

Pass the B1 English Test (Speaking and Listening)

*An Essential Guide to British
Citizenship/Indefinite Leave
to Remain*

(The British Citizen Series)

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Introduction

[INTRODUCTION TO YOUR GUIDE]

Hello, and welcome to your guide, *Pass the B1 Speaking and Listening Test*. If you are reading this, then the chances are you've decided to become a British citizen. This is a brave and exciting choice, which will have fantastic benefits for you. However, it's also time consuming and expensive. The application process is long and arduous. Luckily, this guide is here to help!

As the third book in our *British Citizen Series*, this guide will provide you with a complete breakdown of the B1 Speaking and Listening test. Since 2010, there have been many changes to the UK citizenship laws. So, this book contains the most up to date information for the tests.

The English language speaking and listening test will form an essential part of the process of becoming a naturalised British citizen, or a permanent resident. This test is used in conjunction with the Life in the UK test, where both results will count towards your final assessment. As part of your application for British citizenship, you'll need to provide the Home Office with both sets of results.

In this book, we'll be taking you through the process of passing the B1 Speaking and Listening test.

[HOW TO USE THIS BOOK]

This book has been written to help you understand how to pass the speaking and listening English language tests. In order to do this, we'll run through both sets of tests, to help you decide which one is the best option for you. Following this, we'll give you advice on preparation, revision and perfecting your language technique, to ensure that you pass the test.

Throughout this book, we've provided you with a number of practice questions, to help you track your progress and recap on what you've learnt. The questions in this guide are extremely similar to what you will encounter in the real assessment, so make sure that by the end of the guide, you are comfortable answering them.

In order to use this book in the most effective manner, we advise that you take notes as you progress. Once you are finished with the content, you can then use these notes in your revision.

This book will cover all 6 learning levels. We'll start with A1 – beginner's level, and then move on to A2 all the way through to C2, which is the most advanced level.

Now, let's move onto learning some key info about the assessment.

[ABOUT THE TEST]

There are a total of two speaking and listening tests which are currently accepted by the UK Home Office for British citizenship. **Please note:** you only need to pass one of these tests.

These tests are:

- The Trinity GESE Grade 5 Exam;
- The IELTS Life Skills Test.

Both of these tests are run under different formats, but each of them is designed to assess whether the candidate meets the Common European Framework reference (CEFR) standards of English.

The CEFR was created as a guide by the Council of Europe, and is used by the examiners to judge your English skills. The CEFR guidelines are used almost universally, as a way of assessing candidates. The IELTS Life Skills test and the Trinity GESE Grade 5 test both use different tasks to assess users. However, both tests require Independent Users to fulfil the expectations laid out by CEFR.

When taking the assessment, always make sure that you are sitting the test at a Secure English Language Test (SELT) Centre. This is the only centre from which test results will be accepted.

Candidates can choose which test they would prefer to take. If you wish to

become a British citizen, or are applying for indefinite leave to remain, then you will need to take the B1 Speaking and Listening test at CEFR B1 level. If you are taking this test, then you will be known as an 'Independent User'. Independent users must prove that they have the necessary skills to deal with key topics of conversation (such as travelling) and other fundamental elements of life in the UK.

Please note that if you are from a majority English speaking country, or have achieved a degree which was taught in English, then you won't need to take the assessment.

[HOW ARE THE TESTS MARKED?]

At each learning level, the tests will assess your speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. If you are applying for citizenship or settlement, then you will only be required to demonstrate your speaking and listening skills.

The B1 test is some way off the required standard for C2 Advanced Users, and therefore it will reassure you to know that it's not too difficult. During your examination, the examiner will cross-check your language skills against a checklist in front of them, to see how closely it matches.

The examiner will also be looking at other qualities, such as the pronunciation of your words and how clearly you speak, the quality of your physical interaction, and how well you understand what they are saying to you.

[HOW CAN I IMPRESS THE EXAMINER?]

In order to impress the examiner, you will need to show them that you can meet the requirements expected of a B1 Independent User.

The requirements are measured on the following:

- The fluency of your speech;
- The quality of your English interaction;

- The accuracy of your speech;
- Your range of vocab;
- Your pronunciation.

When taking the assessment, you will be expected to talk with the examiner, in simple terms about familiar/everyday scenarios and situations. For example, conversing with someone whilst travelling, asking for directions or ordering a meal.

The assessor will not expect you to talk at the same level as someone who has lived in the UK for their entire life, nor will you be required to speak for long periods of time or about extremely complex subjects. You'll need to show the examiner that you are able to interact to a sufficient level in English, by speaking clearly and accurately, and showing a good range of vocabulary.

INTERACTING WITH THE EXAMINER

When taking your assessment, you won't just be judged on your level of speech, but how well you interact as a whole. So, simply repeating responses to the examiner will not gain you a high mark. You will need to go out of your way to try and interact with them, making comments, agreeing, nodding, shaking your head or asking them extra questions.

On some occasions, you may be asked to sit the test along with another test-taker, who you will need to converse with. The examiner will then judge you based on how well you interact with that person.

Always remember that while you are not being judged on your personality, it's best to be as open and chatty as possible for this assessment. While you might well be able to speak in complex terms about certain subjects, controversial views will not help your case, and could result in you scoring poorly. You should do your best to put your personality across, but don't be overbearing.

One of the best and most basic pieces of preparation advice that we can give you is to practise your speech beforehand. This is especially true if you are someone who often pauses/stops whilst speaking, or struggles to think of things to say. If this is the case, it will be evident in the exam, and you will lose marks. That being said, the examiner will expect you to think for a moment or two before responding. This is normal practice, especially if speaking slowly, clearly and pronouncing each word helps you to demonstrate your language ability.

While you won't be judged based on how well you pronounce certain words or your accent, it's essential that the examiner can understand what you are saying.

VOCABULARY SKILLS

As mentioned, during the assessment you will need to show that you are able to use a wide range of vocabulary. This means being able to use words and phrases from common scenarios and situations. It's important to remember that if you don't understand a particular expression, you are allowed to ask the examiner to clarify or expand on what was said.

While you should try to avoid this where possible, asking for the occasional bit of help won't damage your chances of success. It's far better to ask for clarification, and then give a clear, in-depth and precise answer; than to give an answer that is lacking these qualities. When you do reply to the examiner, it's also best to try and do so in proper English.

While studying for the assessment, or living in the country, there is a good chance you will have picked up certain slang terms. Don't use these. Try and be as formal as possible, without seeming unnatural. Also, being polite is very important.

LISTENING SKILLS

Listening is a core part of the assessment. You'll need to show that you can listen and then respond to lines of conversation, and questions from the

assessor. The better you can respond to exactly what is being asked of you, the better your listening skills will be judged.

During the IELTS Life Skills test, there is a chance that you will be required to listen to recordings, and then complete a listening exercise, testing your ability to remember what you have just heard. Therefore, your ability to listen and take in information needs to be at a high level.

THE B1 TESTS

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there are two types of B1 assessment:

- The Trinity GESE Grade 5 Exam;
- The IELTS Life Skills Test.

You can choose which of the above tests you wish to take. Let's take a look at the two tests in a bit more detail.

CHAPTER 1

Your Assessment

ABOUT THE B1 TESTS

Both the IELTS Life Skills B1 Test and the Trinity ISE I B1 Test are Secure English Language Tests (SELT) approved for UK visa applications. They assess your English proficiency to ensure it meets the B1 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Despite their shared purpose, the two tests have different structures, formats, and focuses, making them suitable for different needs.

Feature	Trinity ISE I B1	IELTS Life Skills B1
Duration	Full day	22 minutes
Skills Tested	Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing	Speaking, Listening
Test Environment	Examiner-led (Speaking/Listening) + group for Reading/Writing	Conducted with another candidate and an examiner
Listening Tasks	Listening to recordings and giving oral responses	Listening to audio recordings and answering
Speaking Tasks	Prepared topics, conversations with examiner	Paired discussions and planning tasks
Writing Tasks	Includes essays and summaries	Not included
Reading Tasks	Includes multiple-choice and written tasks	Not included
Who It's For	Those needing all four skills assessed	Those proving speaking/listening skills only

Both assessments are designed to examine how well you can deal with everyday situations that you'll encounter in an English-speaking country. There is no limit to how many times you can take each test again (if you fail), although you will need to pay for re-takes.

As we have mentioned, the tests will examine your ability to navigate everyday situations that you'll encounter in an English-speaking country.

This includes subjects such as:

- Buying items from a shop;
- How you spend your free time;
- Travelling;
- Discussing your family, friends and colleagues.

Now, let's look at each test individually.

B1 English Test: Trinity ISE I Overview

The Trinity B1 ISE I is a Secure English Language Test (SELT) required for various UK visa applications, such as Skilled Worker, Health and Care Worker, Scale-up Worker, and some Student visas. It assesses all four language skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. The test is taken over the course of one full day at an approved Trinity SELT centre.

During the test, you will complete two main sections: Reading & Writing and Speaking & Listening. These sections are split into smaller tasks, and each skill is evaluated independently to ensure your English proficiency meets the B1 level according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Below, we break down each section of the Trinity ISE I test in detail:

Reading and Writing Section

This section lasts for two hours and includes four tasks:

Long Reading Task: You will read a single passage of text and answer 15 questions about it. Topics may include travel, transport, money, or music.

Multi-Text Reading Task: You will read four shorter texts and answer 15 questions based on them. Topics often cover subjects like fashion, festivals, personal experiences, or special occasions.

Reading into Writing Task: You'll use information from the four texts in the Multi-Text Reading Task to produce a written response.

Extended Writing Task: You will produce a written response, such as an essay or letter, based on a given prompt. Topics could include rules and regulations, health and fitness, entertainment, or travel.

You will complete this section in a test room alongside other candidates. You'll have access to pens and paper, which will be provided at the centre.

Speaking and Listening Section

This section is 18 minutes long and consists of three tasks. It is conducted remotely with a Trinity examiner via video conferencing:

Topic Task (4 minutes): You will choose a topic in advance to discuss with the examiner. A "Topic Form" must be prepared before the test, outlining points you want to talk about. This form will guide your discussion.

Conversation Task (2 minutes): The examiner will choose a subject area, such as hobbies or travel, and have a short conversation with you about it.

Independent Listening Task (10 minutes): You will listen to two recordings and complete two tasks based on them:

- For the first recording, you'll answer six specific questions asked by the examiner.
- For the second recording, you'll provide six facts orally, followed by answering four follow-up questions from the examiner.

You'll listen to each recording twice and can take notes during the task.

This section evaluates how well you understand spoken English and how effectively you can communicate your responses.

Summing up...

The Trinity ISE I test is comprehensive, covering all four English skills: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. While it may seem challenging, the

format is designed to reflect real-life communication and practical language use. Preparing thoroughly, especially for the Topic and Writing tasks, will help you succeed.

Although you might not be a people person, or you might be shy, it is important that the examiner can get a good understanding of your English language capabilities. They need you to speak as much as possible. The more confidently you can speak the language, the better you will do.

Later in this guide, we will run through a number of exercises that are designed to help your language improve.

Trinity GESE Grade 5 Test Overview

The other test that you might choose to take is the Trinity GESE Grade 5 Test. It is required for various UK visa applications, including:

- Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)
- Settlement/Permanent Residency
- British Citizenship (Naturalisation)

The Trinity GESE Grade 5 Test is approximately 10 minutes in length and can only be taken at an approved centre within the UK.

Unlike the Trinity ISE I B1 Test, you will not sit this exam with another test-taker, and it will only be you and the examiner throughout the assessment. In this test, the examiner will be judging your English-speaking ability against a particular set of criteria.

