

## Reading Comprehension

### A1 Level (CEFR)

#### Passage 1

##### My neighborhood

My neighborhood is very peaceful and quiet. It is a new neighborhood, and there are a lot of big houses and some apartment buildings. The streets are very clean, and there aren't many cars. My school is near my house. I can walk there in 10 minutes.

There's also a park, which has a small playground for children and a large field. I like to play baseball there with my friends after school. All of the houses have a small front yard but big back yards. Most of my neighbors have a swimming pool, and some even have a trampoline!

Everyone has a flower garden, and in the spring, it is very beautiful. My road is called Maple Road. It is not in the city. It's in the suburbs. There aren't any restaurants, bars or cinemas on my road. But, if you go to Main street, you can find a lot of things to do. My favorite store is there. It's called Knick-Knack, and they sell everything you can imagine.

I like my neighborhood because it is very safe. There is no crime, and all of my neighbors take care of each other. The police station is next to the school, which is very nice. However, the hospital is quite far. It is in the city, and we have to drive 30 minutes to get there.

My friends live near me, and we often meet up to play or just talk. We love playing hockey in the street because there isn't any traffic. I think I am lucky to live in my neighborhood.

- |   |      |       |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. It's a busy neighborhood with lots of activity.                          | True | False |
| 2. There are only a few cars on the streets.                                | True | False |
| 3. He enjoys playing in the playground near his home.                       | True | False |
| 4. People decorate their flower gardens in the fall to make them beautiful. | True | False |
| 5. He lives in the city.  | True | False |
| 6. He lives on Main Street.   | True | False |

## A2 Level (CEFR)

### Passage 1 An email from a friend

Hi Samia,

Just a quick email to say that sounds like a great idea. Saturday is better for me because I'm meeting my parents on Sunday. So if that's still good for you, why don't you come here? Then you can see the new flat and all the work we've done on the kitchen since we moved in. We can eat at home and then go for a walk in the afternoon. It's going to be so good to catch up finally. I want to hear all about your new job!

Our address is 52 Charles Road, but it's a bit difficult to find because the house numbers are really strange here. If you turn left at the post office and keep going past the big white house on Charles Road, there's a small side street behind it with the houses 50–56 in. Don't ask me why the side street doesn't have a different name! But call me if you get lost and I'll come and get you.

Let me know if there's anything you do/don't like to eat. Really looking forward to seeing you!

See you soon!

Gregor

**Instructions:** Choose TRUE if the statement agrees with the information FALSE if the statement contradicts the information.

- |  |      |       |
|--|------|-------|
| 1. Samia and Gregor are going to meet on Sunday.                   | True | False |
| 2. They're going to have lunch at Gregor's flat.                   | True | False |
| 3. They haven't seen each other for a long time.                   | True | False |
| 4. Samia's life hasn't changed since they last met.                | True | False |
| 5. The house is easy to find.                                      | True | False |
| 6. Gregor doesn't know the name of the side street his flat is on. | True | False |

Source: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/a2-reading/email-friend>

### Passage 2 An invitation to a job interview

To: Grace Yang

Date: 6 September

Subject: Invitation to job interview

Dear Grace,

Thank you for your application for the position of sales manager.

We would like to invite you for an interview at 10 a.m. on Monday 21 September at our offices at The Shard, 32 London Bridge Street, London.

You will meet with our head of sales, Susan Park, and the interview will last for about 45 minutes. During this time, you will have the opportunity to find out more about the position and learn more about our company.

Please bring your CV and references to the interview. You will also need to show a form of ID at reception to receive a visitor's pass. Please ask for me as soon as you arrive.

If you have any questions or if you wish to reschedule, please call me on 555-1234 or email me by 12 September.

I look forward to meeting you.

