

The Ultimate PET Writing Guide for B1 Cambridge

Writing for B1

KSE Academy®



✓ Emails

✓ Articles

✓ Stories

✓ FAQ pages

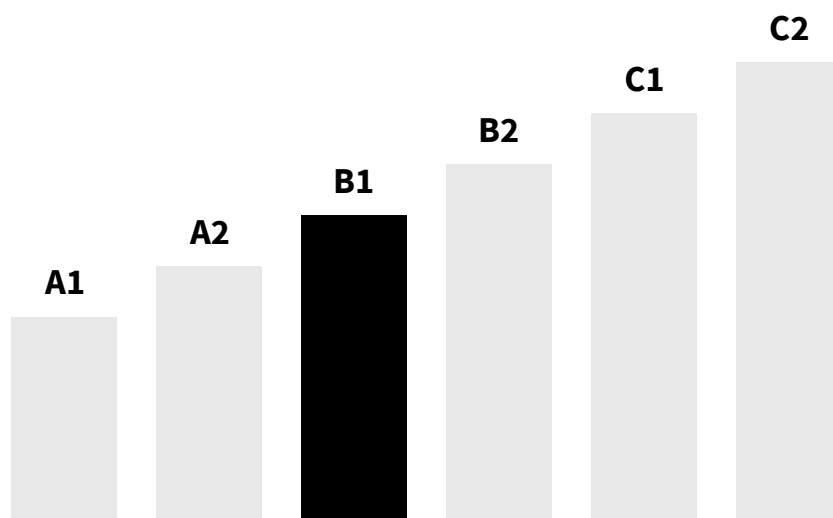
✓ Sample Tests

✓ 300+ phrases

Luis Porras Wadley

Writing B1

The Ultimate PET Writing Guide for B1 Cambridge



KSE Academy®

Luis Porras Wadley

KSE Academy®

Granada, Spain

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Introduction

Welcome to *Writing B1: The Ultimate PET Writing Guide for B1 Cambridge*.

This guide covers the main writing tasks that appear in the Cambridge Assessment English examination B1 Preliminary, previously known as the Preliminary English Test (PET). These tasks are emails, articles and stories.

This book provides six sample tasks and answers for each type of writing, plus a whole set of useful expressions for each type of task that candidates can use in their writing. Ideally, students should use these samples as models for their own writing tasks, making use of the helpful phrases provided at the end of each section.

Besides the sample tasks and useful expressions, this guide also contains a description of Writing Part 1 and Writing Part 2, a full description of every task type, answers to candidates' frequently asked questions (FAQ), guidance on developing an appropriate writing strategy, a description of how writing is assessed and a sample mark sheet which can be used to assess students' performance or as a self-assessment tool.

This writing guide is aimed at students of English as a foreign language who are interested in improving their writing skills with a view to obtaining their B1 Preliminary certificate, and at teachers who want support writing material to use with their own students.

About the author

Luis Porras Wadley is the owner and director of KSE Academy, an online English academy and official Cambridge Exam Preparation Centre based in Granada. As an English teacher, Luis has been preparing Cambridge candidates successfully for more than ten years. He is the author of other successful test preparation books, including *The Ultimate B2 First Writing Guide*, *The Ultimate CAE Writing Guide for C1 Cambridge*, *Speaking First*, *Speaking CAE* and *Speaking CPE*, among others.

B1 Writing: Level Description by the CEFRL

The B1 Preliminary certifies a B1 level of proficiency as described by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL), which corresponds to a lower-intermediate level of English.

According to the CEFRL, someone at the B1 level, in general:

"Can produce simple connected texts on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans." (CEFRL, p. 24)

If we dig deeper into the B1 level, we see that an English learner at the B1 level in writing:

In overall written production:

"Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence." (CEFRL, p. 61)

In creative writing:

"Can write straightforward, detailed descriptions on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest. Can write accounts of experiences, describing feelings and reactions in simple connected text. Can write a description of an event, a recent trip – real or imagined. Can narrate a story." (CEFRL, p. 62)

In reports and essays:

"Can write short, simple essays on topics of interest. Can summarise, report and give his/her opinion about accumulated factual information on familiar routine and non-routine matters within his/her field with some confidence. Can write very brief reports to a standard conventionalised format, which pass on routine factual information and state reasons for actions." (CEFRL, p. 62)

As you can see, everything a B1 candidate produces in writing is expected to be about familiar topics, topics of personal interest, their own opinion, familiar subjects, etc. And some keywords stand out in these level descriptions. For example, *straightforward, simple, brief, short*, etc. This means that these texts are not expected to be very complex, as we might expect at higher levels like B2 or, certainly, at C1 and C2 levels.