They'll be making sure that you can do tasks such as:

- Talking about your plans for the future;
- Talking about your preferences, likes and dislikes;
- Talking about certain experiences that you have had;
- Quantifying amounts, for example ordering 2 sandwiches, 3 lemonades.

It shouldn't be too hard to pass this test. Although the idea of being interviewed by someone for 10 minutes might make you nervous, remember that the examiner will want you to succeed, and therefore will try their best to be as helpful to you as possible.

There are two sections in the Trinity GESE Grade 5 Test. In one of them, you will be allowed to discuss a topic of your choice, and in another you will have to engage in a conversation about two separate subjects.

Topic Discussion

The first section lasts for 5 minutes. In this task, you will be required to talk about a topic of your choosing. Prior to commencing the interview you'll be given a piece of paper with a mind-map on it, to help you come up with ideas of things to discuss.

You'll then share this with the examiner, who will look at each circle/box and then ask questions based on what is written in them. You will also need to initiate some discussion with the examiner, so ask them questions based on your topic too; 'Do you like to play video games?' for example.

In terms of what you should talk about, our best advice is to choose something that you are genuinely interested in. After all, the more interested you are, the more you will have to say about that topic.

Remember that the examiner is only interested in how well you can talk (linguistically) about the subject itself, and not in the depth of your knowledge about the topic.

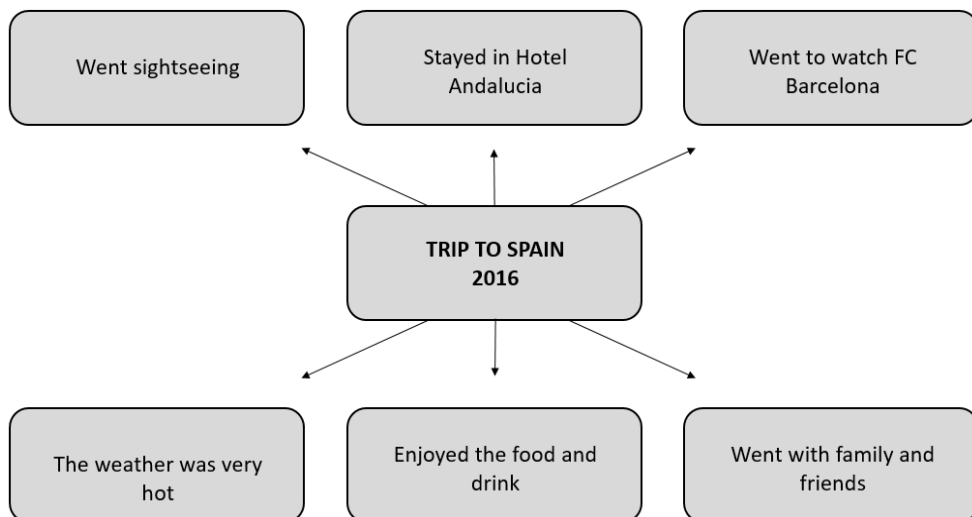
There are plenty of things you can choose from here, including:

- **Cooking.** What is your favourite food? What can you cook? What can't you cook?
- **Films.** What is your favourite and least favourite film? Who is your favourite and least favourite actor?
- **TV and other entertainment.** What shows do you watch? Do you play video games?

- **Your family.** How well do you get on with your parents? How many brothers and sisters do you have? Do you live with them?
- **Your job.** What is your job? How long have you worked there? What are your future career plans?
- **Your holiday.** What is your favourite holiday destination? When did you go and for how long? What was your favourite thing about that place?
- **Music.** Who is your favourite band/artist? What is your favourite song? What music do you not like? Have you been to any concerts?
- **Sport.** Do you play sports? Do you support a team? Why do you support them, and do you go to watch them play? Who is your favourite sports person?

In each square of your mind map, you can write a few ideas down that relates to the subject you have chosen.

Below, we've constructed a sample mind map, to show you how this might look:



As you can see, these topics allow for continued conversation to be made about different topics.

The examiner will probably pick each circle individually, and ask you questions based on that, so make sure that when you do put something in your mind map, it's something that you know you can talk about.

Looking at our mind map, the questions could include:

- Where in Spain did you stay?
- Did you enjoy the hot weather? Would you prefer somewhere cooler?
- Which friends and family did you go with? Names, your relationship with them, etc.
- Did you make new friends while you were on holiday?
- Where did you go sightseeing? What sights did you see? Can you give your impression of them?
- How was the hotel? Was the service good?
- What type of food did you eat while in Spain?
- How was the football match? Do you support a team? Who is your favourite player? What was the result of the match?

Also, remember that the examiner will be judging you based on how well you interact. This means that you should avoid talking continuously, as this is not how a normal conversation would work. You should pause from time to time, allowing them to ask questions, just as you would with any normal interaction. Likewise, make sure that you remember to ask the examiner questions too, based on the topic that you have chosen. This is something that is missed by a lot of test-takers, and is reflective of good conversation practice.

You'll have approximately 5 minutes to talk, before you move onto the next part of the task.

Conversation Task

In the second task, you will have a conversation with the examiner about two different subjects. This part lasts up to 5 minutes. There are a wide variety of subjects from which the examiner can choose.

Prior to your exam, you will be told what these subjects will be, so that you can prepare for them. In previous years these included music, transport and personal experiences. You should expect to talk for around 2 to 3 minutes on each subject.

As before, you should make sure that you also ask the examiner questions. For example, 'what is your favourite type of music?'

It's important to ensure that at all times, you are treating the interview as you would a normal conversation. If you don't ask the examiner questions, then you will score poorly, as this is one of the requirements.

The best advice that we can give you for this exam is to prepare at least 2 or 3 questions on each of the subjects, in advance of the test. This means that you won't be caught off guard, and can impress the examiner right from the word go.

Summing up...

The Trinity B1 GESE Grade 5 is a straightforward test designed to evaluate your real-life communication skills. Hopefully all of this has given you a better idea of what the differences are between the two tests, and has helped you to decide which one of the tests is the most suitable for you. Now, let's move on to actually preparing for the tests.

CHAPTER 2

Preparing for the B1 Tests

Preparing For The Tests

It really is true that practice makes perfect. The more you practice your English before the exam, the easier it will be to speak the language in the exam. Practising your English will also make you more confident, which in turn will lead to better results.

Ideally, the best way to practice is simply to go out and speak to people that you meet. Go to the shops or the cinema, meet with English-speaking friends. You could ask your family or colleagues to only speak to you in English, so that you become more accustomed to the language and don't fall back into speaking in your native language.

Improving Your Vocabulary

One of the biggest things that the examiner will be looking at is your vocabulary. They'll look at the range of words that you can use, and how well you can use them. Although the examiner will be looking for you to demonstrate a good level of proficiency, the marking scheme in this area is fairly relaxed, and B1 examiners will be lenient with a couple of mistakes. However, you should do your absolute best to pronounce and use all the words correctly, as better performance in this area will improve your score.

The variety of your words is also important. The examiner will score you highly for using different words for different topics. For example, saying 'it was nice' about several different things won't score you highly. Saying that one thing 'was great' another 'was awesome' and another 'was fantastic' will score you good marks. You don't have to use really complex words to score highly, but varying up the words that you use will really help you to achieve a good mark. The examiner doesn't want 'yes' or 'no', or simply one word responses – they are looking for a bit more depth. Remember it's all about maintaining a conversation!

So, how can you improve your range of words?

There are plenty of ways to do this. One good way to start off is to create a mind map for each individual subject. Then, once you've done that, add

words to the map which relate to the subject. For example, take the word 'shopping', and draw out a mini map with subjects that correlate to this. Under shopping, you could have subjects such as 'what can you buy' – groceries, sweets, bread, pasta, milk. Then draw another column, titled 'how does shopping make you feel?' – bored, excited, hungry, tired, happy. Finally, draw another 1 or 2 columns, to complete your chart. The topics of these could be anything that you associate with shopping, for example 'types of shop' and 'what kind of things you regularly buy'.

Try to write out the list in English if you can. However, if you can't, then simply write them out in your language and then add a translation next to it. Using this technique should help you to expand your vocabulary, and will help you to come up with words that are associated with a particular topic – which is always valuable in everyday English conversation.

Another good way to improve the range of words that you use, is by studying the range of words that *other* people use. You don't have to sound like a walking dictionary, and it's more important to ensure that the words you are using are being used properly, but at the same time you will still need to demonstrate that you have a good vocabulary.

For this reason, books, newspapers and the media will be a great source of inspiration for you. Try and pick newspaper articles that are fairly short in length, and then read over them to try and understand what the writer is saying. Be careful when you are doing this, as some newspapers use shorthand slang to make it easier for their readers. If there are any words that you don't understand, look them up in a dictionary. This can all be done online too, without even needing to purchase a newspaper.

There are numerous news websites out there, all of which you can use to practice. These sites and sources are also a great way of helping you to come to terms with more difficult grammatical concepts, such as tenses and sentence structure.

Remember that while it's important to know the words and demonstrate your vocabulary, you also need to be able to show that you can put these words together. For example, if the examiner asks you a question about going to the cinema, you will need to put together a response which flows

properly, instead of just saying words which relate to the cinema. Try and make your responses as natural as possible.

It's Not What You Say, But How You Say It

In order to pass the B1 test, you will need to show the examiner not just that you can speak in fluent English, but that you can pronounce and say things in a way that people can understand. Having an accent should not hinder you in this exam, as the examiner will be fully prepared for this and will take it into account when scoring you. This is to be expected, especially if you have lived abroad for most of your life. However, if the examiner cannot understand what you are saying, then this will be a problem. As such, you will need to work hard on improving your pronunciation. There are a number of ways that you can do this.

Firstly, try slowing down the way that you are speaking. Although you should try to keep it natural, slowing down will allow you to speak more clearly and focus on the words that you are saying. Don't be afraid to take a pause in-between sentences. Whether you are pausing to think about what to say, or giving yourself a little breathing room, it's fine. This is completely normal, and reflects everyday speech patterns.

Secondly, listen. It's scientifically proven that the more time you spend in a country, the more likely you are to develop the language habits of that country. With this in mind, the more spoken English you can listen to, the better. Listening to other people pronounce English words should help you learn how to say them. Pay close attention to words and letters which are pronounced in a particular way. Watching TV is a good way to help with this, but at the same time be wary of programmes that use slang words.

Under the B1 requirements, you will be expected to speak and understand what is known as 'Standard English'. Try to watch programmes where the people speak in clear English, ideally without a strong accent. As we mentioned earlier, asking your friends and family to only speak to you in English will go a long way to helping with your own pronunciation.

Thirdly, practise yourself. It goes without saying that you'll need to practise all elements of this test before you go into the exam room; and this is certainly true for your pronunciation. In line with the last point, compare the way that you speak certain words with the way that someone else on television or that you know speaks them. You can record yourself doing this, or ask someone else to provide you with their opinion on how similar it sounds. Then, they'll be able to tell you if you are doing anything wrong.

Expressing Yourself

The examiner will also be looking at the way in which you express yourself. Expressing yourself refers to factors such as the way in which you talk, whether you vary your sentence lengths, how many times you pause and how succinctly you put your thoughts and views across.

If in doubt, remember to keep it simple. There is no point in trying to take on complicated and difficult sentences, if you don't have the necessary skills to do this yet. A short, succinct answer, which flows nicely with no breaks, is far better than a jumbled, complex sentence which is full of mistakes and pauses between words. The examiner won't expect you to take on really difficult subjects, so don't worry about this.

This is one of the reasons that practising your speech beforehand will be so helpful. Through practice, you will pick up certain words or phrases which you'll find yourself using or repeating. You can use these phrases in the exam, if not as a first response, but as a fall back response. It's always good to have words or phrases that you are comfortable with. The more comfortable you are, the better and more confident you will sound, and this will impress the examiner.

