



Assured by  SQA | Powered by  psi

B2 Test Information Sheet for Test Takers

Exploring Skills for
English Tests

Version: 2.0

Effective from: October 2023

Classification: Public



Contents

The B2 Student: CEFR Descriptors	3
The B2 Speaking Test	4
Speaking Part 1	4
Format of the task	4
Speaking Part 1 task	5
Sample responses	5
Speaking Part 2	6
Format of the task	6
Skills/functions you need for Part 2	6
Sample Speaking Part 2 task	6
Sample questions	7
Sample responses	8
Speaking Part 3	9
Format of the task	9
Skills/functions you need for Part 3	9
Sample Speaking Part 3 task	10
Sample response	11
Sample response (continued)	12
The B2 Listening Test	13
Listening Part 1	13
Format of the task	13
Skills/functions you need for Part 1	13
Sample Listening Part 1 task	14
Listening Part 2	15
Format of the task	15
Skills/functions you need for Part 2	15
Sample Listening Part 2 task	16
Listening Part 3	21
Format of the task	21
Skills/functions you need for Part 3	21

Sample Listening Part 3	22
The B2 Reading Test	26
Reading Part 1	26
Format of the task	26
Skills/functions you need for Part 1	26
Sample Reading Part 1	27
Reading Part 2	29
Format of the task	29
Skills/functions you need for Part 2	29
Sample Reading Part 2	30
Reading Part 3	33
Format of the task	33
Skills/functions you need for Part 3	33
Sample Reading Part 3	34
The B2 Writing Test	38
Writing Part 1	38
Format of the task	38
Skills/functions you need for part 1	39
Sample Writing Part 1	40
Sample response	41
Writing Part 2	42
Format of the task	42
Skills/functions you need for Part 2	42
Sample Writing Part 2	43
Sample response	44

The B2 Student: CEFR Descriptors

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), B2 students:

- can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialism.
- can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party.
- can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

Further details of the CEFR can be found in [this manual](#).

The B2 Speaking Test

There are three parts to the Speaking test.

In Part 1, you will answer questions about yourself.

In Part 2, you will answer questions on two topics.

In Part 3, you will talk about a subject using a role card.

You will speak to the computer, not a real person; the computer delivers the questions as pre-recorded audio clips and also records your answers.

After each question, you will hear a beep. You should answer each question after each beep. There is a clock displayed on the screen to show you how long you have to speak. There is also a volume button so that you can change the volume of the audio recording if you want to.

Examiners listen to your performance in both Parts 2 and 3 and give you a mark based on your whole performance across both parts of the test. Responses to Part 2 and Part 3 of the Speaking test are marked together by trained and qualified examiners on:

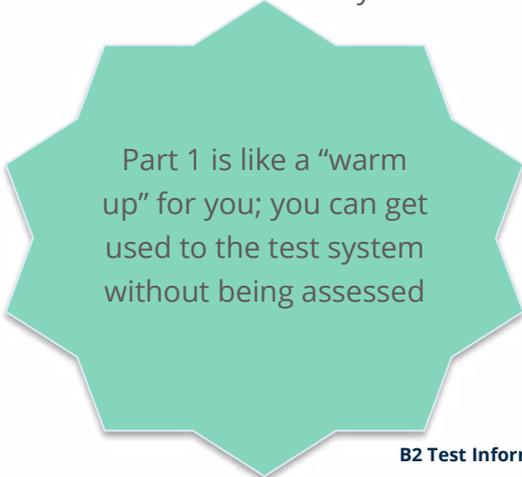
- Relevance and appropriacy of response – score between 0 and 6
- Grammar: Accuracy and Range – score between 0 and 6
- Vocabulary: Accuracy and Range – score between 0 and 6
- Clarity and Pronunciation – score between 0 and 6
- Coherence and Structure – score between 0 and 6

You can take notes during the Speaking test. Someone from the test centre will collect these notes from you at the end of each test.

Speaking Part 1

Format of the task

In Part 1, the computer will ask you five questions. These questions are always the same – in all tests and at all levels. You hear each question once and you have 10 seconds to answer each one. Part 1 of the Speaking test is NOT assessed; this part allows you to familiarise yourself with the test and the test system.



Part 1 is like a “warm up” for you; you can get used to the test system without being assessed

Speaking Part 1 task

Below are the five questions you are always asked in Part 1 of the B2 Speaking test.

1. What is your name?
2. Can you spell your first name, please?
3. Where are you from?
4. What is your date of birth?
5. What do you do?

You have 10 seconds to answer each of these questions and your answers are recorded

You can prepare and practise your answers in advance because Speaking Part 1 questions are always the same

Sample responses

1. My name is Ada Fischer.
2. A - D - A
3. I am from Frankfurt in Germany.
4. My date of birth is the third of April 1993.
5. I am a secretary for a lawyer.

You should answer in full sentences, but do not have to worry about extending your answers in Part 1

Speaking Part 2

Format of the task

In Part 2, the computer will ask you questions on two topics related to personal and everyday life. There are five questions per topic, so ten questions in total for Part 2. You hear each question once, then you hear a beep. For each topic, you have 30 seconds to answer questions 1 to 4 and 40 seconds to answer question 5 after each beep.

The topics and the language of the questions are accessible to B2 test takers. Topics include family, work, society, culture, past events, future plans, hopes and aspirations.

Skills/functions you need for Part 2

Part 2 of the Speaking test assesses your ability to respond to questions about your everyday experiences with a certain level of accuracy and flexibility. Questions will focus on aspects of life, work, culture and plans, such as:

- Describing hopes and dreams
- Describing various aspects of daily life, such as work or study plans
- Giving detailed descriptions of people, places and issues
- Talking about a variety of topics and ideas
- Discussing opinions

Sample Speaking Part 2 task

The extract below is an example of the type of questions you may encounter in Part 2 of the B2 Speaking test. This sample shows five questions with five sample responses. Part 2 of the Speaking test contains two sets of five questions, so ten questions in total.

In Speaking Part 2, there are 10 questions: 5 about one topic and 5 about another

The first couple of questions are usually personal in nature

Sample questions

1. What is your favourite meal of the day and why?
2. How are your weekend eating habits different from your eating habits during the week?
3. What kind of food do you like to eat on special occasions?
4. Do food and cooking play an important part in your culture? Explain your answer.
5. Do you think that a person's food preferences say something about their character? Why or why not?