B1 Preliminary: Writing

In the B1 Preliminary Writing paper, candidates have to prove that they can write different types of texts in English using linguistic resources which show that they have a B1 level of written English. There are two parts in the Writing component, and they have 45 minutes to complete both parts.

B1 Preliminary: Writing Part 1

What's in Writing Part 1?

Candidates are provided with an email they have received. The email is annotated with a set of prompts presented as notes. All of this gives candidates the context, who they are writing to and why, and four key content points. Candidates have to read and interpret the email and respond to it accordingly. In their answer, they must include the four content points in a response of around 100 words.

The goal of this email in Part 1 is to allow candidates to demonstrate the skill to use functional language, which might include agreeing and disagreeing, giving their opinion, offering to do something and explaining something to the target reader.

Candidates' emails should be well organised, containing all the necessary structural elements expected in emails, and they should cover the four key points highlighted in the instructions. They ought to read every part of the task carefully and not omit any required development of the topic.

What do candidates need to practise?

Using language functions, such as agreeing, disagreeing, giving an opinion, offering, explaining, reacting to information, etc.

How many tasks are there?

There is only one compulsory task in Part 1, which is always an email.

How many words do candidates have to write?

About 100 words

B1 Preliminary: Writing Part 2

What's in part 2?

Candidates have to write a text from a choice of two text types: article or story. These different types of tasks are designed to provide situations and contexts in which candidates can put together and develop their ideas on a subject, with a specific purpose for writing, target reader and context in mind. As guidance, candidates are given some information about the context, the topic, the purpose, and the target reader.

For the article, candidates are provided with a snippet from a magazine or website, usually an announcement, and they must write about it responding to the information provided. For the story, candidates are provided with the first sentence of the story, so they need to develop the rest of the story based on the first sentence.

For an appropriate response, candidates must pay attention to every aspect of the question, and they must use language that is appropriate for the task. For example, in the story task, it is important to pay attention to the pronouns used in the first sentence, as it will determine the approach of the rest of the task.

What do students need to practise?

Writing different types of text that could come up in the exam, focusing on the style and structure of the different task types as well as different language functions.

How many tasks are there?

There are two tasks in Part 2, but candidates must do only one.

How many words do candidates have to write?

About 100 words

Emails

Writing Part 1: Emails

Purpose of an email

Given that an email is written in response to a situation outlined in the task, its purpose will depend on each specific task. In general, at this level, the purpose of the email task is usually to react to good or bad news, to agree or disagree with some idea, to explain why you agree or disagree, to respond to questions, to ask for information, to suggest some ideas, etc.

Register

Every email has a particular target reader in mind. At B1 Preliminary, this reader will typically be a friend or a relative. Therefore, standard or informal language is expected. Given that we are dealing with a lower-intermediate level of English, all the situations are familiar, so no formal language is required or expected.

Structure

Every email should have a similar, conventional structure. You need an opening salutation and closing formula; an introductory and closing paragraph; and the main body, which usually consists of as many paragraphs as key points are highlighted in the task email.

Common topics

Many emails to friends and relatives include giving advice on a certain subject like visiting your town, keeping fit, making plans, arranging a trip or a meet-up, etc.

How to Write an Email for B1 Preliminary

In this part of the test, you are given an email from an English-speaking friend or relative, and you are asked to respond to it in about 100 words. This email contains annotations which help you identify exactly what you need to include in your email.

Here's an example:

You **must** answer this question.

Write your answer in about **100 words** on the answer sheet.

Question 1

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Liam and the notes you have made.

From: Liam

Subject: Next week's visit!

Me too!

Hi Luis,

I'm really happy about your visit next week!

There are a couple of things we can do on your first day here. Would you prefer to go to a rock concert or to stay at home and watch a movie?

I prefer...

Also, we could go on a hiking trip while you're staying here. Would you like that?

I can't, because...

If you have any questions, just let me know.

Ask Liam

Love,

Liam

Write your **email** to Liam using **all the notes**.

How to Write an Email for B1 Preliminary (cont.)

As you can see in the previous sample task, you have received an email from a person called Liam, who is a friend of yours. In addition, you have made some annotations, which, are the key content points you need to address in your email:

Me too!

I prefer...

I can't, because...