Expression also refers to the fluidity of your sentences. While it's okay to have short stops and pauses occasionally, too many of these will detract from what you are saying and will hurt your test score. This is especially the case during times when you are required to give a short talk. Since you will be (mostly) speaking continuously for this exercise, it's important that you can manage the way you speak.

If you have ever had to deliver a presentation, whether for work or educational purposes, then you will have a good idea of what we mean here. You need to consider your audience. If you haven't had to deliver a presentation before, then you may have been in the audience listening to one. Think about what techniques the speaker used to communicate with their audience. Methods such as eye contact, hand gestures, and speaking clearly and slowly are always good. You can also acknowledge the audience, in this case the other test-taker and the examiner by asking questions such as 'are you following?' or 'have you understood everything so far?' There is nothing wrong with this, and the examiner will appreciate you taking the time to ask, as well as being impressed by your English skills.

Another method that is also useful for presentations applies here: if you make a mistake, don't stop or panic. Just brush over it and keep going! Take a second to compose yourself, and keep talking.

If the examiner wishes to question you on the mistake, then they'll do so at the end, rather than letting it derail the rest of your talk. Of course, if you are able to, you can always quickly add, 'Oh, my mistake, I meant...' before swiftly moving on, but don't allow that mistake to bring the talk to a complete standstill while you are trying to correct it.

Remember that small pauses are okay. At B1 level, it is expected that there will be short pauses, and that you'll make one or two minor mistakes, so take your time and focus on speaking as clearly and correctly as possible.

Listening And Interacting

As we have mentioned, interacting with the examiner and the other test-taker is very important. With this in mind, it's very important that you don't lose focus, and concentrate 100% on the task at hand. You can't afford to start daydreaming or lose track, as the examiner and the other test-taker will be asking you to respond to them. At all times, make sure that you are polite and formal. The exam room is no place to use slang terms.

Along with making sure that you listen closely to what is being said, you will also need to be an active participant. Obviously, you should never interrupt

the other person, but it's a good idea to demonstrate basic conversational reaction skills. For example, making comments to show your emotion, such as 'that's great!' or 'really?' Obviously, you should only do this if you are confident in knowing what the other person said, otherwise you could make a mistake and be penalised.

When it comes to listening, the examiner will also take into account the speed at which the other person talks. So, if the other person is talking too fast for you to understand, then they won't penalise you for this. However, you could be penalised if you fail to bring it to their attention, so make sure you do. Just a small interruption such as 'sorry, I didn't quite catch that, please could you repeat it more slowly?' works just fine. During the recordings that you will have to listen to during the Life Skills Test, the people in the recordings will be speaking slowly and clearly in Standard English, so you won't have to worry about this.

A good way to practice your listening is simply to just go out in public, and listen to what is being said around you. Obviously, we aren't recommending that you start eavesdropping on other people's conversations, but you should be able to pick up smaller elements of basic conversation, such as communicating with a shopkeeper, asking a supermarket assistant for help, etc. All of this will ultimately contribute to your ability to listen during the exam, and then respond to what is being said in the right way. In the real world, people don't always speak slowly and clearly, or in Standard English. Often they will mumble, speak quickly or speak in slang. Remember that while English is arguably a fairly easy language to learn, it is also different from many other languages, in that it contains a lot of silent letters. This can make pronunciation quite difficult for newcomers. Over time, you will become accustomed to this.

When studying for the exam, it is advised that you dedicate a significant portion of your spare time to watching English speaking movies, television shows or reading books. Ideally, in the former two, you should try not to have the subtitles on, or at the very least work towards this aim. If you wish for further practice, there are a number of online resources at your disposal.

Arguably the best of these is the British Council website, which contains numerous recordings designed to help B1 learners. For more information on this, please check out the following website: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/english>.

Now that we've looked at some language preparation tips, let's move onto planning for the language practicalities of the exam.

CHAPTER 3

Exam Language

Understanding The Language

During the test, the examiner will be trying to establish whether you are able to speak English to the required B1 standard. As mentioned, the language criteria that you will need to meet in order to pass this test, is not all that difficult. You will simply need to show that you can function as part of British society.

In this section of the book, we'll break down particular areas of the exam, and give you some sample questions that you might face. The questions listed in this chapter could be asked during any of the assessments, and could be either from your fellow test-taker, or from the examiner. Along with this, you might find that this section provides you with useful questions that you yourself might ask your fellow test-taker.

**Please note, the questions listed in this section are for practice purposes only, and are not the exact same questions that you will be asked during the exam.*

Typical B1 Questions And Topics

Personal Questions

This is usually the standard introductory topic, but don't worry, the examiner won't get too personal.

In this section, you'll be asked questions including:

- What is your name?
- Which country do you come from?
- How old are you?
- Do you have any children?
- Do you have any brothers and sisters?
- Tell me about your mother.
- Tell me about your father.

Some of these questions will focus specifically around the past, and require you to demonstrate use/knowledge of the past tense.

For example, you might be asked:

- What did you do last weekend?
- What was your favourite game as a child?
- Where did you grow up?
- When did you move to the UK?

In these cases, you'll have to use the past tense – was/went/etc. – to respond. For example, 'I was born in France' or 'last weekend I went to the cinema'.

Your likes and dislikes

In this section, you'll be asked questions based around your likes and dislikes.

This could include questions such as:

- What is your favourite film?
- What is your favourite food?
- What is your least favourite form of travel?
- Do you play any sports? Which do you like best?

The key to answering questions from this section is to expand and elaborate on your responses. For example, if the examiner asks 'what is your favourite film?' then don't just say 'Titanic' or 'my favourite film is Titanic.' A better response would be 'Titanic is my favourite film, because I enjoy the romance and the historical aspect.'

If you give a monotone or simplistic response, then the examiner will prompt you to explain why it's your favourite/least favourite, so by doing this yourself you can avoid them having to prompt you – and gain extra marks in the process!

At many points, you can expect questions from different sections to mix. For example, you might be asked 'what is your favourite thing about your job?'

This question is two-fold, and requires you to take the initiative in explaining where you work, and then following this up by explaining what your favourite thing about the job is.

This section also intercedes with hobbies, as you could easily be asked questions such as:

- What is your favourite thing to do in your free time?
- What is your favourite type of music to listen to?
- Do you share any hobbies with other family members?
- Are there any hobbies which you had as a child, which you still pursue now?
- Why do you think having a hobby is important? If you don't, why not?
- Tell me about favourite hobby. How often do you do it and what does it entail?
- How do you feel about going to the cinema?
- Before you moved to England, what did you do in your spare time?
- Do you spend much time browsing the internet? If so, what are your favourite sites?
- Do you follow the news?
- Do you have a favourite channel on TV that you like to watch?

In all cases, make sure you provide an answer that doesn't just answer the question, but gives the examiner some extra info too.

Shopping

Shopping, and buying items, is a very popular topic in the assessment. This is because this subject focuses around something that is a necessary requirement in everyday British life – going to the shops and buying things like food or other essentials.

With this in mind, the examiner will want confirmation that you are fully capable of doing this.

The questions could include:

- How often do you visit the local supermarket?

- How does going to the supermarket make you feel?
- Do you often go out clothes shopping?
- What is your favourite brand of clothing?
- Is there anything unusual that you often buy from the supermarket?
- Do you have any expensive purchases that you have lined up for the future?
- Are you saving for anything?
- What supermarket do you normally shop at? Why? Are there any supermarkets that you don't like?

Future plans

In this section, you'll be asked questions based around the future, and some questions based around future predictions. You'll need to use the future tense – will/shall/going to – to answer.

The questions could include:

- What are your plans for this weekend?
- When will you next see your family?
- When do you think humans will become extinct?

Don't worry, this section doesn't require you to brush up on any extra-curricular knowledge, all of the questions regarding the future will be fairly simple and on topics which you don't necessarily need to have lived in England to have thought about.

However, it's always helpful to have some extra knowledge, as there is a chance that you could be asked questions such as:

- Who do you think will win the next Wimbledon Championships?
- Who do you think will win the next football World Cup?

If you aren't a follower of football or tennis, then you can simply say to the examiner, 'I'm sorry, I don't follow this sport'.

The examiner may also ask you questions based around chance and possibility, for example:

- Is there a good chance of that happening?
- How likely is that?
- How sure are you?
- Can you make that a possibility?

In this scenario, you should try to answer in as much detail as possible, whilst justifying this too. For example, 'yes, I think Spain are very likely to win the World Cup, as they have great players and a great manager' or, 'while it is very unlikely that I will ever become a professional football player, I will do my best to accomplish this.'

Reasoning and justification

At many points in the exam, the examiner will ask you to justify or explain the things that you have said.

This will usually be in response to an answer that you have just given, for example:

- Why do you think that is?
- Why do you believe that happened?
- Was there a reason for this?
- What was the cause of this?

As mentioned, you can avoid these questions altogether by explaining your answer in full. This is reflective of everyday conversation style, where people pre-emptively explain themselves to save the other person asking them why. If the examiner does want you to explain further still, or hasn't quite understood, they'll ask something along the lines of:

- Can you explain that?
- What do you mean?
- Could you provide me with an explanation?

Your experiences

You'll be asked a lot of questions based around your experiences, and this is a common part of British life, so be ready to answer questions on them.

When telling the examiner about your experiences, try and be as detailed as possible. For example, if the examiner asks, 'do you like going to the seaside?' then don't say just 'yes'. A better answer would be, 'yes, I find that the seaside is very calm and comforting, I really like the sea and would love to live by the coast someday' or 'no, I don't like the smell of the sea or how windy the coast gets. I much prefer the city.'

Other questions could include:

- Tell me about a recent trip that you went on.
- What did you do for your last birthday?
- Have you been to any birthday parties or celebrations lately?
- Where was the last place that you visited with your friends?
- Do you ever go out to nightclubs?
- What is your favourite restaurant?
- Are you very active at the weekends, or do you prefer to stay in?

When answering these questions, the more detail you can provide the better. Just as with the other sections, an answer such as 'for my last birthday I went to France' won't really suffice. You need to give a detailed response to this question, such as, 'for my last birthday I went to France, with my family. We went out to a restaurant and then stayed in the Hotel Le Chaliessie.' Be prepared to give your opinion on these experiences too. The examiner might ask questions such as, 'did you enjoy that?' or 'how did it go?'

Your home

This is quite a common area, so be ready to answer a variety of questions based on where you live at the time of testing. As ever, the more detail you can give, the better.

This is especially the case for questions such as: 'describe your house to me'. In this case, a good answer would be something like, 'I live in a two

floor, semi-detached house. We have a front garden and a back garden. My house is in an avenue; so there are many other houses on the same street. Inside the house, we have 4 bedrooms, two bathrooms and a kitchen joined to the lounge. The house is new and modern.'

The examiner might also ask questions such as:

- Apart from you, who else lives in your house?
- Do you rent or own your house?
- Do you get on with your neighbours?
- Do you like spending time at home?
- If you do still live with your parents, do you have plans to buy your own home?
- Do you have any plans to make changes to your home?
- How does your home now, compare to the home where you grew up?

Travelling

Travelling and transportation are frequently used topics during the assessment, so be ready to answer questions based on this topic.

The questions could even relate to your journey to the assessment centre, for example:

- How did you get here today? How was your journey?
- Did you plan your route before the day?

You'll also be asked questions based on your regular daily schedule, for example:

- What is the most common form of transport that you take?
- Do you have a bus pass?
- How long is your journey into work each day?