You have 30 seconds to answer questions 1 to 4 and 40 seconds for question 5

There may be some follow-up questions asking for more information, such as "Why or why not?", "Give reasons" or "Explain your answer"

The last couple of questions are usually more open and ask for your opinion on a broader issue

Sample responses

1. My favourite meal of the day is dinner in the evening because I can relax with my family. We can take our time and talk about our days. We always have a lovely home-cooked meal together, and we take it in turns to cook so that nobody has to do it all the time.

2. At the weekend I often go out to restaurants for a meal with my friends or family, and I always have a dessert when I eat out because I hardly ever eat sweets at home during the week. Last Sunday I had a really late breakfast because I had been up late on Saturday night, and I can't do that during the week as I have to work.

This test taker uses a range of vocabulary and grammatical structures in their responses, such as past and present tenses, modal verbs, phrasal verbs and passive voice

3. I have a favourite seafood restaurant I like to eat at on special occasions. Their garlic prawns are cooked perfectly and I love their whole crab for a special treat. The restaurant is quite expensive, so I don't go there often, but when I do it is always worth it. Of course, if the occasion is someone's birthday, we always have a birthday cake.

4. In my culture, food and eating is the main activity that brings families and friends together. We don't need a reason to invite people round for dinner and it happens all the time, especially in the summer when we gather around the table outside. My father and my grandmother are both really into cooking and they have passed down many family recipes to me.

Make sure you answer follow up questions too – for example, Q4 asks you to explain your answer

5. I don't really believe that what someone eats says anything about their character, although I suppose some people are happier to try new things which I guess means they are brave and up for an adventure. I think we usually just like the food that our family introduce us to, and then as we get older, we naturally try new things.

Speaking Part 3

Format of the task

In Part 3, you see a role card with 5 prompts. You have 1 minute to read through the role card, think about your response and make notes if you wish. Then you have up to 5 minutes to speak and address the prompts on the role card.

The topics and the language of the prompts are accessible and appropriate to B2 test takers. Scenarios include giving advice to a friend, exploring a local or global issue, or describing plans and aspirations.

Skills/functions you need for Part 3

The aim of Part 3 is to allow you to speak at length about a given topic. The 5 prompts provide you with elements to include in your talk, as well as telling you how to address each element. Examples of skills you need to demonstrate include:

- Explaining
- Describing
- Recommending
- Advising
- Justifying

Sample Speaking Part 3 task

Below is an example of the type of scenario and questions you may encounter in Part 3 of the B2 Speaking test.

You will have 1 minute to read the role card before you hear the BEEP to start talking

The scenario is always given at the beginning of Part 3

Role Card: Giving a friend advice about how to plan the perfect holiday.

- Talk about what to consider when choosing who to go on holiday with.
- Explain how to research different holiday destinations.
- Discuss whether you think it's important to have a holiday budget.
- Talk about possible ways to travel to your holiday destination.
- Say what you should consider when booking accommodation.

You should think carefully about the command word used at the beginning of each prompt

Part 3 usually requires you to use a range of language functions, for example giving information, describing, explaining and suggesting

Sample response

I think that if you want to make sure you have a really great holiday, there are lots of things to consider.

You should structure your talk using cohesive devices

First of all, you should think carefully about who you are going to go away with. Maybe you are thinking about going on your own, but are you sure you wouldn't regret that and feel lonely? You could go on holiday with friends or family, but make sure it is people you know well and that you get on with. It's useful to have the same interests as the people you are going with, so you can agree easily on where you are going and what activities you will do there ...

It is okay if you hesitate and need time to think; there is plenty of time to do that

You can decide where you are going to go by doing research in different ways. You could ask a travel agent, or there will be information online about anywhere you might want to travel to. Read reviews on websites, and also ask people you know who have been to that country or area.

One mistake people often make is not realising how much a holiday is going to cost them. After all, you might pay for your actual holiday in advance, but what about spending money? You don't want to be worrying about money when you are on holiday, so I think it is a good idea to save up before you go. Always take a bit extra in local currency and make sure your bank allows you to use your card abroad. You can work out in advance roughly how much you want to spend each day and then stick to your budget.

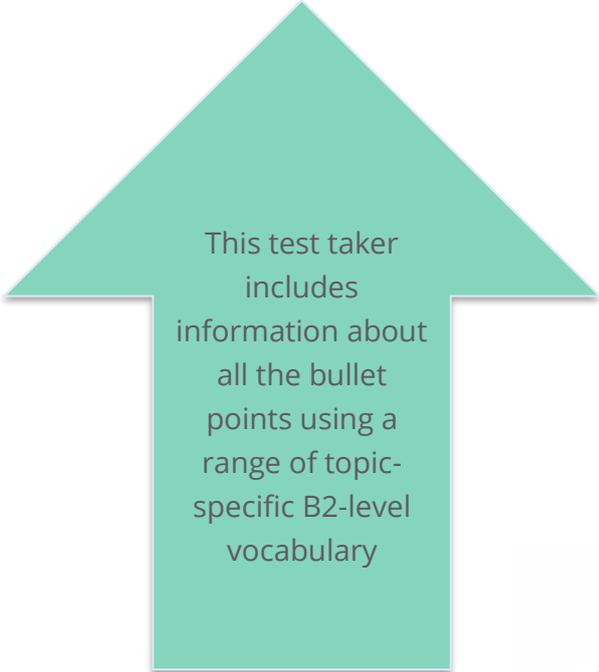
Think carefully about how you are going to travel. This will affect the price of the holiday and you may need to include extra time for travelling. Flying is often the most convenient way to travel, but it can be expensive and some people don't like flying. It may be better to take a ferry or a train if you have enough time. Or you could drive if you need to take lots of stuff with you – sports equipment, for example.