Best regards,

Anna Green

Human Resources Assistant

**Instructions:** Choose the best answer.

1. What job did Grace apply for?

- a. Head of sales      b. Sales manager      c. Sales assistant      d. Human resource assistant

2. When is the job interview?

- a. 6 September      b. 12 September      c. 21 September      d. 22 September

3. How long will the interview take?

- a. Under an hour      b. Just over an hour      c. Over two hours      d. A day

4. What does Grace need to bring to the interview?

- a. Her CV      b. Her references      c. Her ID      d. All of the above

5. Who should Grace ask for at the reception?

- a. The reception manager      b. Susan Park      c. Anna Green      d. Grace Yang

6. What can Grace do if she wants to change the interview date?

- a. Go to the reception on 12 September  
b. Call Anna Green on 10 September  
c. Email Anna Green on 15 September  
d. Meet Susan Park for a coffee on 21 September

Source: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/a2-reading/invitation-job-interview>

### **Passage 3 Choosing a conference venue**

#### **The International Centre**

Whether you are looking for a conference venue or a place to have your meetings and your training days, the International Centre is the perfect modern space for your event.

Offering free Wi-Fi, secure parking and all-day refreshments, the International Centre has 120 meeting rooms and a theatre for up to 1,000 people.

Conveniently located in the city centre, the International Centre is close to the shops and only a ten-minute walk to the train station.

#### **The Grand West**

The Grand West is a country house surrounded by rolling hills and beautiful scenery, only a 30-minute drive from the airport.

With 76 hotel rooms, 12 meeting rooms and a conference room that takes up to 200 people, the Grand West offers free Wi-Fi and a whiteboard in every room.

You can also make use of the gardens of the Grand West for team-building events and outdoor activities. Our indoor swimming pool, gym and 18-hole golf course will ensure that your event is relaxing and enjoyable for everyone.

**Instructions:** Choose TRUE if the statement agrees with the information FALSE if the statement contradicts the information.

1. If you need a large conference venue for about 600 people, you should book the International Centre.      True      False

2. If you want to go shopping after your meetings, you should book the Grand West.  
True    False
3. Only the International Centre offers free Wi-Fi.  
True    False
4. If you go to a conference at the International Centre, you can have food and drink any time during the day.  
True    False
5. You can have fun playing golf if you go to an event at the Grand West.  
True    False
6. You have to walk for 30 minutes if you want to go from the Grand West to the airport.  
True    False

Source: <https://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/skills/reading/a2-reading/choosing-conference-venue>

#### Passage 4

##### How my life has changed

I used to work on cruise ships as a musician. I travelled a lot! I spent the month before the first lockdown in four continents! I used to get up really early, drive to the airport and fly to a port across the world and get on a ship just to get to work! Then I used to spend between three and fourteen days on the ship. The ships were great. The food was excellent, and the staff were brilliant. The ship stopped at fantastic places, and I often used to spend the afternoon at the beach drinking cocktails or sightseeing. But there were disadvantages too. I often didn't know anyone on the ship. But the passengers all knew me, and they used to talk to me every time I left my cabin. I didn't have any privacy. Of course, I had to chat to them politely even when I wasn't in the mood.

But now, everything has changed. The cruises aren't running now, and I don't know when they will run again, and I've been in my flat for a year. I never used to spend much time here, and I haven't spent a whole year in England for over twenty years! But I've enjoyed it. I bought a bike last year, and I've found some great beach cafes that I never used to know about. I also bought a campervan, and I drove around the coast. I always used to prefer beaches in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean to British beaches. The weather is much better for a start! But I found some beautiful places last year. I could park on the beach in some places and run straight into the sea! They were much less touristy and more peaceful than the places where the cruise ships go.

I'm spending a lot more time alone now. I didn't use to be alone much when I was working. But since the pandemic started, I have developed new relationships with people who I didn't use to know very well. I always used to prefer the company of entertainers and people who like to travel. I used to think that people with normal jobs were boring. But since last year, I've got to know some really interesting, strong, kind and caring people! So that's been really valuable.

1. Sarah didn't use to have to \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. travel long distances to work.
  - b. get up early.
  - c. manage staff on the ship.