Ask Liam

Having these key content points highlighted has two main purposes:

- Clarify what you must write about.
- Determine how many paragraphs the email will have.

Email Structure

Every email consists of the following parts:

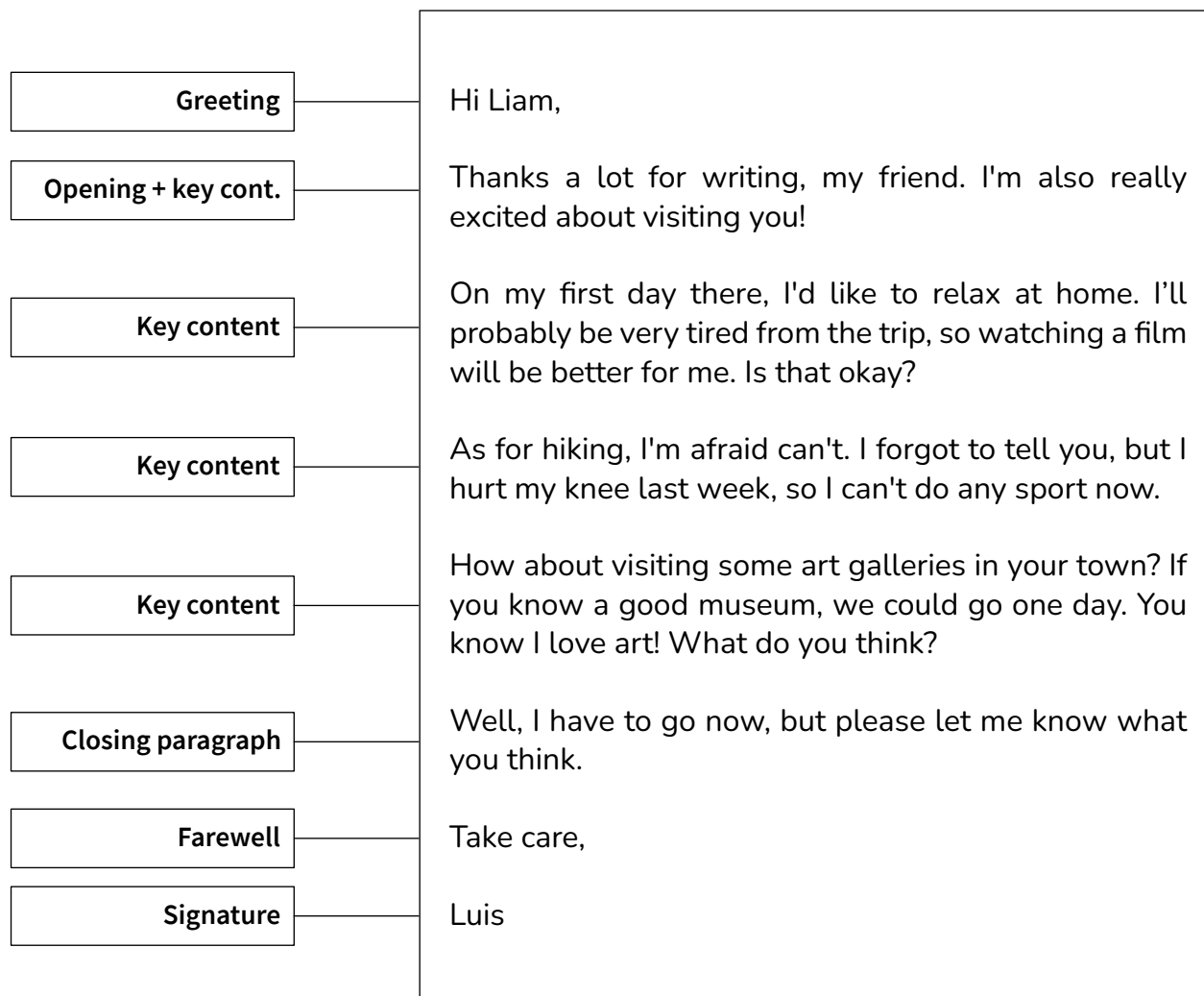
- **Greeting:** Greet the other person (i.e. say *Hi* or *Hello*).
- **Opening paragraph:** React to the other person's news and ask them how they are feeling and whatever else you feel is appropriate.
- **Main paragraphs:** Deal with the key content points, which are highlighted in the instructions.
- **Closing paragraph:** Begin to say goodbye by wishing the other person well and asking them to reply to your email.
- **Goodbye:** Short phrase to say goodbye.
- **Signature:** Sign the email with your name.

