

B1 to B2

BUILDING UP YOUR TIE SKILLS

SAMPLE PAGES

Speaking
& Writing



A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a hand holding a black pen, writing on a piece of white lined paper. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

B1 to B2

BUILDING UP YOUR TIE SKILLS

Speaking & Writing

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Lead in questions

1. How many times do you have a good laugh in a day?
2. Do you enjoy listening to jokes from friends? Why/Why not?
3. Are you good at telling jokes? Why/Why not?
4. In what ways can laughter influence our lives? Read the investigation to find out more.

Reading Comprehension

This is an investigation about laughter. Please read it carefully and then write a brief summary:

Use humour and laughter to live longer!

The correct way to weigh yourself:



We must admit that, despite our problems, worries and everyday difficulties, when we laugh, play, and have fun with others life becomes more enjoyable but also helps us solve problems, connect with others, and be more creative. People who add humor to their daily lives find that it stimulates them and makes them more optimistic about life and its hardships.

Life is full of positive and negative moments that are difficult to judge. When we are the problem, because we take ourselves very seriously, then it becomes very hard to think outside "the box" and come up with solutions. But, instead of being the problem, if we doubt and make jokes about it, then we may really turn it into an opportunity for teaching

ourselves a rather creative lesson!

When we share a good laugh we can actually improve our health. Laughter brings people together, something really fantastic, as it is contagious and helps us become socially accepted and loved more easily. In this way, we continue to have a positive attitude to our everyday life. Our health improves as our psychology and disposition improves and so we are encouraged to face our hardships with courage and patience. The more we resort to humor and laughter, the more we resist to panic and misery. By doing so, our stress is reduced, anxiety and depression disappear and slowly, but steadily, we recover our lost strength which enables our immune system to work more efficiently and our body to fight against physical pain effectively.

**I advise you,
don't mess with me,
I know karate, kung fu, judo,
tae kwon do, jujitsu,
and 28 other dangerous
words.**

When we were children, we used to laugh very much every day, but the more we grow older the less we see the funny side of ourselves, the less we realize that life tends to be more serious and laughter less frequent. Therefore, let us not surrender to fear and worries about our future. After all, the future is so near that it comes quicker than we can ...run! Let us seek out more opportunities for humor and laughter. Besides, life is too short to be serious all the time ...So, let's begin laughing at ourselves and start improving our emotional health by loving the right people. Let's strengthen our relationships with our colleagues, our family and our friends or... even foes. Let's find greater happiness, wherever happiness may be, and even add years to life. Ours or... theirs!

**LIFE IS TOO SHORT
TO BE SERIOUS ALL
THE TIME.
SO, IF YOU CAN'T
LAUGH AT YOURSELF,
CALL ME...I'LL
LAUGH AT YOU.**

Summary writing (Avoid using the same words as much as you can. Don't write more than 50 words):

A. Read the investigation again and answer with T for True or F for False.

1. Having fun can among other things improve our social life.
2. Our lives have only negative aspects.
3. Dealing positively with everyday problems can teach us many things.
4. Laughter is only beneficial to our psychology
5. Grownups are more optimistic than children.
6. Laughter can make us live longer.

Vocabulary

A. Find the following words/phrases in the investigation, work out their meaning in the text and then use some of them to write sentences.

- connect • add humor • optimistic • think outside “the box” • come up with solutions • turn it into
- opportunity • brings people together • socially accepted • share a good laugh • positive attitude
- psychology • disposition • resort to • resist to • reduced • depression • recover • immune system
- physical pain • efficiently • grow older • tends to be • frequent • seek out • strengthen

B. Choose the correct word to fill in the blanks.

- renew • hardships • judge • doubt • contagious • steadily • surrender • colleagues

1. The captain slowly but navigated the ship through the dangerous rocks.
2. You should never a book by its cover.
3. Georgia was in about the red dress but she finally gave in and bought it.
4. Jonathan always tells good jokes and all his in the office like him very much.
5. When life's strike you, try not to but be positive and optimistic.
6. I'm sorry sir but your passport has expired. You will need to it before you are able to fly abroad.
7. The new virus is and extremely dangerous, especially for children and seniors.

Grammar

A. Choose the correct word/phrase to fill in the gaps.

- some • any • no • much • many • a lot of • (a) few • (a) little

1. There were so people in the bar that the waiters could barely keep track of the orders.
2. “Is there milk left? I want to make some biscuits.”
“I’m sorry. There’s milk in the fridge. I can go to the supermarket and get if you like.”
3. guests enjoyed themselves at the party. It was a disaster!
4. “Hey, what’s up?”
“Not . I’m bored. There’s so you can do in this small village.
5. Fortunately, our customers liked the food, but not of them liked the service.