Along with general questions about travelling in Britain, the examiner will also ask you questions about travelling elsewhere, taking holidays etc. For these questions, you will do well to elaborate a little more. For example, if the examiner asks, 'have you visited any other countries recently?' you should answer with something akin to, 'yes, last year I went to Japan with

my mother and father. We stayed in a hotel in Tokyo'. As we explained before, the more detail you can give, the better.

Other questions might include:

- Which airline company is your favourite to travel with?
- Have you visited many other places in Britain?
- How many holidays do you take a year?
- Do you like going abroad during the summer, or would you prefer to stay at home?

As before, you can expect topics such as this to interlink with subjects such as past, present, future and preferences, for example:

- What would be your dream place to visit?
- What is your favourite place that you have visited? Do you have any plans to go back? What did you like about this place?
- Have you ever visited somewhere and not enjoyed it? If so, where?
- Do you prefer to go on holiday with family or friends?

Family and friends

This is a very common topic in the exam, so be prepared to discuss this with both your fellow test-taker and the examiner.

The questions will include:

- Are you married or in a relationship?
- Do you spend lots of time with your family?
- Who is your closest friend? Do you have a lot of friends?
- What kind of activities do you do with your friends?

Sometimes, the examiner won't ask you questions that are directly about yourself. You need to be ready to answer different kinds of questions fluently. For example, the examiner might ask 'why is it important to have close friends?' The purpose of this question is to see if you are able to discuss topics, not just including talking about yourself. These kinds of questions are designed to test you a little further than what many people may have prepared for.

So remember, the test isn't just about you and yourself, you'll need to answer some general questions too. A good response to this type of question would be: 'It's important for people to have friends, as friends make you happy. Spending time with friends is the best way to use the time when you are not working. The more time you spend with friends, the more relaxed and happier you will feel.'

Your work and education

Another very common topic in the exam, is your work and education. As mentioned, the examiner will be talking to you about general topics of everyday conversation.

People in Britain spend a lot of time talking about their work, so it is important that you are able to articulate yourself clearly in this subject area.

There are a wide variety of questions that you could be asked in this area, including:

- Where did you go to school?
- Did you enjoy school? If so, why? If not, why not?
- Did you go to university? If so, where did you go, and did you enjoy it?
- Do you think that education is important?
- What kind of school do your children go to?

The examiner may also ask you questions about your choice of work or speciality, for example:

- What made you decide to work at this company?
- Why did you decide to go into this line of work?
- Tell me about what kind of things you have to do for your job.
- Does the company that you work for have a website?
- Do you see this as a long-term position?
- Have you completed any extra training alongside your current job?
- How long have you been working in this job?
- What kind of job did you have before you moved to England?
- Does your job interest you, or is it simply a way to pay the bills?

Professional relationships are also a focus in this section, and you'll be asked questions such as:

- Do you get on with your work colleagues?
- Are you still friends with anyone from school?
- Do you ever see your work colleagues outside of work?

Health and fitness

Health and fitness is another popular topic in the exam, and there are plenty of questions that you could be asked in this section. Remember, however, that the examiner is only judging you based on the quality of your responses. So, if the examiner asks, 'do you consider yourself to be a fit and healthy person?' it's okay to say no, as long as you justify your response. For example, 'no, I don't exercise; and I am a heavy smoker' is just as acceptable as 'yes, I go jogging three times a day.' Of course, however, the examiner will also ask you questions based around the positive aspects of exercise too, even if you say no.

They might ask:

- What are the benefits of exercise?
- Do you not like to exercise? If not, why not?
- Did you exercise in the past? If so, what kind of things did you do?

The examiner might also ask you general questions regarding health and fitness, for example:

- Is there a gym in your area?
- What is your opinion of the National Health Service (NHS)?
- Have you ever had to visit a doctor or hospital in the UK? What was your experience like?
- Do you try to eat healthily? What kinds of food do you eat?

Now that we've looked at the questions you might be asked, and the potential topics which could come up, let's move on to the language that you'll need to demonstrate.

Your Responses

Naturally, the most important element in you passing the B1 test, is in the overall quality of your responses. Throughout the exam, you'll be asked direct questions by the examiner, and possibly another test-taker too (if you are sitting the exam with them). There are a number of ways to guarantee that you give a good quality response to the questions.

Firstly, let's look at what a good quality response actually is, and isn't.

A **good** response is an answer which:

- Demonstrates your ability to speak at B1 level;
- Shows that you have understood the question;
- Contains only a few or no grammatical errors;
- Uses a good range of words and vocabulary.

Here's an example of a good response:

Q. 'Do you like to go to the cinema?'

A. 'Yes, I love going to the cinema. Just last week I went with my friends to see the new superhero movie. We didn't enjoy the film so much, but we still had a great time.'

On the other hand, a **bad** response is an answer which:

- Is very short and monotone, does not give the examiner a chance to see your language skills.
- Does not really answer the question that has been asked.
- Contains problems with tenses, verbs, pronouns etc.
- Uses repetitive language.

Here's an example of a bad response:

Q. 'Do you like going to the cinema?'

A. 'Yes, I like going to the cinema.'

The more you say in your answer, the better. The reason for this is that the more you say, the more language skills you are showing to the examiner, and the more evidence they will have that you can speak at B1 level.

Later in this book, we'll give you some practice on how to answer some test related questions.

Along with this, the examiner will also require you to demonstrate that you can use particular English language techniques.

Express To Impress

The examiner will want to know that you can demonstrate certain elements of the English language. That is to say, you will need to show an ability to do things such as asking questions, persuading, suggesting and giving your opinion.

In the English language, there are certain words and phrases that we use to indicate what we are saying/trying to do. For example, if I was making a suggestion, I might start by saying, 'have you considered...?' This is a natural language technique, and makes your suggestion easier to understand/accept. If I simply said, 'you must do this!' instead of 'have you considered doing this?' then the meaning of what I'm saying is drastically altered. Instead of making a polite suggestion, I am giving a command, which could come across as rude.

Below we have broken down many of these language techniques into smaller sub-sections, to help you understand them better.

Giving Opinions

Giving your opinion is a really important part of the examination. The examiner will want to see that you are able to put across your own views, in a polite and acceptable manner. There are many ways that you can begin a sentence where you are offering your opinion.

These include:

- In my opinion...
- I feel that...
- The way I see it...

- Personally, I am of the opinion that...
- I think that...
- It seems to me like...
- From my perspective...

Agreeing And Disagreeing

This is another important part of the exam, especially if you are in the room with another test-taker. You need to be able to agree with them on certain points, and politely disagree where necessary. The key word here being 'politely'. Obviously, you don't want to get into a big argument with the other test-taker, but at the same time don't agree with them for the sake of it.

The examiner will score you highly for putting yourself across politely, even if you don't agree with the other person. There are many ways that you can begin a sentence showing that you agree or disagree.

These include:

- I agree!
- I couldn't agree more.
- You are so right.
- I feel the same way.
- I'm not sure about that.
- I don't think that's correct.
- I really disagree with you.
- I'm afraid I don't agree.

Seeking Clarification

At many times during the exam, you might need to seek clarification on something that has been said. This is absolutely okay, and the examiner will score you higher for making use of your language skills in seeking clarification, than they will for you ignoring it and pretending to understand. The chances are, the latter option will risk you giving an incorrect answer, so this won't help you. There are many ways to question or seek clarification on something.

They include:

- Please could repeat that? I didn't quite catch what you said.
- Sorry, I don't understand.
- Could you explain that a little further?
- I don't follow what you are saying.
- Sorry, please could you repeat that?
- So, do you mean....?

Asking Questions

Naturally, when you are in the exam, you'll need to be asking the other person questions. Just as with offering opinions, it's polite to frame your questions with a statement before. This makes them less direct, and a little less scary to answer.

There are plenty of ways to do this:

- I'm wondering...
- Please could you tell me...?
- Please could you share with me...?
- What about...?
- Tell me about...

Persuasion

Persuading, politely, is a natural part of everyday conversation. This is very similar to offering your opinion, except here you are trying to persuade the person to do a certain thing.

A good example could be this: Imagine that you are in the testing room, with another test-taker. The other test-taker is very shy. You lead the conversation, but they are reluctant to follow up on your ideas. What words and phrases would you use to try and persuade them to open up and talk to you?

You could use phrases such as:

- Come on, let's do it, it will be really interesting.
- I think this will definitely work out well.
- I think this is a really good idea, don't you?
- I think this is the best course of action.
- You'll definitely enjoy it.
- It will be really fun, let's give it a go.

Comparisons

Making comparisons is a common element of everyday conversation, and you will often find British people comparing and contrasting things when they speak. For example, they might say, 'the weather today is much worse than yesterday'.

There are plenty of ways that you can do this, and comparisons will help you to achieve high marks in your test:

- Comparatively speaking, I'd say...
- This one seems much bigger than that one.
- It's more interesting than...
- I preferred it to...
- In contrast, my one is...
- On the other hand...

Possibility and speculation

Speculating about future events is a normal part of everyday British language. During the exam, there is a possibility that you might be asked a question such as 'and how likely do you think that is to happen?' or 'what are the chances of that?' You'll need to be able to answer in a way that demonstrates your ability to talk about chance and possibility.

For example:

- There is a good chance that this will happen.
- No, I think the chances are very low.

- It's quite possible.
- It's almost impossible.
- I'm fairly certain about it.
- I'm feeling positive about it.
- I don't think the chances are very high.

Top Tips To Ace Your Test

On the day of the exam, you might well be feeling quite nervous. Don't worry, this is completely normal. The people at the test centre will make you feel extremely welcome.

Along with this, provided you have prepared well, you should have no problem passing the assessment. With that being said however, it never hurts to have a few extra tips.

So, here are our top tips for passing the assessment:

Plan your route

- This is really important. If you are late for the test, you will need to pay for another test on a separate date. With this in mind, plan your route in advance of the day.
- Work out elements such as parking, transport and how long it will take to get to the test centre. You then won't have to worry about these things on the day in question.
- Along with this, make sure that you have all of your essential documents, like your passport, ready in a folder. The more of this you get sorted, the easier it will be to just focus on the test and achieve good marks.
- You will be allowed into the test centre 30 minutes before the test actually starts, so plan for this too.

Focus on your words

- One mistake that some candidates make, is that they allow themselves to become distracted by the occasion. Some candidates will go into the room, and instead of giving clear and concise answers; will allow themselves to worry too much about their notes, the examiner or the other test-taker. Focus on yourself!
- Your focus needs to be on your own performance, and making sure that you are speaking as clearly and carefully as possible.

Don't be afraid to ask for clarification

- Another common mistake is being scared to ask the examiner or the other test-taker to repeat information.
- Many people fear that they'll be marked down for this, when in fact the opposite is true.
- By asking for clarification, you are actually meeting a part of the marking criteria. You'll gain much higher marks for questioning and then producing a high-quality response, than you would for failing to understand and then offering a low-quality response.

Practise your speaking

- If you are feeling really nervous, it's all too easy to lose track of what you are saying.
- A common problem that people who are nervous face, is that they start talking too fast, and then it becomes difficult to understand them.
- This is why you need to practise your speaking first. Obviously, you won't be able to capture the exact exam conditions, or reflect the pressure of the day, but the more time you spend speaking in English, the more comfortable you will be during the exam.

Ask questions

- Although you will mostly be preparing to talk about yourself in the exam, remember that you also need to be able to ask the other person questions, or the examiner.
- Conversation is two-way, so you need to make an effort to plan and ask your own questions too.
- Try and approach this as you would any normal conversation. Be polite and considerate of the other person, try not to interrupt when they are speaking, and greet them in a friendly manner when you first meet.