In general, all emails must follow the same structure, and also, remember that in Cambridge exams you do not need to write *From:*, *To:* or a subject.

Now that we know the different parts of an email, we should see a sample answer.

How to Write an Email for B1 Preliminary (cont.)

Now let's take a look at the following email, where we can see a sample answer to the task on page 16:



In the example above, you can see that the different parts of an email are very well defined. It is important that your email shows this structure clearly and that your writing is visually appealing, apart from having good grammar and vocabulary.

Your paragraphs should be well defined, leaving a space in between, and you should know when to add line breaks. This is especially important after greetings, after opening and closing paragraphs, and after saying goodbye. This will make your text visually appealing, as it will make it look like a real email.

How to Write an Email for B1 Preliminary (cont.)

Top 5 Tips for writing an Email for B1 Preliminary

Learn and memorise a set of expressions

Make sure you already know a set of expressions to use in your greetings, opening and closing paragraphs, and farewells. This will save you a lot of time while doing a task, and you will avoid making mistakes, as you will already know the expressions by heart.

Write a well-structured and visually-appealing email

One of the things Cambridge English examiners pay attention to is the organisation of your piece of writing, so make sure not to write a messy email. Also, remember that punctuation matters, so be sure to separate your sentences with stops and commas and do not write excessively long sentences.

Brainstorm, write, read and edit

Before starting to write your email, brainstorm a couple of things and write down some ideas. This can include vocabulary related to the topic. For example, if you have to write about TV shows, you can write down things like *contestants*, *cooking show*, *prize*, etc. Then, write out your email. After that, read it and look for possible mistakes or opportunities for improvement (e.g.: adding descriptive adjectives, rephrasing sentences, etc.).

Read carefully and identify what you have to do

Do not start writing right away. Make sure you read the task carefully and that you identify exactly what you are being asked to do. Sometimes, we do not pay attention to the instructions and we end up writing about something different. This will mean losing points.

Experiment at home, be conservative in the exam

Homework is the best chance to get creative and experiment with different ways to express yourself. So make sure you try your hardest to keep improving when you write at home. However, when you're doing an exam, don't risk trying out new words or expressions you are unsure of, as you may be making a mistake. So be conservative in your exam and stick to what you already know works.

Sample Email 1

Instructions

You **must** answer this question.

Write your answer in about **100 words** on the answer sheet.

Question 1

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Katie and the notes you have made.

From: Katie

Subject: Your visit next month!

Me too

I don't like bikes

Hi Sarah,

I'm excited about your visit next month!

I was thinking we could do a few things while you're here. Would you like to visit the art museum and go to a new sushi restaurant?

I also thought it might be fun to go for a bike ride along the river trail. Would you be up for that?

If you have any other ideas or preferences, just let me know.

Looking forward to seeing you,

Katie

Both!

Go for a picnic

Write your **email** to Katie using **all the notes**.



Do you need someone to mark your email for B1?

Check out KSE Academy's writing assessment service. Scan the QR code on the left with your phone or visit <https://kdp.kseacademy.com/writing-b1-book> for more information. Use the coupon **AMZWB1** for a great discount as a thank you for purchasing this book.

Sample Email 1

Answer

Hi Katie,

I'm really excited too. I can't wait to visit!

Both the art museum and sushi restaurant sound like great ideas. As you know, I'm always keen on trying new things, especially food!

Unfortunately, I'm not a fan of bike riding, so I'm afraid I'm not interested in going cycling along the river.

However, I think a picnic would be a lot of fun! It's a nice way to enjoy the beautiful weather and spend time together. Do you agree?

I'm looking forward to seeing you too and having a great time together.

Best,

Sarah

Useful Phrases for Emails

Sample 1

- *I can't wait to visit!*
- *... sound like great ideas.*
- *... I'm always keen on ...*
- *Unfortunately, ...*
- *... I'm afraid I'm not interested ...*
- *Do you agree?*
- *I'm looking forward to seeing you ...*
- *Best,*

Sample 2

- *As for the present, ...*
- *bookworm*
- *an awesome place*
- *Shall I call them ... ?*
- *Hope to hear from you soon.*
- *Best wishes,*

Sample 3

- *I'm doing fine.*
- *Thanks for asking!*
- *It's always a good idea to ...*
- *support your fitness goals*
- *As for motivation, ...*
- *... my advice is to ...*
- *..., which can be very motivating.*
- *I hope ...*
- *helpful*
- *Let me know if ...*
- *Regards,*

