

Introduction

This book provides material for reading and listening comprehension and can be used in the year preceding the Cambridge First Certificate (or any other comparable) examination. The texts, although written with the needs of students at this level in mind, are not graded, so that throughout, the learners are being exposed to natural language. The book is divided into three related sections:

Section One This consists of thirty texts, with exercises for oral and written work. The following points should be noted:

Exercise 1 Multiple choice type questions, phased out as the book progresses.

Exercise 2 Wh- type questions, increased as the book progresses.

Exercise 3* (Passages 1-20 only) Yes/No type questions.

Exercise 4* Completion type exercises, which involve restatement (and therefore interpretation) of part of the text.

Exercise 5 Vocabulary exercises (multiple choice in the early stages.)

Exercise 6 Guided composition exercises, which involve re-presentation of part of the text, usually from a personal angle.

Exercise 7 Practice in some point of usage in the text.

Section Two This consists of Recall Exercises. These are extracts from the texts in Section One, with certain grammatical features omitted or incomplete. The extracts are arranged in four groups; tenses, articles, prepositions and adverbial particles, and linking words. References for each extract are provided; they can therefore be corrected by the students themselves and are thus suitable for self-access work.

Section Three This consists of two types of exercise. First, aural comprehension passages. These passages are based, linguistically and thematically, on texts in Section One, as indicated by the references in brackets at the end of each passage. These passages can also be used for 'reproduction' work; that is, the passage is read aloud and the students reproduce the ideas in their own words. Secondly, there are twelve dictation passages, which are similarly based on material in Section One.

* Since Exercise 3 is discontinued after Passage 20, Exercise 4 becomes Exercise 3 (and so on.)

How to use this material

The following approach is suggested:

- 1 Use one of the reading goals (provided at the end of the book) to get the students to do a quick first reading of the text.
- 2 Read the text aloud to the class and/or get them to read it again silently. If the students are reading silently, use either Exercise 1 or 3 as a reading incentive.
- 3 Discuss any points of interest (e.g. what the text is about.) Since the texts are mostly narrative, it is a good idea at this stage to get them to supply some background (e.g. for the people, places and other events mentioned in the story.) In short, try to bring the text alive as much as possible. Here or later the students may like to suggest a title for the text.
- 4 Do the text-related exercises 1-5. The students may work individually, in pairs or in groups. These exercises follow a set pattern, as indicated in the Introduction.

You may wish to do alternative or additional exercises in connection with the text. The following are some possibilities. All references are to the first text:

a Are the following statements true or false? If they are false, give the correct statement.

For example: The writer was driving the car.

This is false – the writer's companion, John, was driving.

b Give more details.

For example: We had little food with us.

They only had a few biscuits and some chocolate.

c Explain why.

For example: John went for a walk.

He was a poor sleeper.

d What do you think they said?

For example: I asked John to drive more slowly.

'Will you please drive more slowly . . . Hey! Not so fast!'

- 5 Get the students to react to the text. For this type of largely narrative text, there are two main ways in which this can be done:
 - a Ask the students to suggest a continuation to the story where this is appropriate. Another possibility is to ask them to decide on a hypothetical turn of events (e.g. What would have happened if they had both gone to sleep?) The students may also be asked to say what they would have done in the circumstances.
 - b Ask the students to relate any similar experience they have had.
- 6 Exercises 6 and 7 may be done at any convenient point. Exercise 6 is particularly suitable for homework. In the early stages, some class preparation will usually be necessary to show the students how to extract relevant ideas and how to re-present these in a properly sequenced form. It is not necessary to insist on the word limit suggested in the exercise, especially if there is any risk of inhibiting the students from using linking words. Note that the 'continuation' activity, suggested in 5 above, can also be done as a writing activity.
- 7 The exercises in Section Two are best done about a week after the other activities.
- 8 Follow the usual procedure for reading aloud the listening comprehension and dictation passages.