Practise your talk

- The short talk part of the assessment is perhaps the easiest to prepare for, so you shouldn't have too many problems with this.
- Make sure that your talk has enough material to last for at least 5 minutes.
- A good way to practise your talk is to give it to your friends and family, and then have them ask you questions in English.

Memorise terms

- This is one of the most important, and obvious, things that you need to do when preparing for the exam.
- Obviously, if you don't know key terms, then you will struggle to speak in the exam. This requires basic revision – and there are plenty of ways to do this. Anything from post-it notes to online revision guides, even this study book!
- There are an enormous number of revision resources out there for you, so make full use of them!

CHAPTER 4

Speaking

The speaking component is a vital part of any English language proficiency test, and preparing for it involves understanding not just the structure but also what is being assessed. In this chapter, we'll dive deep into the speaking test requirements, explain how to excel in each task, and provide a variety of practice questions to help you refine your skills.

What The Speaking Test Measures

The speaking test evaluates your ability to communicate effectively in English. While some of the assessment criteria may overlap with other sections of the test, the speaking component specifically focuses on the following:

Fluency and Coherence

Fluency is about how smoothly you can speak without hesitations or unnatural pauses. Coherence refers to how well you organise and connect your ideas. The examiner will listen for how easily you can express yourself and whether your ideas are logically linked.

Example of Good Fluency and Coherence:

"Last weekend, I went to a beautiful park near my house. It was a sunny day, so I decided to go for a walk with my dog. We spent a few hours there, enjoying the fresh air and the peaceful atmosphere."

Example of Poor Fluency and Coherence:

"Last weekend... um... I went... to a park. It was... um... sunny. I walked... my dog. Fresh air."

Pronunciation

This refers to how clearly and accurately you pronounce words. Good pronunciation involves correct stress, rhythm, and intonation. Having an accent is perfectly fine; the key is clarity. The examiner needs to easily understand your words and follow your sentences without effort. If your speech is unclear or if your intonation makes your sentences sound unnatural, it can hinder your score. For instance, saying, "How are you?" with the proper

rising intonation at the end indicates a question, whereas a flat tone might confuse the listener.

Tips to Improve Pronunciation

- Practice with Tongue Twisters

Tongue twisters are excellent for improving clarity and control. They force you to articulate sounds precisely and help with tricky consonant combinations. Here are some examples to practice:

- She sells seashells by the seashore.
- Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
- Red lorry, yellow lorry.
- How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?

Say each tongue twister slowly at first, focusing on clarity. Gradually increase your speed while maintaining accuracy.

- Listen to Native Speakers and Mimic Their Intonation:

Watch English movies, TV shows, or listen to podcasts. Pay close attention to how speakers emphasize words, change their pitch, and pause. Try to mimic their speech patterns. For example, notice the difference in tone when saying:

- "I can't believe it!" (Excited or surprised intonation)
- "I can't believe it." (Flat, disappointed tone)

Record yourself reading sentences, then compare your tone and rhythm to native speakers. Adjust your speech to match theirs.

Grammar Range and Accuracy

Grammar range and accuracy measures your ability to use a variety of grammatical structures correctly and appropriately. This includes simple, compound, and complex sentences, as well as grammatical elements such as verb tenses, articles, prepositions, and sentence structure. Errors can hinder communication and affect your score, so minimising mistakes is key.

Examiners look for flexibility in your grammar usage. They want to see that you can go beyond basic sentence structures and use language that expresses more complex ideas and relationships. For instance, instead of only saying “I like music,” you might say, “Although I enjoy music, I rarely find the time to attend live concerts.” This demonstrates a higher level of grammar proficiency.

Example of Good Grammar:

“If I had more time, I would love to travel to Japan and explore its rich culture.”

This sentence uses a conditional structure (“If I had... I would”), appropriate verb tenses, and a clear expression of a hypothetical situation.

Example of Poor Grammar:

“If I have more time, I go Japan and explore culture.”

The verb tenses are inconsistent, articles are missing (go to Japan), and the sentence lacks clarity.

Tips to Improve Grammar Range and Accuracy

- Master Basic Sentence Structures

Start with simple sentences and build up to more complex ones.

Simple Sentence: Contains one subject and one verb.

- “I like reading.”

Compound Sentence: Joins two independent clauses with a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or).

- “I like reading, but I don’t have much free time.”

Complex Sentence: Combines an independent clause with one or more dependent clauses.

- “Although I like reading, I don’t have much free time.”

Try transforming each one of these 5 sentences into a compound or complex sentence.

1. I enjoy reading books.
2. She likes to play tennis.
3. The dog barked loudly.
4. He missed the train.
5. We went to the park.

- Avoid Common Grammar Mistakes:

Verb Tense Errors:

- Instead of “I go to the park yesterday,” say “I went to the park yesterday.”

Subject-Verb Agreement:

- Instead of “She don’t like movies,” say “She doesn’t like movies.”

Article Usage:

- Instead of “I saw interesting movie,” say “I saw a interesting movie.”

Identify the errors in these sentences and correct them:

1. He don’t like coffee.
2. I seen that movie last week.
3. We went to park near our house.

Lexical Resource (Vocabulary)

This refers to your range of vocabulary and how accurately and appropriately you use it. To achieve a high score, you must demonstrate an ability to use varied vocabulary. For example, instead of saying “The weather was nice,” say “The weather was pleasantly warm, with a gentle breeze.” This makes your speech more engaging and sophisticated.

Example of Good Vocabulary:

“The view from the top of the mountain was breathtaking, and the air was incredibly refreshing.”

Example of Poor Vocabulary:

“The view was good, and the air was nice.”

Tips to Expand Your Vocabulary

- Learn Synonyms for Common Words:

Replace simple adjectives with more precise or vivid ones.

- Instead of good, say excellent, impressive, or remarkable.
- Instead of bad, say terrible, disappointing, or unpleasant.
- Instead of nice, say charming, delightful, or lovely.

Write three sentences using basic words such as good, bad, or easy then rewrite them with synonyms.

- Use Collocations:

Collocations are word combinations commonly used by native speakers. For example:

- Make a decision (not do a decision)
- Heavy rain (not strong rain)
- Take a chance (not give a chance)

Practice matching the correct collocation.

___ a mistake (make/do)

___ your time (take/use)

___ a problem (solve/fix)

- Use Idiomatic Expressions and Phrases:

Idioms can make your speech sound more natural and engaging. For example:

- “The ball is in your court.” (It’s your decision.)
- “I’m on cloud nine.” (I’m extremely happy.)
- “It costs an arm and a leg.” (It’s very expensive.)

Research idioms and practice using them in the correct context.

- Expand Vocabulary Through Reading and Listening:

Read articles, listen to podcasts, and watch movies to learn new words in context. Keep a vocabulary journal to jot down unfamiliar words, their meanings, and example sentences.

Write a short story using five new words you’ve recently learned.

Common Tasks in the Speaking Test

The speaking test includes several types of tasks, each designed to measure different aspects of your English-speaking ability. Let's break them down.

1. Introducing Yourself and Answering Personal Questions

This section often serves as a warm-up to help you feel more comfortable. The examiner may ask about your background, interests, and daily life. These are simple questions, but they require well-structured and clear responses.

- Keep your answers concise but detailed.
- Use specific examples to make your response more engaging.
- Avoid one-word answers.

Example Practice Questions:

1. Can you tell me about yourself?
2. What do you like to do in your free time?
3. Where do you live, and what is it like there?
4. What do you do for a living?
5. Can you describe your family?
6. What is your favorite hobby, and why?
7. How do you usually spend your weekends?
8. What is your favorite type of music?
9. Do you enjoy cooking? Why or why not?
10. What is a typical day like for you?

2. Discussing Familiar Topics

Here, the examiner will ask you to talk about common topics such as your favorite holiday, daily routine, or a special occasion. These questions assess your ability to express yourself on everyday subjects.

- Organise your response into clear parts: introduction, details, and conclusion.
- Use descriptive language to bring your story to life.
- Include personal opinions to show depth.

Example Practice Questions:

1. Describe your favorite holiday or vacation.
2. What is your daily routine like?
3. Talk about a special occasion you have celebrated.
4. What hobbies do you enjoy, and why?
5. What is your favorite food, and how do you prepare it?
6. Can you describe your best friend?
7. What do you usually do on your birthday?
8. What is your favorite place in your hometown?
9. Talk about a book or movie you recently enjoyed.
10. What is your favorite season, and why?

3. Describing a Situation or Narrating an Event

This task requires you to describe a specific situation or event in detail. It assesses your ability to organise your thoughts and communicate effectively.

- Use sequencing words like first, next, then, and finally.
- Include sensory details (what you saw, heard, felt, etc.).
- Reflect on the significance of the event.

Example Practice Questions:

1. Explain how you would give directions to someone visiting your neighborhood.
2. Talk about a time when you helped someone.
3. Describe an interesting place you have visited and why you liked it.
4. Talk about a problem you faced and how you solved it.
5. Describe a typical day at school or work.
6. Explain how to prepare a meal or complete a task.
7. Talk about a time when you achieved something important.
8. Describe a memorable family gathering.
9. Explain how you usually prepare for a trip.
10. Talk about a time when you learned something new.

4. Role-Play Scenarios

In this section, you may be asked to engage in a role-play where you perform a task, such as ordering food or asking for directions.

- Be polite and use appropriate phrases.
- Focus on clarity and specific details.
- Practice common scenarios in advance.

Example Practice Scenarios:

1. Ordering food in a restaurant.
2. Asking for help in a store.
3. Booking a hotel room over the phone.
4. Asking for directions in a new city.
5. Returning an item to a shop.
6. Making an appointment at a doctor's office.
7. Asking about bus or train schedules.
8. Calling customer service to solve a problem.
9. Checking into a hotel.
10. Buying a ticket for a movie or event.

To master the speaking component, practice is essential. Work through each of the practice questions provided, record your responses, and evaluate them for fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The more you practice, the more confident you will feel during the test.

CHAPTER 4

Listening

The listening component of any language proficiency exam is one of the most important sections. It assesses your ability to comprehend spoken English, an essential skill for communication in real-life scenarios. This chapter will help you understand what the listening test measures, introduce you to common types of tasks, provide strategies for improving your listening skills, and offer plenty of practice questions with explanations.

What the Listening Test Measures

The listening component of the B1 test evaluates your ability to:

- ☑ Understand spoken English at a conversational speed.
- ☑ Follow instructions and respond appropriately.
- ☑ Identify specific details from an audio recording.
- ☑ Understand the main idea of a conversation or monologue.
- ☑ Distinguish between true and false information.

The test usually consists of different types of audio clips, including conversations, instructions, announcements, and short talks. Your task is to listen carefully and answer questions based on what you hear. Here is a breakdown of the common question types you may encounter:

Task Type	Example	Skills Tested
Following Instructions	<i>"Turn left at the bank, then walk two blocks."</i>	Ability to follow directions and instructions.
Identifying Specific Details	<i>"What time does the store close?"</i>	Listening for key details like time and place.
Understanding Conversations	<i>"What does the man want to do this weekend?"</i>	Recognizing context, opinions, and intentions.
Listening for the Main Idea	<i>"What is the talk about?"</i>	Understanding the general purpose of the audio.
True/False Statements	<i>"The train arrives at 10 a.m."</i> → True or False?	Distinguishing correct from incorrect details.

Each of these tasks requires active listening and the ability to process information quickly. In the next section, we will discuss effective strategies to improve your listening skills.

