

Exploring Skills for English Tests

Reading Part 3: B1 Level

Format of the task

There are three parts to the B1 Reading tests. In **Part 3** candidates will read one longer text (600-720 words). The text will explore a particular topic in some depth, can be factual or narrative. This will be appropriate to B1 candidates.

There will be 10 questions in total in Part 3. The types of questions that can be found in this part are 3-option multiple choice questions (MCQs), matching (for example topic to paragraph), and note taking and sentence completion (both using 'drag and drop'), but only 1 or 2 of these item types will be used. The focus of these questions will be on detailed understanding, gist, inference, and global meaning, opinions, attitudes and purpose.

The language of the texts and questions is accessible and appropriate to candidates at B1 level. Candidates should spend approximately 20 minutes on Part 3.

Skills/functions being assessed

- Reading to locate information including for note taking purposes
- Comprehension of writer's views and opinions
- Comprehension of inferred or implied meaning
- Following a line of argument or event in a narrative, written simply and directly

Tips for teachers

Provide candidates with:

- Opportunities to analyse more detailed, topic specific texts
- Skimming and scanning techniques to look for specific information, whether implied or literal. Also taking note of facts and opinions
- Practice of paraphrasing, synonyms and inferred meaning of various texts
- Skills in time management by setting timed activities

Tips for learners

- In preparation, read a wide range of text types
- Read the questions carefully and think about what is being assessed
- Practice paraphrasing parts of texts and looking up synonyms to replace words without losing the meaning of the texts
- Keep your eye on the timer and try to leave some time to check your answers
- Prepare by using the online Skills for English (SfE) practice tests

Sample B1 Reading Part 3 Task

This is a short example extract from the type of text and questions a candidate may encounter in Part 3.

A Short History of Blood Donation

Do not read every word of the text, try to understand the gist/global meaning of the text.

Have you ever given blood? Giving blood saves and improves thousands of lives every year. Around 825,000 people give blood each year because they want to make a difference. People who give their blood are called 'donors'. In many countries such as the UK, people donate their blood for free. This compares with nations such as the US, Germany, Austria, and certain areas of Canada, where people receive money for giving blood.

Q2 -
Harvey

It all began in 1616 when an English doctor, **Dr William Harvey**, suggested the idea that **blood is pumped around the brain and the body by the heart**. By 1818, theory become practice when **Dr James Blundell published the results of taking blood from healthy people and giving it to sick patients**. This process was called 'blood transfusion' and during his life he made instruments for the transfusion of blood, many of which are still in use today.

Q4 -
Blundell

While it was once thought all blood was the same, we now know there are different types of blood, called blood groups. **Transfusions between blood groups can cause death and so knowing the blood type of donors and people it is given to is essential**. This was first recognised in 1901 by Dr **Karl Landsteiner**, who earned a Nobel Peace prize after discovering ABO blood groups.

Q1 -
Landsteiner

By 1946 the UK opened blood banks and set up the National Blood Transfusion Service made up of local blood centres. Around this time, around 200,000 units of blood were collected. Today, this has increased to 1.6 million units, all provided thanks to the help and kindness of over 900,000 donors. So, why are people so generous? In 1970 Richard **Titmuss** wrote the book *The Gift Relationship* which looked at the differences between the U.S. and UK blood supply system. Titmuss's main idea was based on research from the former Soviet Union which showed that 72% of donors reported they would continue donating even if payments were not made. This proved that **people gave blood because they want to help others rather than make money for themselves**. Therefore, he argued that blood donation should always be treated as a 'gift'. By 1997, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended that all blood donations should come from unpaid volunteers.

Q3 -
Titmuss

Try to read a variety of topics to improve your knowledge of vocabulary.

For questions 1 to 4, choose A, B, C and D

Match each statement with the person who is most likely to have said it.

These statements have been paraphrased from the text, so rather than finding the exact words, you should understand their meaning and find the same idea in the text.

1. "My discovery will make blood transfusions safe between people with the same blood groups."
2. "The heart is like an engine that moves blood around the body."
3. "Giving is always better than receiving."
4. "I successfully completed the exchange of fourteen ounces of blood into a patient."

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|------------------------|
| A. Dr William Harvey |
| B. Dr James Blundell |
| C. Dr Karl Landsteiner |
| D. Richard Titmuss |

Answers

1. c
2. A
3. D
4. b

Note: this sample task is for guidance purposes only. For examples of level-specific reading tasks, please refer to the Skills for English Practice Tests available through the Skills for English website: <https://skillsforenglish.com/language-learning/>