2. Sarah used to \_\_\_\_\_ around the world.
  - a. perform in concert halls
  - b. take her bike
  - c. relax on beaches
3. Sarah didn't use to like \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. the lack of privacy on beaches.
  - b. her colleagues on the ship.
  - c. talking politely to strangers.
4. Sarah is spending \_\_\_\_\_ at home than before.
  - a. more time
  - b. less time
  - c. about the same amount of time
5. Sarah went on bike rides and found some nice \_\_\_\_\_
  - a. cafes
  - b. beaches
  - c. parks
6. Sarah disliked British beaches because \_\_\_\_\_ beaches in other countries.
  - a. there are more people than on
  - b. the weather is worse than on
  - c. they are not as beautiful as
7. Sarah spent \_\_\_\_\_ time alone in the past compared to now.
  - a. less
  - b. more
  - c. a similar amount of
8. Talking about relationships, Sarah \_\_\_\_\_ now than in the past.
  - a. has deeper relationships
  - b. appreciates normal people more
  - c. is kinder and more caring

## Passage 5

Why aren't babies born on certain days?

Do you know anyone whose birthday is Christmas Day? You may know a few, but actually, having a birthday on that day is quite rare.

December 25th is the least common birthday in the USA, Australia and New Zealand. Between 30% and 40% fewer babies are born on this day than on the peak days. In England, Wales and Ireland, Christmas Day is the second rarest day for a birthday. There, the fewest birthdays are on December 26th, the national holiday called Boxing Day. Other festival dates are also uncommon. In the USA, the four least common birthdays are Christmas, New Year, Thanksgiving and Independence Day.

So why does this happen? Actually, there is a very logical reason. A third of babies in the USA are born by caesarean. Obviously, doctors can plan the date for these operations. They don't schedule them for the national holidays because they want to be celebrating, not working. Also, if babies don't arrive on time, doctors give the mothers drugs to make them give birth. However, they probably won't do this during holidays.

Interestingly, though, there are relatively few birthdays on April 1st in England, Wales and New Zealand. It's not a national holiday, so doctors carry out operations as usual. But in those countries, this day is called April Fool's Day. Traditionally people play jokes and trick other people on this day. Maybe mothers avoid giving birth then because they are worried that people will bully or play jokes on their child.

Some times of year are more common for birthdays than others. In the USA and New Zealand, the most popular month is September. In the UK, it's September or early October. The reason for this is because many babies are conceived in the cold, winter months when days are short. Australia, where it is warm in February and March, doesn't show this pattern. In countries further north than the UK, like Norway and Russia, the peak months are earlier: in July or August.

Think about your birthday. Is it at a common time of year? Would you prefer your birthday to be at a different time of year?

1. In Australia, there are 30% - 40% fewer births on Christmas Day than on the most common day of the year.

- a. True                      b. False                      c. It doesn't say.

2. In Ireland, there are more births on Boxing Day than Christmas Day.

- a. True                      b. False                      c. It doesn't say.

3. In the USA, there are fewer births on Thanksgiving than Independence Day.

- a. True.                      b. False                      c. It doesn't say.

4. Doctors avoid doing birth operations on national holidays.

- a. True.                      b. False.                      c. It doesn't say.
5. There are fewer births on April 1st than January 1st in Wales.
- a. True.                      b. False.                      c. It doesn't say.
6. Doctors don't do birth operations on April Fool's Day in the UK.
- a. True.                      b. False.                      c. It doesn't say.
7. The most common month for a birthday is later in the USA than Russia.
- a. True.                      b. False.                      c. It doesn't say.
8. The most common month for a birthday in Australia is February and March.
- a. True.                      b. False.                      c. It doesn't say.

### Passage 6

The man with the most world records

Ashrita Furman is a record-breaking record-breaker: He has set more records than anyone else in the world! In the last 40 years, he has established more than 600 records!

As a child, Ashrita loved reading the Guinness Book of World Records. He wanted to be in it too. But he thought people had to be good at sports to be in the book. He wasn't a good athlete. He felt his dream would never come true.

But later in life, Ashrita learned meditation, and with this, he learned that nothing is impossible. He tested this idea in 1978 by entering a 24-hour bike race in New York. Without any training, Ashrita came third! After that, he started thinking about breaking records again.

First, he tried to break the record for the most jumping jacks. He failed at first, but, remembering that 'anything is possible', he trained, meditated and tried again. This time, he did 27,000 jumping jacks in 6 hours 45 minutes and became the new record holder. His achievement appeared in the 1980 Guinness Book of Records.

Today, Ashrita has a long list of records, including: walking the furthest distance with a bike on his chin, cycling the longest distance with a bottle on his head and lighting the most candles on a birthday cake. He says: "I choose ideas which are challenging, fun and childish! I enjoy practising and seeing my progress."

