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WRITING GUIDE FOR
THE B2 (FCE/ISE II)



HOW TO ACE THE WRITING TASKS

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La guía para el 'Writing' de FCE

Los exámenes de Cambridge ESOL tienen una prueba de expresión escrita. La prueba consiste en dos redacciones, la primera siendo un ensayo obligatoria y la segunda una elección entre 3 opciones. Este documento explicará como contestar la primera pregunta con NOTA.

Explicación de la prueba y preguntas típicas **P.3**

Resolver tus dudas sobre esta parte del examen

Ejemplos de un ensayos con consejos **P.4**

(Para ejemplos de los otros textos hay que mirar el ebook: Getting through the B2)

Ver unos ejemplos de un ensayo y conocer el formato de una respuesta de alto nivel.

Frases claves para escribir mejor **P.6**

Frases para expresar tu opinión **P.7**

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¿En qué consiste la prueba de la expresión escrita?

La prueba dura 1:20 minutos (unos 40 minutos cada redacción). Hay que escribir un ensayo y luego tienes 3 opciones. Suelen ser una carta, un email, un reseña, un artículo o un informe (**no recomendamos el informe debido a las exigencias de la estructura y contenido**). Cada texto debe ser de entre 140-190 palabras. En APPF, aconsejamos que escribas mínimo 160 palabras para que no te falte contenido. Cuanto más acerques a las 190 mejor.

Preguntas típicas

1. ¿Debo hacer alguna especie de plan?

Sí... Y lo vamos a poner en mayúsculas "SÍ". Es fundamental tomar un par de minutos para apuntar un pequeño esquema de lo que vas a escribir. Un buen ensayo empieza con un buen plan. En el plan es fundamental incluir una introducción (captar el interés del lector), los párrafos (cuantas vas a escribir, cuál será el punto principal, como relacionar los temas), además de eso hay que pensar en los conectores que vais a usar, frases claves y estructuras gramaticales. La conclusión tiene que ser conciso y informativo.

2. ¿Pasa algo si me paso de las 190 palabras?

Sí y no. Antes te quitaban un punto por cada 5 palabras que te pasabas pero ahora solo te perjudica la nota en cuanto al contenido. Si deciden que algo que has escrito no sea relevante al tema, te baja la nota. Procura no pasar de las 190 palabras.

3. ¿Qué cuenta como 'complex grammar' en el writing?

En el 'language' parte de la evaluación, el alumno tiene que demostrar flexibilidad y control en el uso de estructuras gramaticales y usar varias estructuras complejas (passive voice, relative clauses, modal verbs, conditionals, reported speech, inversions). Para saber más de las estructuras gramaticales necesarias para el FCE ha de usar el ebook: **Getting through the B2** como punto de referencia.



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Cómo escribir un Ensayo (essay) para el B2 First Certificate de Cambridge

Un 'essay' es la primera parte de la expresión escrita del examen. Es una pregunta obligatoria que hay que escribir de 160-190 palabras. Es un texto en lo cual hay que analizar un tema (suele ser una situación o un problema) Debes argumentar los distintos puntos de vista sobre el tema y expresar tu opinión sobre el mismo.

Un ensayo 'Essay' tiene las siguientes partes:

Introducción

Introducir el tema y presentar como vas a contestar la pregunta. Es imprescindible captar el interés del lector.

1º párrafo

De los apuntes en la pregunta hay que escribir sobre el punto principal de tu argumento

2º párrafo

Hay que discutir los otros dos puntos de los apuntes, razonando porque están relacionados (se puede separar los párrafos si te es más conveniente)

Conclusión

Hay que escribir una conclusión, en la cual incorporas tu opinión sobre el tema y demostrando lo que el lector debería haber sacado del ensayo.

¿Qué buscan en un buen ensayo?

Un ensayo a nivel B2 debe ser 'semi-formal'. Hay que opinar sobre el tema y justificar tu opinión de una forma imparcial (menos en la conclusión). Lo que están buscando es un equilibrio entre todos los puntos de vista. Todo el contenido tiene que ser relevante a la pregunta y no debes desviarte del tema.

Hay que evitar; contracciones (can't) y lenguaje coloquial.



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Ejemplos de preguntas con respuestas:

In English class you have been debating the advantages and disadvantages of studying English abroad.