You can add extra information in your response

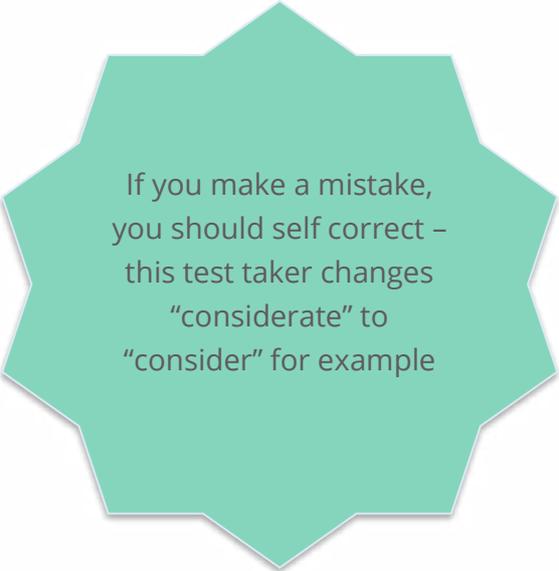
Sample response (continued)

Finally, deciding where to stay and the type of accommodation you need is one of the most important things to considerate ... to consider. Think about how many people are in your group and how much space you will need. Maybe self-catering would be best for you, or you might prefer to have all your meals included if you don't like the idea of having to cook and wash up while you're on holiday. Think about what facilities you want to have close to your accommodation, such as beaches, museums or shops.

As you can see, planning the perfectly holiday can be quite hard work – but it's worth doing the planning properly before you go to make sure you have a great time and feel relaxed when you get to your destination.



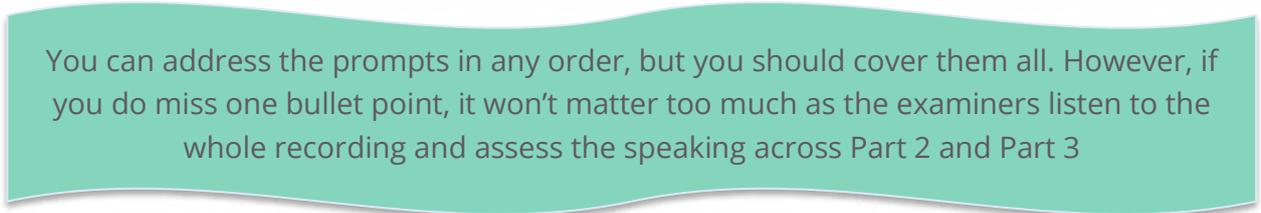
This test taker includes information about all the bullet points using a range of topic-specific B2-level vocabulary



If you make a mistake, you should self correct – this test taker changes “considerate” to “consider” for example



You should provide reasons and examples to support your ideas where possible



You can address the prompts in any order, but you should cover them all. However, if you do miss one bullet point, it won't matter too much as the examiners listen to the whole recording and assess the speaking across Part 2 and Part 3

The B2 Listening Test

There are three parts to the Listening test.

In Part 1, you will listen to 10 short recordings and answer 1 three-option multiple choice question (MCQ) after each recording.

In Part 2, you will listen to a longer conversation and answer 3 sentence-completion questions followed by 7 three-options multiple-choice questions (MCQs).

In Part 3, you will listen to a longer monologue and complete 10 note-completion questions.

You will hear each recording twice. You have time to read the questions before the recordings start and time to check your answers afterwards. However, you must make sure that you have answered the questions on the screen at the end of each recording before you move to the next part of the test.

You can take notes during the Listening test as you listen to the recordings. Someone from the test centre will collect these notes from you at the end of the Listening test.

Listening Part 1

Format of the task

In Part 1, you will listen to 10 short recordings, which may be dialogues or monologues. The topics will be on everyday topics and life contexts, which are appropriate and accessible for test takers at B2 level. For each recording, the script will be 60 to 90 words.

Questions in this part consist of a single three-option multiple choice question (MCQ) for each recording. The focus of these questions will be on identifying key information, and you will need to answer the questions as you listen. You will have time to read and check your answers, and you will hear each recording twice.

Skills/functions you need for Part 1

- Focus on identifying key information.
- Understanding of messages or recordings about everyday life, work or study, for example recorded messages, public announcements, short radio bulletins, or weather reports.
- Identifying speakers' mood, tone, point of view and so on.

Sample Listening Part 1 task

The extract below is an example of the type of recording and question you may encounter in Part 1 of the B2 Listening test.

There are both dialogues and monologues in Part 1

You will hear each recording played twice

Sample Script

Speaker 1	Hi Senita, it's Lisa. I know we were thinking about <u>going into town</u> this Saturday, but I just had to pay for my car to be repaired so I'm a bit short of cash and I can't really afford it. I considered <u>going for a drive somewhere out of the city</u> and getting some fresh air, but the weather forecast is awful. Do you fancy just coming to mine in the evening for a takeaway and a bit of a catch-up? Give me a ring back and let me know.
-----------	--

Sample Question

What is Lisa suggesting they do at the weekend?

- a. A shopping trip.
- b. An outing to the countryside.
- c. **A quiet dinner at home.**

You will hear the incorrect options (in this case a and b, underlined) mentioned in the script/recording, so listen for the details connected to each option in order to choose the correct option

MCQs will always have 3 options: 2 distractors and 1 correct answer

You should be able to understand paraphrasing; for example, "a drive" means the same as "an outing" and "out of the city" means "the countryside"

Listening Part 2

Format of the task

In Part 2, you will listen to a conversation between two or three speakers. The speakers will be exchanging information on everyday topics and issues which are accessible and appropriate for B2-level test takers. For Part 2, the script will be 650 to 800 words.

Questions in this part consist of 3 gapped sentence-completion questions, followed by 7 three-option multiple choice questions (MCQ). The focus of these questions will be on understanding of specific, detailed information, opinions, attitudes and feelings, agreement/disagreement, and negotiation of meaning.

You will need to answer the questions as you listen to the recording, and you will have time to read the questions beforehand and check your answers afterwards. You will hear each section played twice.

Skills/functions you need for Part 2

- Understanding of specific, detailed information, opinions, attitudes and feelings, agreement/disagreement, and negotiation of meaning.
- Understanding of main points/main message.
- Comprehension of familiar matters of a factual or abstract nature encountered in work, study or leisure, through discussion of issues of everyday interest, suggestions, and predictions of what will happen next.

Sample Listening Part 2 task

Below is an example of the type of recording and questions you may encounter in Part 2 of the B2 Listening test.

You have 20 seconds to read the first 3 questions before the recording starts

The first few lines of the script/recording usually set the scene

Part 2 is always a conversation between either 2 or 3 people with contrasting voices

Sample Script

Speaker 1	We are here today to talk to you about creating a good working environment. The average worker spends 45 years of their life working, and in an eight-hour working day, the average amount of time to be seated at your desk is five hours. Companies, of course, want employees to be working as efficiently as possible during those hours, but many employers do not realise that the office environment has such a major influence on production levels and overall workplace health.
Speaker 2	That's right. Ideally, employees should feel inspired, creative and energetic at work. At the same time, the working atmosphere should help them to focus on the job they need to do. There are a number of ways to improve your office space, to achieve the right balance between independent working and teamwork. Workers need the correct space to both work alone and cooperate with others when needed.

