of different resources so that you can practise all the skills and combinations of skills that will be tested in your examination.

The table below is just a guide to some of the different types of activities that you might find useful. This is not a course that you must follow, but perhaps it will help you when you have to revise for your examination, or if you have some time for extra studying.

Skill:	All learners should be able to:	Ways in which the skills might be practised (appropriate contexts)	Checklist – tick ✓ if you have practised this. Make notes to help you remember.
Reading: selecting exact details – looking carefully = scanning	Read short texts, such as notices and advertisements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at timetables, and signs.</li> <li>• Read newspaper advertisements.</li> <li>• Collect and analyse different brochures.</li> <li>• Extract specific information from articles.</li> </ul>	
Reading: understanding main ideas – gist reading = skimming	Read longer texts, such as articles from newspapers and magazines and the internet.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read past paper questions.</li> <li>• Read factual articles in textbooks or journals.</li> <li>• Read a newspaper or your favourite magazine regularly.</li> </ul>	

Skill:	All learners should be able to:	Ways in which the skills might be practised (appropriate contexts)	Checklist – tick ✓ if you have practised this. Make notes to help you remember.
<p>Reading and writing: Integrated skills</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read texts which contain additional information in statistical or graphical form (e.g. tables, graphs, charts).</li> <li>2. Fill in forms.</li> <li>3. Make notes.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do class surveys and present the results as a graph or table.</li> <li>• Look at different ways of presenting information, e.g. graphs/charts or tables.</li> <li>• Fill in forms you find in newspapers and magazines.</li> <li>• Using websites, practise filling in forms to register your details – you can always delete your information later.</li> <li>• Read more complex texts and practise finding exact information and making notes on precise details under a specific heading.</li> <li>• Read interesting articles about people or places and then make some notes so that you can write a paragraph about it in your own words.</li> <li>• Read a chapter in a textbook from another subject – (geography/history/science), and make notes on the content of the chapter.</li> </ul>	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Write a summary.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read a short story or magazine article and write a paragraph in your own words about it.</li> <li>• Read about your favourite film star/sports personality and write a short summary of their life.</li> <li>• Imagine you are that person and write the same summary about yourself.</li> <li>• After a class discussion, write a paragraph outlining your classmates' opinions.</li> <li>• Read about an unusual hobby or activity and make notes, then write a paragraph about it.</li> <li>• Listen to a short radio programme or internet broadcast and make notes, then write about it.</li> </ul>	

Skill:	All learners should be able to:	Ways in which the skills might be practised (appropriate contexts)	Checklist – tick ✓ if you have practised this. Make notes to help you remember.
Writing	1. Describe events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write letters to people in different situations (some formal, some informal).</li> <li>• Write down your feelings and opinions, e.g. diary entries, and record your experiences in other ways, e.g. internet diaries/postcards.</li> <li>• Write descriptions of events, places, people, etc.</li> <li>• Write an email/letter to friends/family explaining about an event which happened to you recently.</li> </ul>	
Writing	2. Use language for a specific purpose, e.g. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) to persuade</li> <li>ii) to discuss the advantages/disadvantages</li> <li>iii) to argue in favour/against</li> <li>iv) to convince with a strong argument.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take part in class debates and write up the conclusions, either from both sides, or from your own side.</li> <li>• Write an article about a specific topic, e.g. to persuade your local council not to build a new road; to argue that smoking should be allowed/not allowed in a particular place.</li> <li>• Become familiar with current local/international issues.</li> <li>• Read letters and articles aimed at stating a point of view.</li> </ul>	
Listening	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Listen for specific information in short, separate statements.</li> <li>2. Listen for specific information in longer conversations and talks.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to announcements (e.g. on the radio, at train stations, at airports).</li> <li>• Listen for factual detail (e.g. news reports, weather reports, travel reports).</li> <li>• Ask for directions, etc.</li> <li>• Listen to recordings of interviews, on news programmes or chat shows.</li> </ul>	

Skill:	All learners should be able to:	Ways in which the skills might be practised (appropriate contexts)	Checklist – tick ✓ if you have practised this. Make notes to help you remember.
Listening	<p>3. Listen for gist – understand the main idea of a conversation; follow the overall theme.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch television interviews where the host is asking a guest about his/her lifestyle, hobbies, job, future career, etc.</li> <li>• Role-play typical interview situations.</li> <li>• Listen to an interview with a friend and write short sentences to answer your friend's questions, that show both your overall understanding and some details.</li> <li>• With a friend, write some true/false questions, based on an interview that you both heard.</li> <li>• Write some multiple-choice questions to ask a friend about a conversation/interview you both heard.</li> </ul>	
Speaking	<p>1. Speaking test:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be confident when you are having a conversation with an adult.</li> <li>• Talk about a topic at some length.</li> <li>• Keep a conversation going and try to develop it.</li> </ul> <p>2. Coursework: Be confident in all speaking situations – conversations, solo work (e.g. presentations, speeches) and working in groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to get some information about topics in the news and common interesting subjects.</li> <li>• Read newspapers, listen to TV news and documentaries to improve your general knowledge.</li> <li>• Practise role-playing conversations based on a single topic or theme.</li> </ul> <p>Your teacher will guide you through your course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practise speaking on your own.</li> <li>• Practise speaking with one other person.</li> <li>• Practise having small-group discussions.</li> </ul>	

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## Section 5: Command words and further advice

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Here are some of the common phrases used by examiners to test skills and understanding in the three examinations:

### Reading and listening

To test your understanding of specific parts of a written or spoken text (e.g. brochure, article, interview, speech, statement) examiners will use question words/phrases such as:

- How much...?
- How long...?
- How did...?
- Apart from.....what...?
- What other ...?
- What can ...?
- According to the diagram ...?
- What is ...?
- Where can... ...?
- When does ...?