Write an essay giving reasons for your opinions

Title: Many students spend a lot of money to study English in an English speaking country, but is it worth it?

Notes: write about

- 1. Costs***
- 2. Teaching methods***
- 3. Immersion technique***

Many students spend a lot of money to study English in an English speaking country, but is it worth it?

To get started it is important to understand that learning English is of the utmost importance for people in Spain. Education experts say that the demand for a high level of English is only going to increase so we all need to find the best way of learning this language.

Firstly, we need to look at the cost of learning a language. We study English at school from the age of 3 but the level of classes and teaching is generally quite poor so our parents invest a lot of money in private language schools to help us through our exams. This is a costly process but we need to think, is it the quickest way to learn? Wouldn't it be better to go to an English speaking country?

Going abroad to study is a fantastic experience and we generally make a lot more progress than we would that if we stayed in our own country, but it is extremely expensive. Not all people can afford it and they need to try to get grants to be able to go. The advantages are obvious because we are surrounded by the language and we are forced to use it in real life situations. But it is important to find people to practice with who are willing to be patient and help us.

To summarise, it is a fantastic opportunity to go abroad to study but it is important to have a good teacher and to be focussed on learning or you could waste your time, and a lot of money.



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In English class you have been discussing free time and how habits have changed nowadays from the past.

Write an essay giving reasons for your opinions

Is it easier to find opportunities to do what you enjoy in your free time than in the past?

Discuss the issues involved:

- 1. Work.***
- 2. Facilities***
- 3. Time available to the general population.***

Can we use our free time better nowadays than in the past?

A lack of free time can be a cause of stress and therefore, health problems. On starting this essay, it is important to take into account the various factors that have changed our access to free time activities from that of past generations.

Firstly, we should mention that in general, people have never had so many opportunities to enjoy leisure activities as they do today. People generally had less time and money to do as they pleased as the standard of living was lower. But the way we work also has a negative influence as in this day and age there is far more pressure to succeed and we are discouraged from using our free time unproductively.

In spite of having a vast amount of facilities and money to our advantage we have more distractions that prevent us from doing what we enjoy. Due to the emergence of the internet and technological advances, it is all too easy for us to waste our spare time.

Given these points, I believe we have more time and money to do what we like in our free time than in the past but people do not necessarily use it in a better way.



Intercambioidiomas

In class you have had a group discussion about the education system in your country.

Write an essay giving reasons for your opinions

How could the education system be improved in your country?

Discuss:

- 1. Funding***
- 2. Teaching methods***
- 3. (your own idea)***

How could the education system be improved in Spain?

Spain has one of the highest drop-out rates in high school in Europe so it is obvious that something is failing. To kick off this essay we are going to look at the current state of education and how to improve it.

On the one hand, Spain has just experience an extreme economic recession, therefore funding has been cut and this of course has lead to a lack of resources. Teachers will have had a bad time trying to maintain standards due to this fact. A simple increase of investment in education could help to make things better for both teachers and students.

On the other hand, teaching methods in Spain are said to be among the worst in the world. There needs to be an extreme change in the training process for teachers, especially to assimilate the recent emergence of bilingualism. Good teacher come out of a well-formed training system.

In brief, Changes need to be made at both government and grass roots levels to ensure that future generations have a bright future. Starting with funding teacher training so that teachers can change the face of the education system.



Frases claves para escribir mejor

STARTING:	CONCLUSION:	CONTRAST:	TIME:
To get started	as can be seen	although this may be true	Firstly, secondly, thirdly
On starting this essay	in the final analysis	in contrast	in due time
Firstly	all things considered	different from	as long as
To begin with	as shown above	of course ..., but	as soon as
In the first place	in the long run	on the other hand	at the moment
until now	given these points	on the contrary	in good time
the first point I'd like to make is	as has been noted	at the same time	in the meantime
it is time to	in a word	in spite of	in a moment
I would like to start by	for the most part	even so / though	in ages
To start with	after all	be that as it may	whenever
To introduce the topic	in fact	then again	now that
To kick off this essay	in summary	above all	instantly
The first thing to mention is	in conclusion	in reality	without delay
As a starting point	in short	after all	all of a sudden
In the first part	in brief	although	at the present time
On the one hand	in essence	instead	from time to time
	to summarize	whereas	sooner or later
	on balance	despite	at the same time
	altogether	conversely	up to the present time
	overall	otherwise	at this instant
	by and large	however	first, second
	to sum up	rather	in time
	on the whole	nevertheless	prior to
	in any event	nonetheless	straightaway
	taking all of this into account	regardless	by the time
	all in all	as if/though	in this day and age



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Expresar tu opinión

In my opinion,...