You will hear this first section of the recording played twice, giving you the chance to answer and then check your answers to questions 1, 2 and 3 before moving onto the rest of the conversation relating to questions 4 to 10

After you answer questions 1, 2 and 3, you have 40 seconds to read questions 4 to 10 before this next section of the recording starts

Speaker 1	A recent survey found out that access to natural light was the most important workplace benefit for employees, helping with mood and energy levels. Natural light improves health, while reducing eye strain, headaches and sleepiness. So, try to reduce the amount of artificial lighting you use if you can. If a company can arrange the workplace so that everyone can see a window and is exposed to some natural light during the day, there is likely to be an improvement in workers' moods.
Speaker 2 Q4	However, remember to make sure that employees can still see their computer screens properly. You may need to close curtains over some windows to avoid too much bright light if it is particularly sunny.
Speaker 1 Q5	Absolutely. And it goes without saying that if you are putting in all those hours at a work station, you want it to be comfortable at the very least – even beneficial to your body if possible. Check the height of desks, chairs and screens to make sure they are not going to cause any aches or pains. You could also try a standing or adjustable desk, although these can cost a bit of money.
Speaker 2 Q6	Those desks can really make a difference if you are one of the many people who suffer from back problems these days. And if you get used to working standing up, you could also try stand-up meetings which, as recent research has shown, have the benefit of being shorter than traditional seated meetings. Anyway, whether sitting or standing, workers should be able to reach their mouse easily with their arm at a right angle, the top of their monitors should be at eye level and their feet should be flat on the floor.
Speaker 1	Another thing to think about in the office is the colour scheme. If you have the option of decorating your office, think carefully about the colour you choose to paint the walls. While working in a plain white office isn't likely to offend anyone, adding a bit of colour can change the mood.

<p>Speaker 2</p> <p>Q7</p>	<p>Certainly. A 2021 study shows that green makes a space feel calmer, blue makes it more productive, and yellow and orange apparently make people feel more optimistic.</p>
<p>Speaker 1</p> <p>Q8</p>	<p>It's also important to remember that, while open plans are seen as fashionable and progressive, they may not suit everybody's needs. Most businesses will also need a range of separate spaces. For example, some of the management team might need an office for private conversations, and you will almost certainly need one or more meeting rooms. Quiet zones for thinking or working alone can also be useful as an open space tends to be noisy.</p>
<p>Speaker 2</p> <p>Q9</p>	<p>So, lots of options for different needs. One thing that is a little more difficult to manage is the temperature in the office. Unfortunately, it's common for workers to disagree about this, and there's no simple solution. It has been proven that women generally like their workspace to be warmer than men do, explaining why the women in our office tend to wear pullovers while the males are comfortable in t-shirts. There are also some studies that show that cooler temperatures make staff work harder and others show the exact opposite, which is not very helpful in settling the debate!</p>
<p>Speaker 1</p> <p>Q10</p>	<p>Well, maybe letting people choose whether they sit near a heater or a window is one solution, as is introducing more personalised heating control for different areas of the office. Otherwise, the temperature will have to remain the decision of the majority. As with most workplace decisions, involving the whole team is likely to have the most positive results.</p>
<p>Speaker 2</p>	<p>Exactly. Ask your staff how they prefer to work and identify the issues that are currently holding them back. Then you can make the best choices as managers. Getting these decisions right can be positive for work results and office atmosphere, as well as the health and wellbeing of all staff members.</p>

Like in all parts of the Listening test, you will hear this recording twice

Sample Questions

You should read the instructions for the sentence-completion questions carefully as they can vary from test to test (e.g. "write ONE WORD OR A NUMBER" or "write ONE OR TWO WORDS")

1. In general, office workers spend about _____ hours per day sitting down.
2. Employees need to be able to _____ on their work.
3. The working environment should enable people to work alone and _____ with colleagues.

The questions are always in order, so you will hear the answer to Q1 first, then Q2, then Q3 etc.

4. What do the speakers say about natural light?
 - a. Too much natural light can cause headaches.
 - b. Artificial light and natural light have the same benefits.
 - c. **Natural light can make it difficult to see your computer screen.**

5. What do the speakers say about work stations?
 - a. Spending long periods at your desk is bad for you.
 - b. **Badly set up equipment may result in pain.**
 - c. Expensive furniture is easier to adjust.

MCQs will always have 3 options: 2 distractors and 1 correct answer

6. One benefit of having a standing desk is that
 - a. it's easier to set up your equipment correctly.
 - b. it can make your work day seem shorter.
 - c. **It is better for your back.**
7. If you want to make staff members feel relaxed at work, you should paint the office
 - a. white.
 - b. **green.**
 - c. orange.

You should expect to see a mix of MCQ stems: some questions to answer and some sentences to complete

8. Why don't some people like open-plan offices?
- a. **They are too limiting.**
 - b. They are too modern.
 - c. They are too relaxed.
9. What did the results of the studies on office temperature show?
- a. **The studies did not reach the same conclusion.**
 - b. Females prefer a cooler working environment.
 - c. Colder temperatures make staff work harder.
10. What do the speakers agree on about making decisions?
- a. Managers can make the best choices for their staff.
 - b. **Staff members should be asked for their opinion.**
 - c. Decisions should be based on the health of the workers.

You should use the second recording to check your answers and change any if you want to

Answers

- 1. five / 5
- 2. focus
- 3. cooperate / co-operate
- 4. c
- 5. b
- 6. c
- 7. b
- 8. a
- 9. a
- 10. b

If an answer is a number, you can write either the word (e.g. "five") or the number (e.g. "5")

If there is more than one accepted spelling of a word (e.g. "cooperate" and "co-operate" in Q3), both are accepted; this is also true of British English or American English spelling (e.g. "organized" or "organised" would both be marked as correct)

Listening Part 3

Format of the task

In Part 3, you will listen to an extended monologue, for example a talk or a lecture. Scripts contain between 460 and 600 words at B2 level. Topics will be related to everyday issues appropriate to B2-level test takers.

There are ten questions in Listening Part 3. You must complete a set of notes by listening and writing words from the recording. These questions will focus on key information. You will need to answer the questions as you listen, and you will need to spell the words correctly.