Your answers to these types of question need to be short, precise, and as accurate as possible. You can repeat the information in the text, if it helps you to answer the question, but be careful not to include too much information.

Examiners will test your understanding of specific parts of a text, or test your ability to follow instructions by asking you to do the following:

- Give two details...
- Write an article...
- Give your views ...
- Write a letter...
- Fill in the form...
- Complete the notes...
- Make two notes...
- Write a summary about...
- Use your own words...

Make sure you understand exactly what these instructions mean. Ask your teacher if you need extra help.

NB: In both the reading and the listening exams you will be asked to make **notes** based on articles or conversations which might be quite long. By notes, that means writing down the main points, in single words or short phrases. Notes are **not** usually made using complete sentences – certainly not long sentences. In some cases, you will be asked to fill in gaps using notes.

## Writing

### Summary writing (Extended)

After reading a text about a specific topic, or based on a theme, you will be asked to write a summary.

Examiners are looking for a short piece of writing that:

- (i) includes the main points according to the question
- (ii) uses accurate language (linking words, conjunctions, sentences which read fluently, structured paragraphs)
- (iii) keeps within the word limit.

### Summary writing (Core)

Your summary needs to include the information from your notes in Exercise 4. Make sure you:

- i) don't write more than the word limit
- ii) keep to the topic
- iii) connect the ideas to make a clear paragraph
- iv) try to use your own words, and not just copy from the text.

You will also be asked to write two longer pieces, usually one informal and one formal piece of writing.

- Write a letter to a friend telling him/her ...
- Write an article for your school Principal ....
- Write an article for your school magazine about ...

You will be given some ideas (pictures or opinions), which can start you thinking about the topic.

In these writing exercises, examiners are looking for answers that:

- are the right length – remember to check how many words you need to write
- have paragraphs – these don't have to be long, but each one should contain a different set of ideas
- answer the question – don't forget any bullet points
- are organised and logical – this helps to keep you on the topic
- are accurate – so be careful to check your spelling, grammar and punctuation
- are clear to read – so keep your handwriting tidy.

## Speaking

- The speaking test consists of a short conversation at the start. This is recorded, but not assessed, and is used to help you to feel comfortable with the situation and not nervous.
- The examiner will give you a topic card which tells you the subject for your conversation, and gives you some extra ideas for the discussion. You will have 2 or 3 minutes to think about the topic and to ask the Examiner any questions you may have.
- When you are ready the conversation will begin. Only this part of the test is assessed.
- Usually the examiner starts the conversation by asking a question, but you can start if you wish.
- It is important to talk about all the points on the card, and you can introduce new ideas too if they are relevant to the topic.
- If the examiner asks you a question, don't just give a short answer – try to develop it with ideas of your own.
- Try to make the conversation as natural as possible. It isn't a formal debate or a presentation.
- Remember that this is a test of speaking, not knowledge. You aren't expected to be an 'expert' on any topic.



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## Section 6: Useful websites

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The websites listed below are useful resources to help you study for your Cambridge IGCSE.

Please note that there are no websites which are specifically for the Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language course. The recommended sites below are therefore useful for practising the main skills that you will need to do well in the examinations, and to keep you up-to-date with some of the topics and articles you can expect to read and discuss.

[www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/)

Useful for news articles, interactive listening activities, an updated daily grammar exercise, and word quizzes.

[www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine)

Interesting articles on topical subjects for reading comprehension, improving spelling and getting ideas for speaking.

[www.learnenglish.org.uk](http://www.learnenglish.org.uk)

The British Council's main learning English as a Second, or Foreign Language site. Lots of activities, designed to suit the different levels of language ability. It also has particularly useful grammar exercises, as well as advice for exam listening and speaking.

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/english/)

Although mainly concerned with revision for GCSE English, there are useful exercises for Cambridge IGCSE English as a Second Language – e.g. reading non-fiction/information texts, writing in different styles, exam advice.

[www.usingenglish.com](http://www.usingenglish.com)

Free resources for learners and an 'Ask the Teacher' forum.

[www.englishclub.com](http://www.englishclub.com)

This is good for listening practice on current topics, with questions based on the listening.

[www.cambridge.org/gb/elt](http://www.cambridge.org/gb/elt)

Follow the link to the Student Zone for interactive exercises, listening articles and vocabulary building.

[www.englishspace.ort.org/launchpad/about\\_what\\_is.asp](http://www.englishspace.ort.org/launchpad/about_what_is.asp)

A completely free site, containing lots of appropriate activities. Designed for teenage learners. It also puts you in touch with other learners around the world.

[www.debatabase.org/](http://www.debatabase.org/)

Use this site to keep in touch with current and international issues. There are lots of topics – many of which are common themes that you will read about, hear, and discuss in your examinations.

[www.eslgo.com](http://www.eslgo.com)

Free online lessons and a community forum to keep you in touch with other learners of English.

Cambridge International Examinations  
1 Hills Road, Cambridge, CB1 2EU, United Kingdom  
tel: +44 1223 553554 fax: +44 1223 553558  
email: [info@cie.org.uk](mailto:info@cie.org.uk) [www.cie.org.uk](http://www.cie.org.uk)