Tips for Success in the Listening Test

To perform well in the B1 Listening Test, follow these strategies:

- **Practice Regularly:** Listen to English audio daily (podcasts, news, dialogues).
- **Watch with Subtitles:** Watch TV shows or YouTube videos with English subtitles, then watch again without them.
- **Focus on Key Words:** Pay attention to words related to time, place, actions, and opinions.
- **Predict the Answer:** Before the audio starts, look at the question and guess what you might hear.
- **Write Down Key Points:** While listening, note down names, numbers, locations, and important words.
- **Use Abbreviations:** Instead of writing full words, use short forms (e.g., bkg for booking).
- **Don't Panic If You Miss Something:** Focus on the next part of the conversation instead of dwelling on missed words.
- **Listen for Clues:** If you don't understand everything, focus on tone and emphasis to get the meaning.

The more you practice these techniques, the better you will perform in the test!

On the following pages are some practice questions in transcript form for the types of scenarios you may encounter during the listening section of the test.

Practice Questions

"To find the bookstore, start at the main entrance of the shopping center. Walk past the supermarket and turn left. Go straight until you see a café. The bookstore is right next to it."

- Q1.** What landmark should you pass before turning left?
- Q2.** What is located next to the bookstore?
- Q3.** If the speaker says, "Turn right instead of left," after the supermarket, would you end up at the café?

"If you're driving to the museum, take the second exit at the roundabout. Then, turn right at the traffic lights and continue straight for 500 metres. The museum will be on your left, opposite the train station."

- Q4.** What should you do at the roundabout?
- Q5.** Where is the museum located in relation to the train station?
- Q6.** Is the museum less than 500 metres away from the roundabout?

Tip: Look for spatial relationships (e.g., opposite, next to).

"To reach the conference room, take the lift to the third floor. Walk past the reception desk and turn right. The room is at the end of the hallway, next to the restrooms."

- Q7.** On which floor is the conference room?
- Q8.** What do you need to pass before turning right?
- Q9.** Where is the conference room located in relation to the restrooms?

Tip: Remember sequences of actions instead of just memorising individual steps.

Buyer: *"Hi, I'd like to return these headphones. They don't work properly."*

Employee: *"I'm sorry to hear that. Do you have the receipt?"*

Buyer: *"Yes, here it is."*

Q10. What is the reason for the return?

Q11. What does the employee need to process a return?

Q12. How much did the headphone cost?

Woman: *"Excuse me, what time does the next bus to Oxford leave?"*

Man: *"The next direct bus leaves at 3:45 p.m., but there is one at 3:30 p.m. with a transfer in Reading."*

Q13. What time is the next direct bus to Oxford?

Q14. What is the difference between the two buses?

Q15. If the woman wants to get to Oxford the fastest way, which bus should she take?

Buyer: *"I'd like a large cappuccino with oat milk and no sugar, please."*

Barista: *"Of course. That will be £3.80."*

Q16. What size is the drink the woman orders?

Q17. What specific ingredient does she request?

Q18. How much does she need to pay?

Tip: Listen for numbers, preferences, and reasons for decisions.

Man: *"I can't believe I forgot my umbrella. It's supposed to rain later."*

Woman: *"You can borrow mine. I have an extra one in my car."*

Man: *"Thanks! That would be really helpful."*

Q19. What problem does the man have?

Q20. How does the woman help?

Q21. What does this conversation suggest about the weather later?

Man: *"Are you free this evening? We could go for dinner."*

Woman: *"I'd love to, but I have a meeting that might run late."*

Man: *"No problem. Let's plan for another day."*

Q22. What does the man suggest?

Q23. Why does the woman decline?

Q24. What does the man decide to do?

Woman 1: *"Did you hear about the new gym opening downtown?"*

Woman 2: *"Yes! They're offering free classes for the first month."*

Woman 1: *"That's great! I think I'll sign up."*

Q25. What is happening downtown?

Q26. What special offer does the gym provide?

Q27. How does woman 1 react to the offer?

"Scientists have discovered a new way to generate clean energy using ocean waves. This technology could help reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and make electricity more sustainable."

Q28. What is the main idea of the transcript?

Q29. How could this discovery impact energy production?

Q30. What problem is the new technology trying to solve?

"Our library is launching a new reading programme for children. Every Saturday, volunteers will read stories aloud to encourage a love for books. Parents can sign up online to participate."

Q31. What is the main purpose of this announcement?

Q32. How can parents get involved in the programme?

Q33. Why might this program be beneficial?

"A new café has opened in the city centre. It focuses on serving organic and locally sourced food. They also have a loyalty programme for regular customers to get up to 20% off their bill."

Q34. What is special about this café?

Q35. Where is the café located?

Q36. How does the café encourage customer loyalty?

"The train to Edinburgh leaves at 12:45 pm, not 1:15 pm. Please arrive at least 10 minutes early."

True or false?

Q37. The train leaves at 1:15 pm.

Q38. Passengers should arrive at least 10 minutes before departure.

Q39. The train is delayed.

"The supermarket will be closed on Sunday for maintenance but will reopen on Monday at 8 am."

Q40. The supermarket will be closed for a full day.

Q41. The reopening time is 7 am.

Q42. The closure is for renovations.

"The weather today will be mostly cloudy with occasional showers in the evening. Temperatures will remain around 18 degrees Celsius."

Q43. The weather will be sunny all day.

Q44. It might rain later in the day.

Q45. The temperature will drop below 10 degrees.

Answers

Q1. The supermarket

Q2. The café

Q3. No, if you went right instead of left you would be going in the opposite direction to the café and bookstore.

Q4. Take the second exit

Q5. Opposite

Q6. No, it must be more than 500 metres away because it is 500 metres from the traffic lights and the roundabout is before the traffic lights.

Q7. Third floor

Q8. The reception desk

Q9. Next to each other

Q10. The headphones don't work

Q11. The receipt

Q12. Unknown, the cost of the headphones is not mentioned in the transcript.

Q13. 3:45 pm (quarter to four in the afternoon)

Q14. The 3:30 pm bus requires a transfer, while the 3:45 pm bus goes directly.

Q15. The 3:45 pm direct bus will be faster.

Q16. Large

Q17. Milk, no sugar

Q18. £3.80

Q19. He forgot his umbrella

Q20. She offers him an extra umbrella from her car

Q21. The conversation suggests that it will rain later

- Q22.** Going for dinner
- Q23.** She has a meeting that might run late
- Q24.** Plan dinner for another night
- Q25.** A new gym has opened
- Q26.** Free classes for the first month
- Q27.** The woman likes the idea and decides to sign up
- Q28.** Generating clean energy from ocean waves
- Q29.** It could reduce reliance on fossil fuels
- Q30.** Sustainable energy production
- Q31.** To promote a new reading programme for children
- Q32.** Parents can sign up online
- Q33.** It can help encourage children to enjoy books
- Q34.** It serves organic and locally sourced food
- Q35.** In the city centre
- Q36.** Offers a loyalty programme with discounts
- Q37.** False – It leaves at 12:45 pm
- Q38.** True – The announcement mentions this
- Q39.** False – There is no mention of a delay
- Q40.** True – It is closed on Sunday
- Q41.** False – It reopens at 8 am
- Q42.** False – It is for maintenance
- Q43.** False – It is mostly cloudy
- Q44.** True – Showers are expected in the evening
- Q45.** False – It stays at 18 degrees

CHAPTER 5

Grammar and Vocabulary Essentials

Common Idioms

Idioms are phrases or expressions whose meanings cannot be understood from the individual words. They are frequently used in everyday English, so learning them will help you sound more natural and understand native speakers better.

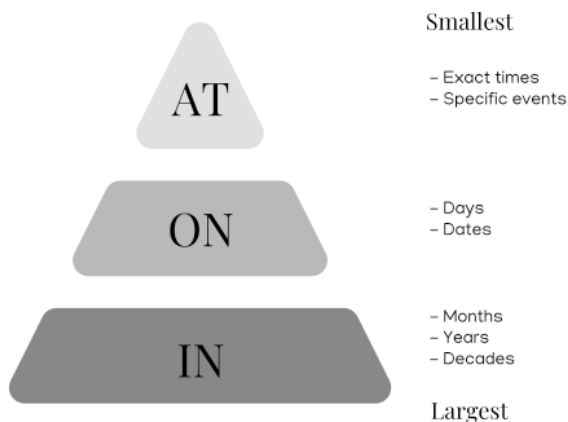
Idiom	Meaning	Example Sentence
A piece of cake	Something very easy	"This test is a piece of cake if you study."
Break the ice	To start a conversation	"He told a joke to break the ice at the meeting."
Under the weather	Feeling sick or unwell	"I'm not coming today; I'm feeling under the weather."
Hit the nail on the head	To be exactly right	"You hit the nail on the head with your suggestion."
The ball is in your court	It's your turn to take action	"I've given you all the information; now the ball is in your court."
Bite the bullet	To face something difficult bravely	"I had to bite the bullet and apologize."
Call it a day	To stop working for the day	"Let's call it a day and finish this tomorrow."
Time flies	Time passes very quickly	"I can't believe it's already December—time flies!"
In the nick of time	Just in time before something happens	"I arrived at the train station in the nick of time."
On cloud nine	Extremely happy	"She's on cloud nine after passing her exam."
Once in a blue moon	Very rarely	"He visits his hometown once in a blue moon."
Make ends meet	To earn just enough money to live	"With the rising prices, it's getting harder to make ends meet."
Beat around the bush	To avoid talking about the main issue	"Stop beating around the bush and tell me what happened!"
Burning bridges	Damaging a relationship permanently	"You shouldn't argue with your boss—you don't want to burn bridges."

Pull your weight	Do your share of the work	<i>"Everyone on the team needs to pull their weight for this project to succeed."</i>
Go the extra mile	Do more than what is expected	<i>"She always goes the extra mile to help her students."</i>
Raining cats and dogs	Raining very heavily	<i>"It's raining cats and dogs outside. Don't forget your umbrella!"</i>
Out of the blue	Something happening unexpectedly or suddenly	<i>"He called me out of the blue after five years."</i>
Make a mountain out of a molehill	To make a small problem seem bigger than it really is	<i>"It's just a minor issue—don't make a mountain out of a molehill."</i>
Keep your fingers crossed	To hope for a positive outcome	<i>"I have an important interview tomorrow—keep your fingers crossed for me!"</i>
In hot water	In trouble or difficulty	<i>"I'm in hot water with my boss after missing the deadline."</i>
Cut to the chase	To get to the point, skipping unnecessary details	<i>"Let's cut to the chase. We don't have much time."</i>
In a nutshell	To explain something in a brief and simple way	<i>"In a nutshell, the project is on track but we need more funding."</i>
Jump on the bandwagon	To join others in doing something popular or fashionable	<i>"Everyone's using that new app—looks like I'm going to jump on the bandwagon."</i>
Keep an eye on	To watch or monitor something or someone	<i>"Can you keep an eye on the kids while I make dinner?"</i>
The last straw	The final problem or difficulty that causes someone to react strongly	<i>"I can't take it anymore—the last straw was when they moved my desk again."</i>
On the fence	To be undecided or unsure	<i>"I'm still on the fence about whether to accept the job offer or not."</i>

Time Prepositions (In/On/At)

Time prepositions are small but essential words that help you talk about when something happens. They often confuse learners, but with practice, you can master them.

Preposition	When to Use	Examples
At	Exact times:	"At 3 PM" "At midnight"
	Holidays (as points in time):	"At Christmas" "At Easter"
	Specific points/locations in time:	"At the moment" "At the start of the film"
On	Specific days or dates:	"On Monday" "On July 4th" "On Christmas Day"
	Specific parts of specific days:	"On Monday morning" "On Christmas Eve"
	Special occasions or holidays:	"On my birthday" "On New Year's Day"
In	Months, years, centuries, long periods:	"In January" "In 2020" "In the 21st century"
	Parts of the day (except night):	"In the morning" "In the afternoon"
	Future time periods:	"I will leave <i>in</i> two weeks."