Writing

Spontaneous Task: Informal Letter

A. Read the following topic and answer the questions that follow.

Write a letter to your friend in the UK to tell him a funny incident you witnessed recently.

1. What do you need to write?
2. Who is going to read it?
3. What kind of story do you have to include?
4. Should you use formal or informal language? Why?

B. Model letter.

Hello Victoria,

How are you? You'll never believe what happened to my Dad yesterday. Do you remember my little brother Toby? Well, he did it again!

When Toby came back from school yesterday, he looked very sad. When Dad asked him what was wrong, Toby said to him: "Today at school, I was punished for something I didn't do". Dad was angry and immediately phoned the School Principal. He started complaining to the Principal about the teacher and the unfair way she had treated Toby. Poor Dad! He should have known better!

When Dad hung up the phone, he asked Toby: "By the way, what was that you didn't do?" and Toby answered with a huge smile: "My homework". I can't really describe to you the look on my dad's face. He was very angry, but my mum and I were laughing so hard that he couldn't help but bursting into laughter. Of course, he called the School Principal and apologized.

Toby got away with it, but first Dad made him promise that he will always do his homework from now on.

Got to go now! I hope we will talk again soon!

Kisses,
Meredith

C. Assignment.

Read the outline that follows and then write a letter to a friend describing a funny incident that happened to you or to someone you know.

OUTLINE

Greeting: Write *Hello/Hi/Dear* and your friend's name.

Opening paragraph: Ask about him/her and say why you are writing the letter.

Body paragraph 1: Say how it all begun and how the people involved (or you) felt.

Body paragraph 2: Say what happened next and how the people involved (or you) felt. Something unexpected can make your story funny.

Body paragraph 3: Say what finally happens in the story or just after the funny incident.

Closing paragraph: Say that you would like to write to your friend again.

Signing off: Write *Kisses/Bye for now/Later* etc. and your name underneath.

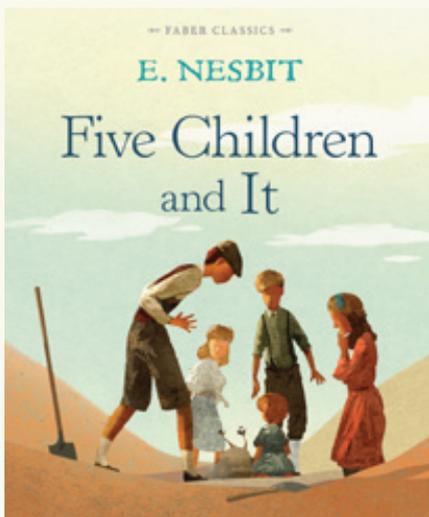
Lead in questions

1. What is your favourite fairy tale? Why?
2. Do you prefer reading fantasy stories or watching them on TV and the cinema? Why?
3. Do you think that fairy tales are only for children? Why/Why not?
4. Have you ever heard of Psammead or the sand-fairy that can grant wishes? Read the plot summary and find out more.

Reading Comprehension

A. Read the short summary of E. Nesbit's *Five Children and It* and answer the questions that follow in a few sentences.

Five Children and It



The story of *Five Children and It* was written by the famous English writer Edith Nesbit (1858-1924) and it was first published in 1902. It is the first volume of a trilogy of children's books also known as the Psammead series. The story begins when a family with five children moves from London to the countryside near Kent. The young children – Cyril, Anthea, Robert, Jane and baby Hilary (who is always called the Lamb by his siblings) – are playing in a pit, when they accidentally uncover an ugly pre-historic little monster. It is a Psammead or simply a sand-fairy, which always refers to itself as It.

The Psammead is usually bad tempered and not very sociable, but it has the ability to make people's wishes come true. He convinces the children to make a wish every day that will be common for all of them, with the rule that the unused wishes will turn into stone at sunset. But the children's wishes are so imaginative that Psammead realises that some wishes are too fancy to simply become stones.

Of course, all children's wishes lead them to hilarious incidents and sometimes put them in trouble. One day the children wish to be beautiful. The Psammead makes them look wonderful but so different that the servants of their house do not recognise them and lock them out of the house. The next day they wish to be extremely rich. But the Psammead is so ancient that they eventually end up with a gravel-pit full of old gold coins, which are out of circulation, so they can't buy anything.