You will have time to read the questions before you hear the recording, and time to check your answers after you listen. You will hear the monologue played twice.

Skills/functions you need for Part 3

- Comprehension of main ideas in complex speeches or talks, following a line or argument or a case.
- Understanding of specific information and distinguishing main themes.
- Following talks on concrete or abstract topics.

Sample Listening Part 3

Below is an example of the type of recording and questions you may encounter in Part 3 of the B2 Listening test.

Listening Part 3 is always a monologue, meaning there is only one speaker

Sample Script

Good morning everyone and welcome to Balcroft Castle. My name is Hannah and I am a tour guide here. Before we start our tour, I would like to tell you a little bit about the history of the castle. There has been some kind of accommodation on this site since 857 AD when the first manor house was built of earth and timber. It was not until after the Norman Conquest of 1066 that the construction of the **stone** castle you can see today began. This castle grew in size significantly over the following centuries until it was handed over to the royal family to be used as a palace in 1342.

After the castle had avoided destruction during the civil wars of the 17th century, it was used as a private hospital to house the sick and elderly in the 18th century and then later held **prisoners** from overseas until the early 20th century. Lady Morsden became the first private owner of Balcroft Castle in 1926. She loved her new home and brought in French interior designers to transform it. She spent many years lovingly supervising major **improvements** to the castle and, most importantly in my opinion, she set up the "Castle Trust" in 1952, which ensured the conservation of the castle in future years. In **1976**, the doors of the castle were opened to the general public for the first time.

These days there are many events held at the castle throughout the year. One thing you might like to do is watch the amazing **daily** wild bird display, in which you will get the chance to see wild birds like eagles flying freely around the castle. For children, there is the "Explorers Club" where one of our experts will take a group of children around the grounds of the castle and show them many different animals, plants and flowers. Every child will be given a worksheet to fill in and keep as a souvenir of their **wildlife** walk. This is a really enjoyable and educational activity for children aged between six and twelve. Parents are of course welcome to join in ... or, ummm, you can choose to have a coffee in the café if you prefer.

The audio clips contain "real language use" such as contractions (e.g. I'm, we're, that's) and hesitations (e.g. ummm, errr)

Sample Script (continued ...)

There are many small concerts and plays performed throughout the year at the castle. Then every July we hold a series of spectacular open-air concerts, bringing together world-class music and dance with famous international performers. Just to warn you that tickets for these events do always sell out quickly so it's worth booking in advance if you want to come to one of these special nights out. While you are watching the performances, you can enjoy a picnic under the stars, then you can watch the wonderful fireworks at the end of the night. These events really are the highlight of our summer season each year.

Finally, there's one last thing you may not be aware of. You can actually spend a few days staying here in one of our twenty historic family-friendly cottages, which are situated all around the lake and surrounded by wonderful woods and fields. Staying on-site entitles you to free entry to the castle and its attractions during the day. And once the gates to the estate have been closed to daytime visitors, you are free to explore in the evening. There's plenty to keep the children busy and happy during their stay, and no need to leave anyone at home because pets are welcome too.

Now, let's start our tour of the castle, shall we? If you'd like to follow me ...

Sample Questions

You should read the instructions for the sentence-completion questions carefully as they can vary from test to test (e.g. "write ONE WORD OR A NUMBER" or "write ONE OR TWO WORDS")

You should read the notes before the recording starts and predict what kind of words you need to use in each gap – for example, Q1 is likely to be an adjective and Q2 a noun

Balcroft Castle

History

- Original manor built in 857 > first parts of [1] _____ castle added after 1066
- Became a royal palace in 1342
- Then used as a hospital, before foreign [2] _____ were kept there
- Many [3] _____ made under Lady Morsden & creation of "Castle Trust"
- The public have been able to visit the castle since [4] _____

Events

- Wild bird displays held [5] _____
- Explorers Club: children can go on a [6] _____ walk
- July concerts:
 - featuring [7] _____ from all over the world
 - advisable to buy tickets in advance
 - evenings end with [8] _____

Accommodation

- Visitors who stay in [9] _____ on castle grounds:
 - get free entry to castle during the day
 - can explore the [10] _____ in the evening

You have 1 minute to read the notes before the recording starts, then 30 seconds after the second play to check your answers

You must spell your answers (the gapped words) correctly

Answers

1. stone
2. prisoners
3. improvements
4. 1976
5. daily
6. wildlife
7. performers
8. fireworks
9. cottage(s)
10. estate

The B2 Reading Test

There are three parts to the Reading test. You have 75 minutes for the B2 Reading test.

In Part 1, you will read 5 short texts and answer 10 three-option multiple choice questions (MCQs) – two for each text.

In Part 2, you will read a single longer text and answer 10 questions (True/False/Not Given, matching, sentence completion or MCQs). Texts will be informational, such as a brochure, instruction manual or letter.

In Part 3, you will read a longer text and answer 10 questions (sentence completion, note completion, MCQs or matching). Texts will explore a topic in more detail.

You are permitted to take notes during the Reading test; however, you must make sure that you have answered the questions on the screen after reading each text before you move to the next part of the test.

Reading Part 1

Format of the task

In Part 1 of the Reading test, you will read 5 short texts with a maximum word limit of 250 words each. The text types can include web pages, blogs, news reports and so on. The content will be appropriate to B2 test takers.

There will be 10 questions in total for Part 1- two for each text. The type of questions in this part are three-option multiple choice questions.

The language of the texts and questions is accessible and appropriate to test takers at B2 level. You should spend approximately 25 minutes on Part 1.

Skills/functions you need for Part 1

- Comprehension of a straightforward text
- Understanding the main message of a short text
- Understanding the main points being communicated
- Understanding of specific information
- Reading for information, orientation or instruction

Sample Reading Part 1

Below is an example of the type of text and question you may encounter in Part 1 of the B2 Reading test. Remember there are 5 texts with two questions each in Part 1.

Sample Text

[information at a vet's clinic]

Travelling abroad with your pet

More and more people take their pets abroad with them these days, and this means they are likely to need the services of a specialist animal transfer company. Of course, a pet is part of the family and therefore, like any other treasured possession, you want to ensure that your pet is safe and properly cared for during the journey. In order to ensure that this is the case, it is essential that you communicate with and receive estimates from a number of specialist animal transport companies. Be careful as some of these may be very expensive. It is extremely important that you have full knowledge of what's covered (including insurance) so that you know what you are personally responsible for. Before you make any final decisions, check out trustworthy reports from people who have already used the companies in the past, to give yourself peace of mind about the quality of the service on offer.