Sample 4

- *... it's doing to be even better ...*
- *I definitely agree that ...*
- *should be on our list*
- *I also think we should ...*
- *And how about visiting ...?*
- *Believe me, they're amazing!*
- *As for a place to stay, ...*
- *What do you think?*
- *I'm looking forward to ...*
- *All the best,*

Sample 5

- *Dear Mrs Smith,*
- *Thank you for your response about ...*
- *I'm available on ...*
- *Regarding the types of films I enjoy, ...*
- *thrillers*
- *... I would love to watch ...*
- *Do you think ... ?*
- *Sincerely,*

Useful Phrases for Emails

More useful phrases

Greetings

- *Hi John,*
- *Hello John,*
- *Dear John,*

Introductory paragraph

- *It's nice / great / good to hear from you.*
- *It's nice / great / good to read your letter.*
- *Thanks a lot for writing!*
- *It was good to receive your letter.*
- *Thank you very much for your letter.*
- *Hope you are doing well.*
- *How's it going?*
- *How are you (doing)?*
- *How are things (going)?*

Reacting to good news

- *I'm (so) glad to hear ... (your news).*
- *I'm excited about ... (your news.)*
- *It's great to hear/read that ...*
- *That's fantastic!*
- *I'm so happy that ...*

Reacting to bad news

- *I'm (so) sorry to hear that ...*
- *I'm really sorry to read your news.*
- *Sorry to read about*

Introducing paragraphs & ideas

- *As for ... ,*
- *As to ... ,*
- *Regarding ... ,*
- *By the way, ...*
- *Hey, did you hear about...?*
- *One more thing, ...*

Ending the informal email or letter

- *Well, it's time to say goodbye.*
- *Anyway, I have to go now.*
- *Well, it's time to go.*
- *Anyway, gotta go.*
- *I really hope to hear from you soon.*
- *I'm looking forward to hearing from you.*
- *I hope you write back soon.*
- *Make sure you write back soon.*

Closing formulas

- *Best wishes,*
- *Best,*
- *Sincerely,*
- *Take care,*
- *All my love,*
- *Love,*
- *Lots of love,*
- *See you soon,*
- *Regards,*

Sample Test 1

PRELIMINARY ENGLISH TEST

Writing

Time 45 minutes

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Do not open this question paper until you are told to do so.

Write your name, centre number and candidate number on your answer sheet if they are not already there.

Read the instructions for each part of the paper carefully.

Answer the Part 1 question and one question from Part 2.

Write your answers on the answer sheet.

Write clearly in **pen**, not pencil. You may make alterations, but make sure your work is easy to read.

You **must** complete the answer sheet within the time limit.

At the end of the test, hand in both this question paper and your answer sheet.

INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES

Each question in this paper carries equal marks.

Part 1

You **must** answer this question.

Write your answer in about **100 words** on the answer sheet.

Question 1

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Ruth and the notes you have made.

From: Ruth

Subject: Day at the park

Hi,

I'm excited to spend the day at the park with you on Sunday! Can you meet me there at 10 a.m.?

I was thinking we could bring a picnic lunch and play some games. Do you have any favorite park activities you'd like to do?

Should we invite anyone else? Let me know in your next email.

See you soon,

Ruth

I have some board games

Better at 11, because...

Volleyball and cricket

Maybe Sue?

Write your **email** to Ruth using **all the notes**.



Do you need someone to mark your writing tasks?

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Part 2

Choose **one** of these questions.

Write your answer in about **100 words** on the answer sheet.

Question 2

You see this notice on an English-language website about your town.

OUR CRAZY WEATHER

What's your favorite type of weather and why?

What activities do you like to do during different types of weather?

Do you have any tips for visitors?

Write an article for our website. We will publish the best ones!

Write your **article**.

Question 3

Your English teacher has asked you to write a story.

Your story must begin with this sentence:

Samantha heard a noise downstairs.

Write your **story**.