In my eyes,...

To my mind,...

As far as I am concerned,...

Speaking personally,...

From my point of view,...

As for me / As to me,...

My view / opinion / belief / impression / conviction is that...

I hold the view that...

I would say that...

It seems to me that...

I am of the opinion that...

My impression is that...

I am under the impression that...

It is my impression that...

I have the feeling that...

My own feeling on the subject is that...

I have no doubt that...

I am sure / I am certain that...

I think / consider / find / feel / believe / suppose / presume / assume/reckon that...

I hold the opinion that... (I form / adopt an opinion.)

I dare say that...

I guess that...

I bet that....

I gather that...

It goes without saying that...



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Justificar tu opinión

Estas frases son flexibles y se puede modificar para ajustarlas al contexto

To begin, you can use these *basic (B1) phrases* to justify an opinion in English:

because...
the reason is...
the reason I believe that is...
the facts suggest...
the evidence shows...
taking into account what I have seen...

You can justify your opinion more effectively by being more specific. Try some *intermediate (B2) phrases* like these:

The first reason I believe this is...
The main reason I feel this way is...
There are several reasons I believe this. The first is...

When you are not completely certain, you can try one of these more *advanced (C1) English phrases*:

I don't have any special reason for believing this. It just seems right to me that...
I could be wrong as I have no special reason for believing this. I just feel this is right as...
I'm not sure why I feel this way but I have reason to believe...

When you ARE certain, try one of these phrases:

There is a lot of evidence to support my point of view. For example...
There are many facts in favour of my opinion. One such fact is...
From my own personal experience, I am lead to believe...



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Conectores

Cada conector tiene una función distinta. Ha de tener en cuenta la diferencias gramaticales de cada.

ADDING INFORMATION	CONTRAST
And, also, as well, in addition, besides, above all	However, but, although, on the other hand, despite, in spite of, even though, though
GIVING EXAMPLES	SIMILARITY
Such as, for example, like, for instance, as follows:	Similarly, equally, likewise, in the same way
REINFORCEMENT	RESULT
Also, furthermore, moreover, above all, not only... but also	So, therefore, as a result, because of this, consequently, thus, hence, in that case
DEDUCTION	SUMMARY
Otherwise, in other words, then, in that case	In conclusion, to sum up, in brief, to sum up, therefore, to summarise
SEQUENCE	STATING THE OBVIOUS
Firstly, secondly, thirdly, lastly, next, after, to start with, to finish,	Obviously, clearly, naturally, of course, naturally, surely, after all

Linking:

‘Linking’ se refiere a la forma que el escritor relaciona sus ideas con otras. Es fundamental hacer esto para formar un argumento.

As I have said before...

With respect to the point on...

Regarding...

Like I have said...

In relation to...

Taking into account...



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Ejemplo de una pregunta para practicar

El candidato ha de escribir un ensayo de 160-190 palabras usando la pregunta y los apuntes como referencia. Debe incluir su opinión y también tener un formato organizado con párrafos distintos que sirven un propósito cada uno.

Should famous sports stars earn more money than people in other professions, such as doctors, teachers or nurses?

- Time spent at work
- Training needed
- (your own idea)

Consejos:

Titulo – el candidato debe incluir un titulo. Tiene la opción de usar la pregunta ‘ **Should famous sports stars earn more money than people in other professions, such as doctors, teachers or nurses?**’ o si no, debes formar un titulo que indique el tono de la respuesta.

Organización – hay que escribir párrafos. Una introducción que explique cómo vas a contestar la pregunta y además capte el interés del lector. Por lo menos dos párrafos que traten de los 3 puntos de la pregunta (si se puede juntar dos de ellos, no hay nada malo de hacerlo). La conclusión tiene que expresar la opinión del candidato sobre el tema.

Equilibrio de la respuesta – es mejor mantenerse imparcial durante casi todo el ensayo, habla de todos los puntos de vista y luego en la conclusión hay que opinar sobre el tema y justificarlo.

Suerte con el examen y no dudes en escribirnos al foro para que solucionemos alguna duda que pueda surgir