Tenses in English

Tenses are the foundation of English grammar, as they indicate the time an action occurs—past, present, or future. This appendix will provide a comprehensive guide to tenses, including their rules, usage, common irregularities, and tips for mastering them.

Common Verbs

Start with learning high-frequency verbs, as they form the backbone of everyday English.

Be	Do	Have	Go	Say	Get	Make	Take
See	Come	Give	Know	Think	Want	Look	Use
Find	Tell	Try	Need	Keep	Put	Move	Work

These verbs are used in every tense and help you communicate even with limited vocabulary.

Regular verbs form their past tense and past participle by adding -ed or -d to the base form. They form their present tense by adding -ing to the base form.

Verb/Base Form	Past Tense	Present Tense	Future Tense
Walk	Walked	Walking	Will walk
Play	Played	Playing	Will play
Talk	Talked	Talking	Will talk
Cook	Cooked	Cooking	Will cook

Irregular verbs do not follow regular patterns. Here are some common ones:

Verb/Base Form	Past Tense	Past Participle	Future Tense
Go	Went	Gone	Will go
Eat	Ate	Eaten	Will eat
Take	Took	Taken	Will take
Write	Wrote	Written	Will write
Drink	Drank	Drunk	Will drink

Spelling Changes for Regular Verbs

If the verb ends in -e, add only -d.

Examples: Hope → Hoped Live → Lived Agree → Agreed

If the verb ends in a consonant + y, change y to i and add -ed.

Examples: Cry → Cried Study → Studied Try → Tried

If the verb ends in a vowel + y, simply add -ed.

Examples: Play → Played Enjoy → Enjoyed Employ → Employed

Double the final consonant if the verb ends in a single vowel + single consonant.

Examples: Stop → Stopped Plan → Planned Admit → Admitted

Do not double consonants in words with two vowels before the final consonant

Examples: Rain → Rained Fail → Failed Clean → Cleaned

Signal Words for Tenses

Signal words are time-related words or phrases that provide clues about the correct tense to use. These words act as "indicators" that guide how you construct your sentence in English. Understanding these signal words can significantly improve your grasp of tenses.

In simple tenses, words like *yesterday*, *last week*, or *in 2010* point to the past tense, while words like *tomorrow* and *next week* indicate an upcoming event. Recognising these time markers allows you to match the sentence structure with the appropriate tense.

Using The Correct Tense

There are three main tenses in English, and each one is divided into four aspects (simple, continuous, perfect, perfect continuous):

Tense	Aspect	Examples
Present	Simple	It's happening every day or regularly.
		<i>"I eat breakfast every morning."</i>
	Continuous	It's happening right now .
		<i>"I am eating breakfast now."</i>
	Perfect	It started in the past but is still important now or just finished.
		<i>"I have eaten breakfast already."</i>
	Perfect Continuous	It started in the past, has continued, and might still be happening.
		<i>"I have been eating breakfast for 20 minutes."</i>
Past	Simple	It already happened.
		<i>"I ate breakfast yesterday."</i>
	Continuous	Something was happening at a specific time in the past.
		<i>"I was eating breakfast when the phone rang."</i>
	Perfect	It was done before something else happened in the past.
		<i>"I had eaten breakfast before I left for work."</i>
	Perfect Continuous	It had been happening for a while before something else happened.
		<i>"I had been eating breakfast for 20 minutes when the phone rang."</i>
Future	Simple	It's going to happen later.
		<i>"I will eat breakfast tomorrow."</i>
	Continuous	It will be happening at a specific time in the future.
		<i>"I will be eating breakfast at 8 a.m."</i>
	Perfect	It will be done before another future event.
		<i>"I will have eaten breakfast by the time you arrive."</i>
	Perfect Continuous	It will have been happening for a while before something else happens in the future.
		<i>"I will have been eating breakfast for 20 minutes when you arrive."</i>

Collocations in English

Collocations are natural word combinations or phrases commonly used by native speakers. Mastering collocations is essential for sounding fluent and natural in English. Instead of learning individual words, understanding collocations helps learners use the language more effectively and accurately. For example, native speakers say *make a decision* instead of *do a decision*. This appendix explores common collocations, their types, and how to use them effectively.

1. What Are Collocations?

Collocations are pairs or groups of words that frequently go together. These combinations are often fixed, meaning replacing one word can sound awkward or unnatural. They can include:

Verb + Noun: *Make a mistake, do homework*

Adjective + Noun: *Strong coffee, heavy rain*

Adverb + Adjective: *Deeply grateful, highly unlikely*

Verb + Adverb: *Run quickly, listen carefully*

Noun + Noun: *Traffic jam, school bus*

Minimal Pairs

Minimal pairs are two words that sound almost the same but have one key sound difference. This difference may be in a vowel sound (e.g., "ship" vs. "sheep") or a consonant sound (e.g., "pat" vs. "bat").

Minimal pairs are important because they help learners distinguish similar sounds and improve pronunciation clarity. If you mix up minimal pairs, you might accidentally say the wrong word, which can lead to confusion.

For example:

"Can you bring me a pen?" (correct – a writing tool)

"Can you bring me a pan?" (incorrect – a cooking utensil)

Below is a list of common minimal pairs.

Ship	a boat	Sheep	an animal
Bit	a small piece	Beat	to hit repeatedly
Sit	to rest	Seat	a chair
Pen	a writing tool	Pan	a cooking tool
Cat	an animal	Cut	to slice
Pat	to tap	Bat	an animal
Fan	a cooling device	Van	a vehicle
Light	opposite of dark	Right	correct
Think	to consider	Sink	a kitchen fixture
Sea	the ocean	She	a female person
Rice	a grain	Lice	small insect
Heart	a body organ	Hard	not soft
Few	a small number	View	a sight
Pool	a place to swim	Pull	to tug
Bag	a container	Back	opposite of front
Fit	the right size	Feet	plural of 'foot'
Word	element of writing	World	the Earth
Catch	to grab	Cash	money
Clothes	worn on the body	Close	near
Zoo	a place with animals	Sue	to take legal action

Chapter 6

Topic Discussion

Topic Discussion Practice

The Topic Discussion section of the B1 Speaking and Listening test is a key opportunity for you to demonstrate your ability to express yourself in English. Since this part of the test allows you to choose your own topic in advance, it is a great chance to talk about something familiar and interesting to you. However, simply choosing a topic is not enough—you need to be able to discuss it fluently, expand on your ideas, and respond naturally to follow-up questions from the examiner. Use the following prompts to help you develop these essential skills.

Read each of the following topics and sample introductions. Then, create your own introduction and answers to the potential follow-up questions.

Playing Football

"One of my favourite hobbies is playing football. I play every weekend with my friends at a local park. I have enjoyed football since I was a child because it helps me stay active and have fun. My favourite team is Manchester United, and I love watching their matches. In the future, I would like to join an amateur football club to improve my skills."

Your answer

1. How often do you play football?
2. Why do you like this hobby?
3. Do you prefer playing or watching football? Why?
4. Have you ever been to a football stadium?
5. What equipment do you need for football?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Skill You Have Learned

"One skill I have learned is cooking. I started cooking when I was a teenager because I wanted to help my family in the kitchen. Now, I enjoy trying new recipes from different countries. Cooking is useful because it allows me to prepare healthy meals at home. In the future, I would like to take a cooking course to improve my skills."

Your answer

1. What is your favourite dish to cook?
2. Who taught you how to cook?
3. Do you prefer cooking alone or with others? Why?
4. What are some challenges you face when cooking?
5. Would you like to become a professional chef?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Celebration or Festival You Enjoy

"One celebration I really enjoy is New Year's Eve. My family and I celebrate it every year by having a big dinner together and watching fireworks. It is a special time because we reflect on the past year and make plans for the future. I also like it because it's a happy occasion where people come together to celebrate."

Your answer

1. How do people in your country celebrate this festival?
2. What is your favourite part of the celebration?
3. Have you ever celebrated this festival in a different country?
4. Do you prefer celebrating with family or friends? Why?
5. How do you prepare for this celebration?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Book or Film You Enjoy

"One of my favourite films is 'The Lion King.' It is an animated movie about a young lion named Simba who grows up to become king. I love the story because it teaches important lessons about responsibility and courage. The music in the film is also very beautiful. I have watched it many times, and I never get bored of it!"

Your answer

What is the main story of the book/film?

1. Who are the main characters?
2. Why do you like this book/film?
3. Would you recommend it to others? Why?
4. Have you read a book that was later made into a film?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Person Who Inspires You

"One person who inspires me is my grandmother. She is a very strong and kind person. She raised five children while working full-time, which I think is amazing. She always gives me good advice and supports me in everything I do. I hope to be as kind and hardworking as her in the future."

Your answer

What qualities do you admire in this person?

1. How has this person influenced your life?
2. Have you ever told this person that they inspire you?
3. Do you think everyone needs a role model? Why?
4. Who is a famous person that inspires you?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Difficult Decision You Have Made

"One difficult decision I had to make was choosing between two job offers. One job had a higher salary, but the other job had better working conditions. After thinking carefully, I chose the job with better working conditions because I believe job satisfaction is more important than money. Now, I am happy with my decision."

Your answer

Why was this decision difficult?

1. Did you ask anyone for advice?
2. Do you think you made the right choice?
3. Have you ever regretted a decision you made?
4. What advice would you give to someone making a difficult decision?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Time You Helped Someone

"Last year, I helped my friend prepare for a job interview. She was very nervous, so I helped her practice answering questions and gave her advice on what to wear. She got the job in the end, and she was very grateful for my help. It made me feel happy to support her."

Your answer

What did you do to help this person?

1. How did they feel afterwards?
2. Have you ever received help from someone else?
3. Do you think helping others is important? Why?
4. How can people in your community help each other?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Place in Your Country You Would Recommend

"I would recommend visiting Edinburgh in Scotland. It is a beautiful city with a lot of history. The most famous attraction is Edinburgh Castle, which is located on a hill and has amazing views. There are also many traditional pubs and restaurants where you can try Scottish food. It is a great place for tourists."

Your answer

What is special about this place?

1. When is the best time to visit?
2. What activities can visitors do there?
3. Have you ever taken a visitor to this place?
4. What is one place you would like to visit in the future?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Childhood Memory

"One of my favourite childhood memories is playing in the park with my cousins. We used to go there every Sunday and spend the whole day playing football and riding our bicycles. I remember feeling so happy and free. I miss those days because life was much simpler back then."

Your answer

How old were you when this happened?

1. Why is this memory special to you?
2. Who were you with at that time?
3. Do you think childhood memories are important? Why?
4. What advice would you give to children today?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Time You Felt Proud

"I felt very proud when I passed my driving test. I had been practicing for months, and I was very nervous on the day of the test. However, I focused and did my best. When the examiner told me I had passed, I felt so happy and relieved. It was a great achievement for me."

Your answer

What did you do to achieve this goal?

How did you feel at that moment?

Did you celebrate your achievement? How?

What is something else you would like to achieve in the future?

Do you think hard work always leads to success? Why or why not?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

A Tradition in Your Country

"One important tradition in my country is having a big family meal on Sundays. Every Sunday, families gather to eat together, talk, and spend time with each other. It is a special time because it strengthens family bonds. In my family, we always cook a special meal and share stories about our week."

Your answer

1. Why is this tradition important?
2. How has this tradition changed over time?
3. Do young people still follow this tradition?
4. Are traditions important in modern society? Why?
5. What is a tradition from another country that you find interesting?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Conversation Practice (Unprepared Topics)

In the second part of the B1 Speaking and Listening test, the examiner will select two subject areas for discussion. Unlike the Topic Discussion, where you can prepare in advance, this section requires you to respond spontaneously to questions on everyday topics. This part of the test assesses your ability to understand questions, give relevant answers, and maintain a natural conversation.