In most situations, your animal will be transported as live animal cargo. In planes, this will be a special area in the plane which is kept at a comfortable temperature. There will probably be an extra charge for this. In some circumstances, you may be allowed to transport your pet with you as extra luggage in the main passenger section of the plane. However, this changes from airline to airline and is also affected by the type of animal that you intend to transport; therefore, you must confirm these details with the airline you intend to travel with. Finally, any arrangements to transport your pet should only be made after you have sought advice from your vet.

Note how the text uses authentic language relative to its context or genre

Something related to the incorrect options (see underlined sections) is always mentioned in the text, so you need to read carefully

Sample Questions

1. When booking a pet transport service, you are advised to
 - a. use the most expensive company.
 - b. check customer reviews of the company.**
 - c. take out separate pet insurance.

2. According to the text, which of the following statements is true?
 - a. You must have permission from your vet before you transport your pet.
 - b. Airlines have to charge you extra to take your pet as additional baggage.
 - c. In certain situations, you can have your pet with you on the plane.**

MCQs will always have 3 options: 2 distractors and 1 correct answer

You should expect a mix of MCQs: sentences to complete (as in Q1) and questions to answer (as in Q2)

Reading Part 2

Format of the task

In Part 2 of the Reading test, you will read one longer text of 450 to 600 words. The texts are informational and can include brochures, manuals, letters of instruction/communication (for example from local council, hospitals), leaflets, websites and so on. The language will be appropriate to B2 test takers.

There are 10 questions in total in Part 2. The types of questions in this part are True/False/Not Given (T/F/NG), three-option multiple choice questions (MCQs), sentence completion and matching, but you will see only 1 or 2 of these item types, for example, 5 MCQs and 5 T/F/NG. The focus of these questions will be on reading for information, orientation and instruction.

The language of the texts and questions is accessible and appropriate to test takers at B2 level. You should spend approximately 25 minutes on Part 2.

Skills/functions you need for Part 2

- Ability to read for information, orientation and instruction
- Understanding of a variety of text types written for information
- Understanding of key information

Sample Reading Part 2

Below is an example of the type of text and questions you may encounter in Part 2 of the B2 Reading test.

The Part 2 text is informational in nature and usually contains aspects like bullet points and/or headings

This text is 585 words including the headings

Sample Text

Taking a UK driving test

Q1 In the UK, people can start driving when they are 17 years old on a “provisional” licence. All learner drivers must be supervised by a qualified driver over the age of 21 who has had a driving licence for at least three years, and have learner signs (a red “L”) displayed on both the back and the front of the vehicle.

Driving eyesight rules

Q3 If you usually wear contact lenses or glasses, you must wear them during the test. In fact, you should wear them whenever you drive. You must tell the DVLA (Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency) if you have a problem with your eyesight that affects both of your eyes. However, you do not need to report if you have had any surgery to correct sight problems and can now meet the eyesight standards. The examiner will check that you can read a car number plate from a distance of 20 metres (you can wear glasses or contact lenses to do this). It is against the law to drive without meeting the standards of vision for driving.

The theory test

Q4
Q5 This is a test you must take and pass before you are allowed to take the practical driving test. Books and software to revise for the theory test are available at no cost from the test centre. Once you feel that you are ready to take the theory test, take a practice theory test to check how much you have learned. In order to book your theory test, you must have been a resident in England, Wales or Scotland for a minimum of 6 months of the year before the date of your theory test.

Taking your practice test

You must take the following with you on the day of your practical test:

- Your provisional UK driving licence.
- If you have a copy of your theory test pass certificate, you should take it to the test. However, it is not essential that you have this with you on the test day as, before your practical test begins, your examiner will be able to check **online** to see that you have passed your theory test.
- A car. In most cases, people take their test in their driving instructor's car as this is the one they are most familiar with, but as long as your own car meets all the **requirements**, you can take your test in it if you wish.

The test will take about 40 minutes and will start with the eyesight test. Afterwards, the examiner will instruct you to drive in a variety of different road and traffic conditions. The examiner will tell you which direction to take while you are driving. You will never be asked to drive on a **motorway** during your test. However, you will not be able to find out the **routes** in advance that the examiner might take as they are not made available to the public. You will be asked to stop and drive away again several times during your test, including moving out from behind a parked car and doing a hill start. You will most likely be expected to do an **emergency stop** during the test. The examiner will tell you at the beginning of the test if they intend to do this, and it will involve them suddenly saying "Stop!" in a loud voice at any point during the test when it is safe to do so.

T/F/NG questions
will progress
chronologically
through the text

Sample Questions

For each question, 1 to 5, choose True, False or Not Given.

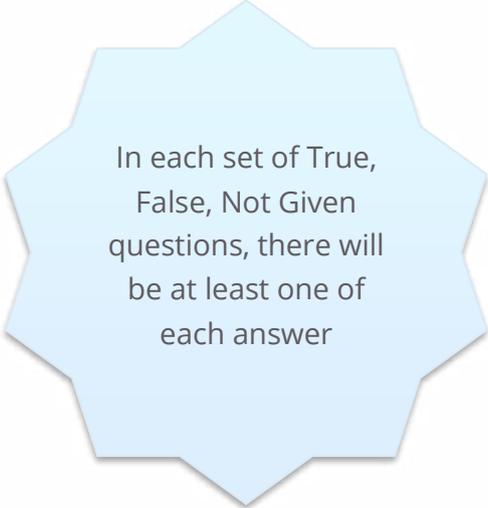
1. Anyone who has passed their driving test can teach others to drive.
2. It's advisable to buy new glasses before you take the test.
3. You cannot take a test if you have recently had an operation on your eyes.
4. The theory test is the first test you will need to do.
5. There are free resources available to help you study for the theory test.

For questions 6 to 10, complete the sentences with ONE OR TWO WORDS from the text.