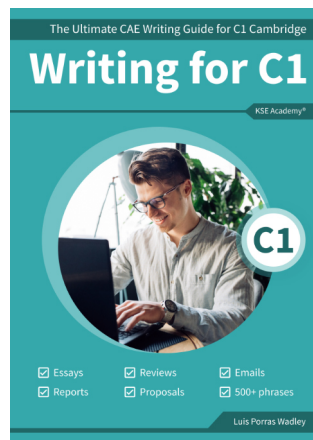
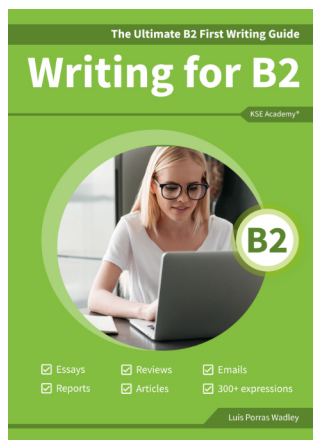
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More Cambridge resources by the Author

Writing books

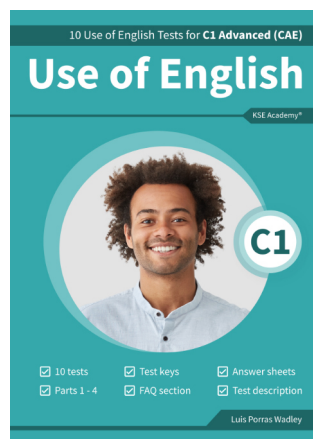
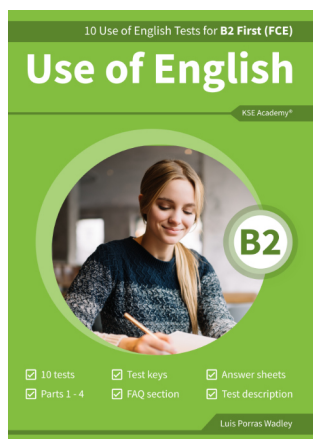


Writing for B2 and C1

These guides cover the main writing tasks that appear in the Cambridge English tests called B2 First (FCE) and C1 Advanced (CAE). These books provide several sample tasks for each type of writing, plus more than 500 useful phrases that candidates can use in their writings for B2 First and C1 Advanced.

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Use of English books



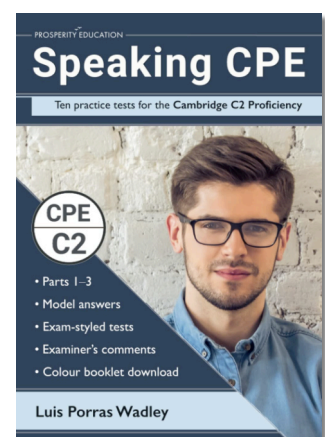
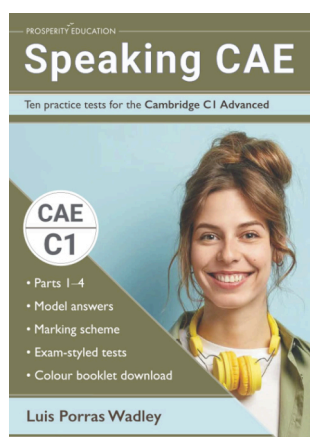
Use of English for B2 and C1 levels

These books contain ten practice tests for the Use of English of the C1 Advanced and B2 First tests. Whether you are a teacher or a student, you can benefit from the exercises in this book, as they will help you become familiar with the format and level of the exam, and the type of questions.

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Speaking Series by Prosperity Education

In this series, Luis Porras Wadley and Prosperity Education join forces to bring you 10 Speaking practice tests for the different examination levels. Get your digital copies now at prosperityeducation.net.



Writing for B1

Welcome to ***Writing for B1: The Ultimate PET Writing Guide for B1 Cambridge***

This **Writing Guide for B1** provides teachers and students with a **range of practical examples** covering all the writing task types featured in the **B1 Preliminary Writing** test. With 18 sample tasks and over 300 useful phrases and expressions, ***The Ultimate PET Writing Guide for B1 Cambridge*** is the **perfect writing resource** for anyone preparing for B1 Preliminary.

Contents of this book

- ✓ **90+ pages** of exclusive and original writing content for B1 Preliminary
- ✓ **Step-by-step writing strategy** to produce emails, articles and stories
- ✓ **6 examples of every task type** (Emails, Articles & Stories)
- ✓ **300+ useful phrases** ready to use in your writings
- ✓ **Description of the B1 Writing paper** and every type of task
- ✓ **Extras and freebies** to maximise your writing practice
- ✓ **Sample mark sheet** and **assessment criteria** for B1 Preliminary Writing



About the author

Luis Porras Wadley is the owner and director of KSE Academy®, an English academy and official Cambridge Exam Preparation Centre based in Granada. As an English teacher, Luis has been preparing Cambridge candidates successfully for over ten years.

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