The children also wish for pairs of wings and they have so much fun with them. However, at sunset they find themselves stuck on a church roof unable to get down. They are of course in trouble with the gamekeeper who has to help them down and take them home. Robert is bullied by the baker's son and when his turn comes he wishes he were bigger. He becomes eleven feet tall and his cunning siblings make a show of him at a fair for money. Another wish has the children meet real Red Indians and they avoid being scalped at the last minute.

The baby brother of the children cannot wish for himself and so he falls victim of two of his siblings'

Writing

Written Production: Book

In the first part of the writing section you may be asked to write a text about the book you included in your logbook.

A. Read the following topic and answer the questions that follow.

Write a letter to a friend of yours about the book Five Children and It. In your letter: a) include a brief summary of the storyline (50 words) and b) recommend the book to him/her. Give reasons why he/she should read it.

1. What do you need to write?
2. Who is going to read it?
3. Do you need to explain why you recommend the book?

B. Study the following outline and write a letter on the topic in exercise A.

OUTLINE

Greeting: Write Hello/Hi/Dear and your friend's name.

Opening paragraph: Ask about him/her and say that you are writing the letter to recommend a specific book you read.

Body paragraph 1: Briefly refer to the storyline of the book. (No more than 50 words).

Body paragraph 2: Explain why your friend would enjoy the book.

Closing paragraph: Say that you definitely recommend the book to your friend because of the reasons you mentioned.

Signing off: Write Kisses/Bye for now/Later etc. and your name underneath.



Speaking

Spontaneous Task: Decision making

Look at the pictures and answer the questions that follow:



1. What is the man's profession in picture 1?
2. What is the woman's profession in picture 2?
3. What is the man's profession in picture 3?
4. What is the woman's profession in picture 4?
5. Who do you think makes the most money? Why?

Look at the pictures again and discuss the following question with your partner.

Which one of these careers do you think is the most favourite among teenagers nowadays? Why?



Inside story of Grammy Awards 2017 ON FEBRUARY 13,

FOR those that graced the 59th annual Grammy Awards, which took place on Sunday, at Los Angeles's Staples Centre, the night was nothing short of a display of glamour, fashion, seriousness and sometimes politically charged affair.

The night was dominated by Adele, who scooped five awards including the "big three": best song, best record and album of the year.

Also in the press room, Album of the Year winner and massive Beyoncé fan, Adele, said that she felt that 2017 should have been Beyoncé's time to win. "My album of the year was *Lemonade*," she declared.

When Beyoncé became emotional! In an evening that ran high with emotion, Beyoncé was moved to tears as Adele dedicated her Album of the Year win to the singer at Sunday night's Grammy Awards.

Beyoncé was nominated for nine Grammy awards following the success of her critically-acclaimed and internet - breaking album *Lemonade* last year. However, on the night she walked away with just two of those awards, winning Best Urban Contemporary Album and Best Music Video for the politically-charged anthem "Formation"

Overcome with emotion, Adele thanked her co-writers and fans before saying



she could not possibly accept the award: "I can't possibly accept this award and I'm very humble and gracious but the artist of my life is Beyoncé and the *Lemonade* album was just so monumental and so well thought out and so beautiful and soul-baring," she said through a shaky voice.

The camera then panned to Beyoncé whose eyes filled with tears as Adele thanked her for the way she makes "me and my friends feel and the way you make my black friends feel".

Beyoncé, who is usually very composed and private during public events, was seen shaking her head and mouthing 'I love you' back to Adele while visibly emotional as she stood next to her husband Jay Z.

Adapted from: www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/drone-crashes-boeing-737-jet-9574073

Summary writing (Avoid using the same words as much as you can. Don't write more than 50 words):

A. Read the News Story again and answer the questions.

1. How did Adele characterize Beyoncé's Album "*Lemonade*"?

2. Which Grammy Awards are described as the "big three" in the News Story? Who won them?

3. How many awards was Beyoncé nominated for? How many did she win?

4. How did Beyoncé receive Adele's dedication to her?

Speaking



Presentation and Discussion of News Story

A. Questions on the News Story.

1. Was the topic interesting? Why/Why not?
2. Why are Grammy awards important to a singer's career?
3. Why did Adelle dedicate her award to Beyonce?
4. Can you describe the photos of the two articles?

B. Group discussion.

1. How do people in your country view famous singers? Why?
2. Do you consider someone to be your role model? Why/Why not?
3. What are the advantages for teenagers to have role models?
4. Are there any disadvantages? What are they and why?
5. Discuss with a partner the main reasons why teenagers prefer singers or athletes as their role models. Make a list and present it to your classmates.

C. Assignment.

Write a short paragraph about a person (local or foreigner) who you consider to be a positive role model for teenagers. Present it to your classmates and answer any questions you may be asked.