He says his favourite record was "the longest distance on a pogo stick". While he was on holiday in Japan, he saw Mount Fuji and thought it was beautiful, so he decided to try to break a record there. He did 11.5 miles. The most difficult record was "the most forward rolls". In 10 hours, 30 minutes, he did 8,341 of them, travelling 12 miles!

If you want to break a world record too, Ashrita gives this advice. "Choose something you enjoy because you will need to practise. And don't give up. Your mind will tell you that something is impossible, but it isn't. If someone else has done something, and you work hard, you can do it too!"

1. When Ashrita was a child, he...
  - a. was good at sports.
  - b. dreamed of being in the Guinness Book of Records.
  - c. achieved his first world record.
  - d. met a record-breaking athlete.
2. When he was a child, he thought that...
  - a. one day he would achieve his dream.
  - b. everything is possible.
  - c. only good athletes could break records.
  - d. he would become a good athlete one day.
3. When Ashrita did the 24-hour bike race, he learned that...
  - a. training is important.
  - b. breaking records is easy.
  - c. anything is possible.
  - d. meditation is unnecessary.
4. Which activity did Ashrita do for his first world record?
  - a. meditating
  - b. cycling
  - c. jumping jacks
  - d. using a pogo stick
5. Which of these sentences is NOT true about Ashrita?
  - a. He failed his first record-breaking attempt.
  - b. His record-breaking activities are childish.
  - c. In one record, he carried a bottle on his head while cycling.
  - d. He doesn't enjoy training for records.
6. Which sentence might Ashrita say?
  - a. "You don't have to practice much to break records."
  - b. "Doing the most forward rolls was easy!"
  - c. "Do what your mind tells you to do."
  - d. "Anyone can break records."



## Passage 7

### Black Friday

The day after Thanksgiving has become America's biggest shopping day. Closed all day on Thursday, shopping centres all across the nation open early on Friday. Some of them open at 12:01 Friday morning, while others open at 4 a.m. Some "**sleepyhead**" shopping centres, like Target this year, don't open their doors on Friday until 6 a.m. From Friday to the day before Christmas, this is the season when businesses make nearly 25 per cent of what they earn in a year. This season puts many businesses "in the black", that is, they make the money they need for the year.

Reporters from local TV stations interview people who sleep in tents in front of the shops a day or two before the doors open on Friday. These people patiently wait in queue to get products that are 50 per cent cheaper or more.

"Oh, we have fun," said one of the persons queuing. "We sometimes bring games to play, we watch TV and order lots of pizza, and we often meet interesting people. And, most important of all, we save a lot!" The problem, of course, is that only a very small number of products have big reductions in their prices. Apart from a few big discounts, each shop has other things that are reduced from 10 to 50 per cent, saving shoppers from \$10 to \$400 per item, and so Americans want to go shopping.

Not all Americans enjoy shopping. Reverend William Graham wants to change Black Friday's name. "We want to call it *Remember Jesus Friday*. People should start the season with the right attitude. Christmas has become a Season of Shopping. We want to make it a Season of Giving. And we don't mean giving material things. We mean giving your back, your mind, and your hands. Help an old lady clean up her house. Teach a kid how to read. Visit sick people in the hospital or in nursing homes. Give food to the Red Cross. Celebrate Christmas by remembering Jesus and forgetting Santa Claus."

1. According to the text, the expression "sleepyhead" refers to shops that ...

- a. open later than others
- b. open early in the morning
- c. don't open until late in the morning

2. On these days some businesses make ... for the rest of the year.

- a. half the money
- b. enough money
- c. nearly all the sales

3. Which of these sentences is TRUE?

- a. Most products are reduced nearly half price
- b. In general, most discounts in prices are quite big

c. Just a few selected products have large discounts

4. Reverend William Graham thinks shopping so much at this time of the year ...

a. is not right

b. is the right attitude

c. needs a new name

5. According to the text, Black Friday is ...

a. the Friday before Christmas

b. the beginning of a shopping period

c. an important holiday in The United States

*Source: <https://test-english.com/reading/a2/how-my-life-has-changed-a2-english-reading-test>*