To succeed, it is important to:

- Listen carefully to the examiner's questions before answering.
- Answer in full sentences rather than giving short, one-word responses.
- Expand on your answers by adding reasons, examples, or opinions.
- Use appropriate vocabulary related to the topic.
- Stay calm and confident when speaking.

Use the practice questions below to help you improve your ability to answer spontaneous questions clearly and confidently on a variety of different topics. If you have someone who can help you, ask them read the questions to you before you have read them for a more authentic practice experience.

Work and Studies

- What do you do for a living?
- What do you enjoy most about your job/studies?
- Would you like to change your job in the future? Why or why not?

Travel and Holidays

- Do you prefer travelling alone or with others? Why?
- What was your last holiday like?
- Where would you like to go on your next trip?

Free Time and Hobbies

- What do you usually do in your free time?
- Do you prefer indoor or outdoor activities?
- Have your hobbies changed over time?

Food and Eating Habits

- What is your favourite meal?
- Do you prefer cooking at home or eating out? Why?
- What is a traditional dish from your country?

Technology and Social Media

- How often do you use social media?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of technology?
- Do you think people spend too much time on their phones? Why?

Home and Neighbourhood

- Do you live in a house or a flat?
- What do you like about your neighbourhood?
- Would you like to move to a different place in the future? Why?

Sports and Exercise

- Do you play any sports?
- Do you prefer watching sports or playing them? Why?
- What are the benefits of regular exercise?

Shopping and Fashion

- Do you like shopping? Why or why not?
- What type of clothes do you like to wear?
- Do you prefer shopping online or in a store? Why?

Tips for Success in the Conversation Section

- Don't memorise answers – Focus on understanding the question and responding naturally.
- Use full sentences – Avoid short, one-word answers. Expand your response with details and examples.
- Ask for clarification if needed – If you don't understand a question, say:
 - “Could you repeat that, please?”
 - “Could you say that in a different way?”
- Practise with a friend or tutor – Have someone ask you random questions so you can improve your ability to respond spontaneously.
- Stay confident – If you make a mistake, don't panic! Keep speaking and correct yourself naturally if needed.

Chapter 7

Practice Exercises

Exercise 1: Complete the sentences by filling in the blanks with the correct word/s.

1. I ___ to the gym every Monday.

go / going / gone / goes

2. She ___ the movie, but I thought it was great.

doesn't like / didn't like / isn't like / not like

3. We ___ for our exams at the moment.

studies / studied / are studying / have studied

4. If I ___ more time, I would travel more.

have / having / had / will have

5. They ___ at the airport when the flight was delayed.

arrive / arriving / had arrived / arrives

6. I can't find my keys. I ___ them.

must lose / must have lost / should lose / must losing

7. We ___ to the beach because it was raining.

didn't go / not go / don't go / isn't go

8. She ___ me with my homework if I ask her.

will help / helps / is helping / helped

9. By the time I arrive, they ____ the meeting.

finished / will finish / will have finished / have finished

10. ____ you like a cup of tea?

Will / Do / Would / Can

11. There ____ a lot of people at the concert last night.

was / were / is / be

12. I need ____ some milk.

buying / buys / to buy / buy

13. We ____ the bus if we miss the train.

takes / took / will take / are taking

14. She ____ to France three times this year.

was / has been / is / has been to

15. I haven't seen him ____ we were at university.

since / for / at / during

16. There are ____ apples in the fridge.

some / any / no / much

17. I will go to the party if I ____ my homework on time.

finished / finish / will finish / will have finished

18. You should ___ an umbrella because it looks like rain.

take / took / taking / to take

19. She ___ to her friend right now, but she's in a meeting.

speaks / is speaking / would speak / speak

20. I prefer to read books ___ watch movies.

than / over / then / to

Exercise 1 Answers

1. I **go** to the gym every Monday.

The simple present tense is used for routines and regular actions.

2. She **didn't like** the movie, but I thought it was great.

"Doesn't" is the negative form of "does" used for "she," "he," or "it" in the present tense.

3. We **are studying** for our exams at the moment.

The present continuous tense is used for actions happening at the moment of speaking.

4. If I **had** more time, I would travel more.

Use "had" for hypothetical situations in the past or present

5. They **had arrived** at the airport when the flight was delayed.

"Had" is used to describe an action that was completed before another action in the past.

6. I can't find my keys. I **must have lost** them.

"Must have" shows that we are sure something happened in the past.

7. We **didn't go** to the beach because it was raining.

Use the negative form "didn't" to talk about something that did not happen in the past.

8. She **will help** me with my homework if I ask her.

"Will" is used to talk about things that will happen in the future.

9. By the time I arrive, they **will have finished** the meeting.

The future perfect is used to talk about something that will be finished before a certain time in the future.

10. **Would** you like a cup of tea?

"Would" is a polite way to ask someone about their preference or offer something.

11. There **were** a lot of people at the concert last night.

"Were" is the past tense form of "are" used for talking about the past.

12. I need **to buy** some milk.

The infinitive form "to buy" is used after the verb "need."

13. We **will take** the bus if we miss the train.

Use "will" for future actions that are possible.

14. She **has been** to France three times this year.

Use the present perfect when talking about something that happened at an unspecified time before now.

15. I haven't seen him **since** we were at university.

"Since" shows the starting point of a period of time.

16. There are **some** apples in the fridge.

"Some" is used in positive sentences with countable and uncountable nouns.

17. I will go to the party if I **finish** my homework on time.

In the first conditional, we use the present simple (finish) to talk about future possibilities.

18. You should **take** an umbrella because it looks like rain.

"Take" is the correct verb form after "should," which expresses advice or suggestion.

19. She **is speaking** to her friend right now, but she's in a meeting.

The present continuous tense (is speaking) is used for actions happening right now.

20. I prefer to read books **than** watch movies.

Use "than" to compare two things.

Exercise 2: For each word, choose the correct definition from the four options provided.

1. Elegant

- a) Old-fashioned
- b) Graceful and stylish in appearance or manner
- c) Very expensive
- d) Loud and bright in appearance

2. Accurate

- a) Almost right, but not quite
- b) Correct and free from mistakes
- c) Unclear or vague
- d) False or misleading

3. Anxious

- a) Feeling calm and relaxed
- b) Feeling worried or nervous about something
- c) Feeling sleepy
- d) Feeling happy and excited

4. Generous

- a) Very careful with money
- b) Willing to give or share with others
- c) Needing help from others
- d) Very polite

5. Curious

- a) Not caring about anything
- b) Interested in learning or discovering things
- c) Feeling very tired
- d) Uncomfortable in new situations

6. Confused

- a) Understanding everything clearly
- b) Not knowing what to think or do
- c) Very happy and cheerful
- d) Not interested in learning more

7. Boring

- a) Very exciting
- b) Uninteresting and dull
- c) Very loud and exciting
- d) Attractive or beautiful

8. Confident

- a) Shy and unsure of oneself
- b) Sure of your abilities and beliefs
- c) Quick to make decisions
- d) Very friendly and sociable

9. Delicious

- a) Tasting very good
- b) Difficult to eat
- c) Expensive or rare
- d) Not pleasant to the senses

10. Reliable

- a) Untrustworthy
- b) Always doing what is expected
- c) Forgetful or careless
- d) Hard to find or rare

11. Serious

- a) Funny and entertaining
- b) Important or sincere, not joking
- c) Feeling bored
- d) Lacking focus

12. Patient

- a) Unable to wait for something
- b) Able to wait calmly and not get frustrated
- c) Rushing through tasks
- d) Very nervous and upset

13. Friendly

- a) Unkind and rude
- b) Willing to talk and get to know others
- c) Very shy and reserved
- d) Always angry and upset

14. Rude

- a) Very polite and respectful
- b) Acting in a way that is impolite or disrespectful
- c) Calm and peaceful
- d) Happy and positive

15. Active

- a) Always moving, energetic
- b) Very sleepy or tired
- c) Resting and relaxing
- d) Lacking energy or enthusiasm

16. Trustworthy

- a) Likely to tell lies
- b) Someone you can rely on to be honest
- c) Always looking for problems
- d) A person who is not reliable

17. Helpful

- a) Not willing to support or assist
- b) Always ready to offer assistance
- c) Uninterested in other people's needs
- d) Very confused and unsure

18. Shy

- a) Very social and outgoing
- b) Reserved and nervous in social situations
- c) Very talkative
- d) Always in a hurry

19. Lively

- a) Full of energy and life
- b) Quiet and reserved
- c) Unhappy and gloomy
- d) Only active at night

20. Comfortable

- a) Unpleasant and uncomfortable
- b) Making you feel relaxed and at ease
- c) Not feeling anything
- d) Feeling stressed or anxious

Exercise 2 Answers

1. b) Graceful and stylish in appearance or manner
2. b) Correct and free from mistakes
3. b) Feeling worried or nervous about something
4. b) Willing to give or share with others
5. b) Interested in learning or discovering things
6. b) Not knowing what to think or do
7. b) Uninteresting and dull
8. b) Sure of your abilities and beliefs
9. a) Tasting very good
10. b) Always doing what is expected
11. b) Important or sincere, not joking
12. b) Able to wait calmly and not get frustrated
13. b) Willing to talk and get to know others
14. b) Acting in a way that is impolite or disrespectful
15. a) Always moving, energetic
16. b) Someone you can rely on to be honest
17. b) Always ready to offer assistance
18. b) Reserved and nervous in social situations
19. a) Full of energy and life

Exercise 3: Read each sentence and highlight and correct any errors.

1. He can sings very well.
2. She don't like ice cream.
3. They was very happy yesterday.
4. I going to the store tomorrow morning, is that okay?
5. She can plays the piano very well.
6. I haven't saw that movie yet.
7. I would of gone to the party if I knew about it.
8. He don't know where the station is.
9. My friend enjoy to travel a lot.
10. We have ate breakfast already.
11. He is more taller than I am.
12. They doesn't want to come to the meeting.
13. She said she is help me tomorrow.
14. I was seeing him yesterday at the park.
15. There is too much people in the room.
16. I am interesting in learning new languages.
17. He speak English very well.
18. We are planning to meet at tomorrow.
19. They will arrives late to the party.
20. She's working in a big company since 3 years.

Exercise 3 Answers

1. He can **sing** very well.
2. She **doesn't** like ice cream.
3. They **were** very happy yesterday.
4. I **am** going to the store tomorrow morning, is that okay?
5. She can **play** the piano very well.
6. I haven't **seen** that movie yet.
7. I would **have** gone to the party if I knew about it.
8. He **doesn't** know where the station is.
9. My friend **likes** to travel a lot.
10. We have **eaten** breakfast already.
11. He is **taller** than I am.
12. They **don't** want to come to the meeting.
13. She said she **would** help me tomorrow.
14. I **saw** him yesterday at the park.
15. There are too **many** people in the room.
16. I am **interested** in learning new languages.
17. He **speaks** English very well.
18. We are planning to meet **tomorrow**.
19. They will **arrive** late to the party.
20. She's been working in a big company **for** 3 years.

Final Thoughts

You've now reached the end of our B1 Speaking and Listening Guide. We sincerely hope that you have found this guide to be informative and helpful, and that you will make full use of the lessons learned in order to pass your citizenship test.

Remember, the B1 test doesn't have to be intimidating. You don't need to be nervous, or worried. As long as you have prepared fully, revised the subjects that will come up in the exam and can speak to a good standard of English; you will be absolutely fine.

Thank you for reading, and we wish you the very best of luck with your examination.