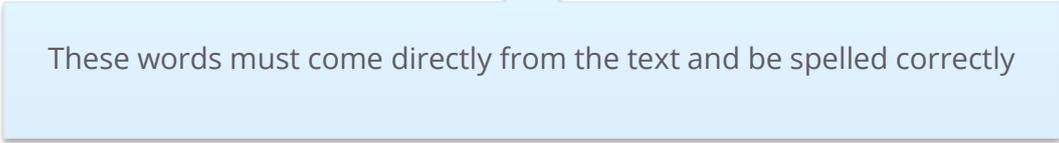
6. Your theory test results can be seen _____ by the examiner.
7. There are certain _____ if you take the test in your own car.
8. _____ driving is never included in the test.
9. Test _____ are not published.
10. The examiner will let you know if they want you to do a/an _____ during the test.

Answers

1. F
2. NG
3. F
4. T
5. T
6. online
7. requirements
8. motorway
9. routes
10. emergency stop



In each set of True, False, Not Given questions, there will be at least one of each answer



These words must come directly from the text and be spelled correctly

Reading Part 3

Format of the task

In Part 3 of the Reading test, you will read one longer text of 600 to 750 words. The text will explore a particular topic in some depth. It can be factual or narrative, and it will be appropriate to B2 test takers.

There will be 10 questions in total in Part 3. The types of questions in this part are three-option multiple choice questions (MCQs), matching (for example, matching topics to paragraphs), note taking and sentence completion, but you will see only 1 or 2 of these item types. The focus of these questions will be on detailed understanding, gist, inference, global meaning, opinions, attitudes and purpose.

The language of the texts and questions is accessible and appropriate to test takers at B2 level. You should spend approximately 25 minutes on Part 3.

Skills/functions you need for Part 3

- Reading to locate information including for note taking purposes
- Comprehension of writer's views and opinions
- Identifying meaning of unknown words from the context
- Following a line of argument or event in a narrative, written simply and directly

Sample Reading Part 3

Below is an example of the type of text and questions you may encounter in Part 3 of the B2 Reading test.

You should not worry if you don't understand every word in the text – you should instead try to understand the gist/global meaning

This text is 720 words including the paragraph titles

Sample Text

Paragraph A

These days it is not unusual for people to find themselves stuck in a daily or weekly routine that leads to a life with few challenges or new experiences. To a certain extent, we all have a schedule to stick to, but this means there is always a risk that our days will lack inspiration – especially if we spend too much time doing pointless activities that do not stimulate our minds, like scrolling through social media or staring at the TV, or develop bad habits that hold back our personal success. Introducing a new hobby into your life can add excitement and personal satisfaction, while also benefitting your physical and mental health.

Paragraph B

Having a hobby can be the ideal way to relax. Your hobby should be something that helps you to forget your everyday demands and worries, and reduces negative feelings and emotions, while at the same time teaching you new and valuable lessons. Everyone deserves to take a break on a regular basis, and a hobby gives you this opportunity, while also making you feel as if you are achieving something worthwhile. You will gain more knowledge, which is incredibly satisfying. Maybe you want to learn a new language or sport. Whatever the hobby, practice makes perfect!

Paragraph C

Hobbies give you the chance to push yourself and explore your talents – you may surprise yourself. It is only by trying new things that we find out what we are really capable of; for example, you might assume that you would never be interested in taking up golf because you find it very boring to watch on television – but if you try playing, you may find you are naturally talented at it ... or even if not, you may still enjoy it! Hobbies can help you make unexpected discoveries about your strengths and weaknesses.

Paragraph D

One unexpected result of having a hobby is that it can also benefit your life at work. You should feel more relaxed and be able to achieve a better work-life balance. It gives you the opportunity to free your mind of your work and career

Q2

Q6

Q5

Q7

Q1

Q8

worries. So, if you spend time after work doing something you enjoy, for example cycling or painting, you will focus on more positive things for the rest of the evening rather than thinking about what happened at work that day. This can result in you returning to work the following day with a new determination to succeed. Having a hobby also shows employers another side to your character and that you have interest in things outside work and a commitment to doing something productive in your free time.

Paragraph E

Some hobbies can even turn into money-making activities if you are talented enough. Perhaps you take up jewellery making and find that your friends and neighbours want to buy what you have made. People have even been known to form new full-time careers out of an activity that was initially something they just did for fun; for example, an enthusiastic gardener might discover they have a natural skill with plants and flowers, which may lead to a new business in garden design.

Q3

Paragraph F

Finally, pushing your limits and trying out new activities will help you build your self-confidence as you achieve things you didn't think were possible when you first started. Each time you progress with your hobby, you are teaching yourself – and proving to others – that you are able to achieve great things. Everyone feels a sense of pride and self-respect when they achieve something or do something well. Of course, there are stages of discovery and improvement with every activity, but once you become more confident, it will motivate you to continue.

Q9

Paragraph G

To sum up, whatever type of hobby you decide to take up, having one will help you grow in many ways. Hobbies give you new experiences and make you more interesting to other people as you share your knowledge and enthusiasm. Without a doubt, taking up a new hobby can greatly improve your life in many ways. So, why not set aside some time daily – even just half an hour – and devote that time to a new passion that has no connection to your career or the things you already do? Who knows where it might take you!

Q4

Sample Questions

Which paragraphs contain the following information?
Match each statement (1-5) to the correct paragraph (A-G).

1. You may not always be good at the hobby you choose.
2. Some people are fed up of doing the same thing every day.
3. Interest in a hobby could lead to a change in career.
4. You should dedicate a little time daily to a new hobby.
5. Hobbies can be educational.

For questions 6 to 10, choose the correct answer, a, b or c.

6. What point does the writer make about too much screen time?
 - a. It is boring.
 - b. It does not have much value.**
 - c. It is not good for your health.
7. What does the writer suggest about golf?
 - a. Watching it on the television might be different from playing it.**
 - b. Lots of people are better at it than they think they are going to be.
 - c. It's a boring sport to learn how to play.
8. According to the writer, how could you impress your boss?
 - a. By cycling to work.
 - b. By being devoted to a hobby.**
 - c. By arriving at work with a positive attitude.
9. Reaching a high level in your chosen hobby makes you more likely to ...
 - a. Start another hobby.
 - b. Teach the hobby to someone else.
 - c. Want to carry on the same hobby.**
10. Which of the following would be the best title for the text?
 - a. The pros and cons of starting a new hobby.
 - b. Want to make friends? Take up a new hobby!
 - c. Try something new to find the new you!**

If there is this kind of global question – asking for a title, purpose or main point of the text – it will come at the end

Answers

1. C
2. A
3. E
4. G
5. B
6. b
7. a
8. b
9. c
10. c

Where there are matching questions, these questions are not always in chronological order whereas all other questions are

The B2 Writing Test

There are two parts to the Writing test.

