

**An Ardor Learning Group Class**

# **FCE exam preparation**

## **Class #1**



In this class you'll:

- Practice your **reading and use of English skills** (multiple choice cloze)
- Practice your **writing skills** (informal email)
- Practice your **listening skills** (multiple choice)
- Practice your **speaking skills** (picture comparison)

# Reading and Use of English – Part 1



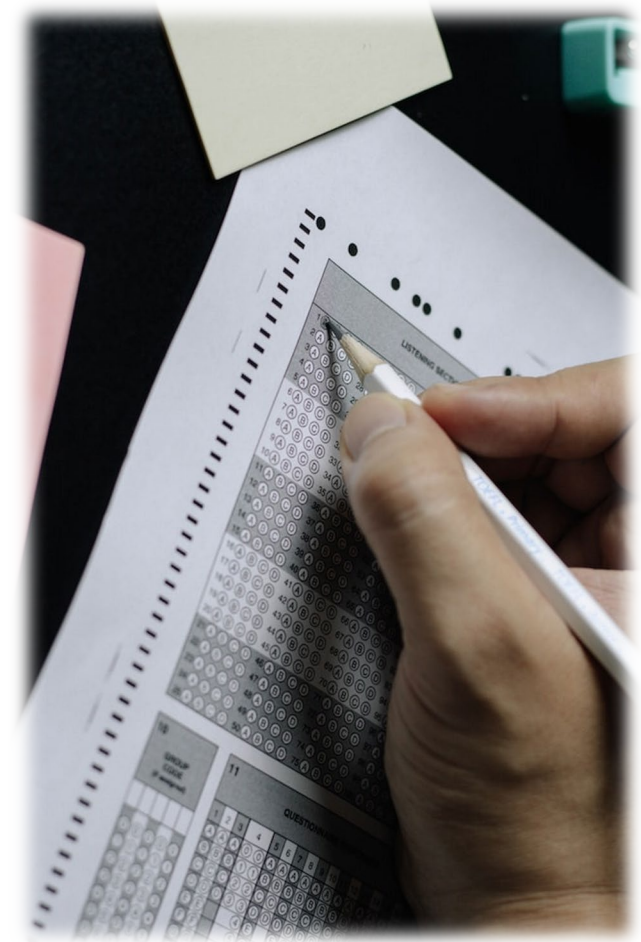
Part 1 of the FCE Reading exam is a multiple choice cloze exercise.

Your task is to fill in the gaps of the text, choosing the correct word from four options – A, B, C, or D.

The first gap will always be an example.

This task examines your lexical knowledge and your understanding of the text.

Practising collocations, phrasal verbs, prepositions and set phrases can be helpful.



## The Benefits of Regular Exercise

Read the passage below, and choose the correct option (A, B, C, or D) for each blank to complete the text.

Regular exercise has a lot of physical and mental benefits that (0) \_\_\_\_\_ individuals to have healthier and happier lives. One of the most obvious benefits of exercise is its effect on physical health. (1) \_\_\_\_\_ sports such as running, swimming, or cycling helps improve cardiovascular health. Moreover, exercise plays a (2) \_\_\_\_\_ role in weight management, as it helps burn calories and build muscles.

Exercise also affects mental well-being. When you exercise, your brain releases endorphins, which act as natural mood boosters. This is why people often (3) \_\_\_\_\_ a sense of euphoria after a workout. Additionally, exercise can (4) \_\_\_\_\_ stress and anxiety. Also, people who exercise regularly tend to fall asleep faster and enjoy deeper, more (5) \_\_\_\_\_ sleep, leading to having more energy during the day.

Adding exercise to your daily routine doesn't have to be (6) \_\_\_\_\_. Simple activities like taking a walk, dancing, or doing yoga can make a significant difference in your health, especially for people with (7) \_\_\_\_\_ lifestyles. Remember, the (8) \_\_\_\_\_ to having healthier habits is consistency.

Example: 0. A) encourage **B) enable** C) convince D) motivate

1. A) making B) doing C) having D) getting

5. A) relaxed B) shallow C) erratic D) restless

2. A) crucial B) trivial C) marginal D) minor

6. A) complicated B) troublesome C) difficult D) complex

3. A) undergo B) experience C) encounter D) endure

7. A) active B) inactive C) sedentary D) static

4. A) mitigate B) intensify C) exacerbate D) alleviate

8. A) solution B) formula C) key D) answer



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# Writing - Part 2 – Informal email

In Part 2 of the FCE Writing exam you are asked to write a situationally based text - for example an article, a formal or informal email, a review, or a report. The word limit is 70 words.

The topics of Part 2 are general questions related to a variety of fields, like health and fitness, entertainment, culture, and so on.

In this task, four main aspects will be assessed: content, communicative achievement, organisation, and language.





**From:** j.isaacs0512@hello.com  
**To:** emmastevens@hello.com  
**Subject:** Paddle team recruitment

*Hey Emma,*

*Long time no talk! Hope everything's good with you.*

*I couldn't wait to tell you—I've taken up paddle tennis! A while back, some friends invited me to give it a shot, and it's so much fun. You can play it indoors or outdoors, and it's like a mix of tennis and ping-pong.*

*I'm still learning, but I'm getting better each time I play. How about we plan a day to play together? If you are up for it, we could be partners. Can't wait to catch up and tell you more about it!*

*Take care,*

*Jamie*

Read the email and answer the questions.

1. What is the structure of the writing like?
2. How do we know that it is an informal email?
3. What other ways do you know to open and close informal emails?



**From:** j.isaacs0512@hello.com  
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*Hey Emma ,*

*Long time no talk! Hope everything 's good with you.*

*I couldn 't wait to tell you—I 've taken up paddle tennis! A while back, some friends invited me to **give it a shot**, and it 's so much fun. You can play it indoors or outdoors, and it 's like a mix of tennis and ping-pong.*

*I 'm still learning, but I 'm getting better each time I play. **How about** we plan a day to play together? If you are up for it, we could be partners. Can 't wait to **catch up** and tell you more about it!*

*Take care,*

*Jamie*

## Tips for writing an informal email:

1. Choose an informal greeting that suits the context. You can also include the name of the addressee.
2. You can add in some colloquialisms, idioms and phrasal verbs - but don't overuse them.
3. You can use contracted forms.
4. Make sure to organize your text into paragraphs. Having two-three body paragraphs should be enough.
5. Choose an informal closing to your email.



# Writing - Part 2 – Informal email



**Have a look at the notes and reply to Jaime's email accordingly.**

**From:** j.isaacs0512@hello.com  
**To:** emmastevens@hello.com  
**Subject:** Paddle team recruitment

Hey Emma,

Long time no talk! Hope everything's good with you.

I couldn't wait to tell you—I've taken up paddle tennis! A while back, some friends invited me to give it a shot, and it's so much fun. You can play it indoors or outdoors, and it's like a mix of tennis and ping-pong.

I'm still learning, but I'm getting better each time I play. How about we plan a day to play together? If you are up for it, we could be partners. Can't wait to catch up and tell you more about it!

Take care,

Jamie

Not really - had a very busy exam period, but it's over now.

Sounds fun! Say you have been wanting to start doing sports for a long time.

Agree and suggest a day to meet. Ask if you need special equipment.

# Listening – Part 4

In FCE's Listening Part 4 exercise you will listen to an interview or an exchange between two speakers.

You will need to choose the correct answer from three options in a multiple choice exercise. There will be seven questions in total.

The information in the questions can guide you while listening. Read the questions carefully before the audio starts and underline the key elements.

Don't try to understand every word - try to listen to the whole message.



Listen to the audio carefully and answer the following questions by selecting the correct option (A, B, or C).

**1** What is the main reason they decided to set up a well-being programme?

- A) People were taking time off for colds and illnesses.
- B) Employees wanted free snacks and drinks at work
- C) There was a drastic increase in health-related issues at the company

**2** Why did Claudia feel something was wrong in the office atmosphere?

- A) Employees were taking too many holidays.
- B) Employees were not communicating effectively.
- C) Employees were not working efficiently.

**3** What did the well-being committee do to start the programme?

- A) Conducted interviews with employees
- B) Collected feedback from different departments
- C) Sent healthy lifestyle tips directly to employees

**4** What was the most popular initiative?

- A) Starting a jogging club
- B) Getting flu shots at work
- C) Participating in charity events

**5** What change did they make in the food options?

- A) Introduced more fast food choices
- B) Removed unhealthy snacks from the vending machines
- C) Offered mainly nutritious meals in the office

**6** How has the number of sick days changed as a result of the programme?

- A) It decreased by more than two thirds
- B) It did not change
- C) It increased by an average of three days

**7** What positive change has Claudia observed in the workplace after implementing the programme?

- A) Employees are leaving the company less frequently.
- B) The office atmosphere is more serious and focused.
- C) Employees are taking longer vacations.

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# Speaking – Part 2

In FCE's Listening Part 4 task you will be asked to speak about a topic for 1 minute, without interruption.

First, Candidate A is asked to compare two photographs. Then Candidate B is asked a question related to the topic. After this, the same process is repeated the other way around.

You will not need to give detailed descriptions of the photos - focus on their comparison and react to them.

Remember to use linking words, comparatives, and set phrases to describe similarities and differences.



## Useful expressions

### 1. Start by briefly describing the pictures:

- *Both of these pictures show...*
- *These photos show...*
- *In these pictures we can see...*
- *The photos were taken in/at...*
- *The location seems to be...*

### 2. Then, concentrate on the similarities:

- *These photos/situations are similar because/in that...*
- *Both pictures show/depict...*
- *One of the similarities between these pictures/situations is that...*
- *Another similarity might be that...*
- *One thing that these pictures have in common is that...*
- *The two images share a common theme of...*

### 3. After that, describe the differences:

- *One differences that...*
- *Another difference is that...*
- *However, these photos differ, because...*
- *While the first picture ..., the second one...*
- *The first picture.... However, the second one...*
- *In contrast to the first picture, the second one...*
- *A notable difference between the pictures is...*
- *On the one hand, the first picture shows... . On the other hand, the second one...*

### 4. Finally, answer the question that was given to you at the beginning:

- *As for + paraphrased question*
- *As to + paraphrased question*
- *In response to the question, ...*
- *Regarding the question of the task,*
- *With regard to + paraphrased question*





Look at these two photographs. They show people spending time in different types of gardens.

Compare the two photographs and say why what you think these people are enjoying about spending time in these gardens.



Answer the questions related to the photos on the previous slide.

1. Which garden would you prefer spending time in? Why?
2. What do you think are the benefits of having a garden or an allotment?
3. What is the importance of having green spaces in a city?
4. Does growing your own produce help sustainability? Why/Why not?
5. What consequences does the use of pesticides have?
6. Can being in nature influence our mental well-being?



We hope you've enjoyed the class!