In Part 1, you write a passage (100 to 140 words) in response to a given scenario.

In Part 2, you write a longer passage (150 to 200 words) on a given topic.

You can take notes during the Writing test; however, you must make sure that you have typed your responses in the text boxes on the screen within the given time limit.

You will have 1 hour for the Writing test. We recommend you spend about 20 minutes on Part 1 and 40 minutes on Part 2.

Writing Part 1

Format of the task

In Writing Part 1, you will see a scenario or situation followed by a series of 3 bullet points.

The scenarios will draw from everyday life situations and will be authentic in nature, requiring some kind of response from you. The response may need to be formal, neutral or informal depending on the scenario. You may be asked to write an email, a blog post, a forum post or a similar digital piece of communication.

You will need to address the requirements of the scenario and all three bullets in order to be able to achieve maximum marks available for the Appropriacy and Relevance of Response criterion. The task will include instructions about the number of words you should write; at B2 level, you are required to write between 100 and 140 words in Part 1. It is recommended that you spend around 20 minutes on Part 1.

Your responses should follow expected conventions, for example:

- Emails should have an appropriate start and finish. There is no need for you to put in email addresses or a subject line.
- Other digital formats should also have an introduction, a main section which addresses the bullet points, paragraphed if appropriate, and a closing section, which may summarise or provide conclusions as appropriate.
- Language and structure should be suitable for the level and you should use appropriate cohesive devices

Skills/functions you need for part 1

The following list provides examples of the skills or functions which may be elicited:

- Explaining a situation
- Describing something that has happened
- Requesting information
- Recommending a course of action
- Giving own opinion

You are marked on:

- Relevance and appropriacy of response, coherence and structure – score between 0 and 5
- Grammar: Accuracy and Range – score between 0 and 5
- Vocabulary: Accuracy and Range – score between 0 and 5

Sample Writing Part 1

Below is an example of the type of task you may encounter in Part 1 of the B2 Writing test.

The scenario provides some background to the task and identifies the recipient

You have seen an advert for a job vacancy that you want to apply for.

Write an email to the manager of the company.

In your email:

- describe what kind of work you are doing now.
- explain why you are the best person for the job.
- Ask them a question about the role.

The required response will usually be digital, for example an email

The bullet points give an indication of what you should include in your answer; you do not have to address the bullet points in order, but you must include some information on every one

Write your email here. You should write between 100 and 140 words.

There is a minimum and maximum word count; the system will not allow you to write more than the maximum number of words

Sample response

There is a clear greeting here

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to express my interest in the job as sales assistant in your clothes shop. At the moment I am working at a coffee shop, but I would like to do something different. I have had some experience working in my uncle's shop and I believe I have good customer service skills. I am passionate about fashion and clothes, and would be able to give customers advice on what suits them. I am also a reliable, punctual and hard-working person.

Bullet 1 is addressed here

Bullet 2 is addressed here

Do you require a reference? If so, I can ask my current employer to provide one. And when will the job start? I will be available full-time in two weeks' time as I will have finished college by then.

Bullet 3 is addressed here

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours,

Eun Jung Kim

[136 words]

This sample response includes B2-level vocabulary such as *current*, *express*, *passionate* and *reference*

This sample response includes a variety of structures: present continuous, present perfect, future simple, future perfect

This semi-formal email ends with appropriate wording

Writing Part 2

Format of the task

In Writing Part 2, you will see a statement setting out an issue or providing a viewpoint or something similar.

The statement introduces a topic that can be explored and discussed by you. The statement is followed by a series of 3 bullet points which list the areas of content that you should focus on in your response. The topic and language within the task will be level appropriate and will draw from everyday life situations.

Your response should address the instructions you have been given (for example “discuss” or “describe”) and cover all the bullet points. The response should be well-structured with an introduction, the main body of your response and a conclusion. The response should be appropriately paragraphed.

The task may ask you to present your own opinions and you should ensure you provide these in your response. The task will include instructions about the number of words you should write; at B2 level, you are required to write between 150 and 200 words in Part 2. It is recommended that you spend around 40 minutes on Part 2.

Skills/functions you need for Part 2

The following list provides examples of the skills or functions which may be elicited:

- Describing a situation
- Discussing a question
- Discussing advantages and disadvantages
- Comparing and contrasting
- Discussing solutions to a problem
- Discussing the impact of something on everyday life

You are marked on:

- Relevance and appropriacy of response, coherence and structure – score between 0 and 5
- Grammar: Accuracy and Range – score between 0 and 5
- Vocabulary: Accuracy and Range – score between 0 and 5

Sample Writing Part 2

Below is an example of the type of task you may encounter in Part 2 of the B2 Writing test.

The first sentence provides a context and topic



In many countries, people do not recycle their rubbish as much as they could.

What can be done to change this?

Write about:

- **why it is important to recycle.**
 - **why you think people don't recycle.**
 - **how people could be encouraged to recycle.**
- 

The bullet points give an indication of what you should include in your answer; you do not have to address the bullet points in order, but you must include some information on every one

Write your answer here. You should write between 150 and 200 words.

The system will not allow you to type more than the maximum number of words in the text box

Sample response

With the many problems affecting the environment these days, it is becoming increasingly important that people recycle as many waste products as they can. Recycling changes rubbish into useful products that can be re-used, as well as protecting natural resources and preventing pollution.

Firstly, we need to look at why people may not currently recycle. One reason is that they may not be aware of the importance of recycling and, therefore, it is the responsibility of schools and governments to educate the population. Secondly, in some areas, there are not enough recycling facilities, such as bins. This makes it difficult for people to recycle things even if they want to.

There are some quite simple solutions to this problem, however. If every household, or even every street, is provided with recycling bins, people should make an effort to use them. Governments could produce leaflets with information letting people know what they can and cannot recycle. Lastly, far less packaging – especially plastic – should be used by shops and other businesses. If these measures are taken, hopefully people will become more environmentally friendly in the future.

[184 words]

The first paragraph introduces the topic and addresses bullet point 1

The second paragraph addresses bullet point 2

The third paragraph addresses bullet point 3 and concludes the topic

This test taker uses a variety of cohesive markers, such as *Firstly*, *therefore* and *however* to organise their ideas

This sample response includes a range of B2-level vocabulary, such as *affecting*, *aware*, *increasingly*, *household*, *leaflets*, *measures* and *responsibility*