

RW.1-3 · Key reading: messages and short texts

A2 Key and B1 Preliminary (KET, PET) · Cambridge English · A2 Key (KET)

What this topic covers

A2 Key (KET) A2 starts with Reading and Writing Part 1–3: short, real-world texts. Notices, text messages, signs, and one longer text with multiple-choice questions.

- **Part 1:** six short notices or messages; choose what each one says (A, B or C).
- **Part 2:** three short texts on the same topic – usually three people writing about it. Seven questions; for each question, choose the text (A, B or C) that says it.
- **Part 3:** one longer text with five 3-option questions.
- Memory hook: Parts 1–3 are the **street**, not the library. Everything is a sign, a note or a message – read it like you read a shop window.
- Always check the current format in the official Cambridge handbook ; these notes teach the strategy, not the rulebook.

Part 1: read the notice like a detective

Six tiny texts: a sign, a note, a message. Each has three options, and **two of them are traps**.

- The trap options usually **repeat words** from the text but twist the meaning. The correct answer **says the same thing in different words**.
- Example: “*Mum: Your football is at Sam’s house. He found it in the garden.*” – A) Sam lost the football. B) Sam found the football. C) The football is in the garden. → **B**. C repeats the garden word but the ball has moved on; that is the trap shape.
- Strategy : read the text, say its meaning in one Chinese sentence, then find the option that matches your sentence – not the option that matches the words.

Part 2: which text says it?

Three short texts about one topic – usually three people (A, B and C) writing about the same thing: their hobbies, a journey, a club. Seven questions; each question names a detail, and exactly one text contains it.

- **Skim the three texts first:** one line each – who is A, who is B, who is C, and what does each one say? Then the questions tell you what to hunt .

- **The question is the target, not the topic.** *Who says the class was too expensive?* – all three may mention the class; only one mentions the price. Match the detail, not the topic.
- Δ The trap texts **share the words** of the question. If two texts say *weekend*, the answer is the one that says what the question actually asks about the weekend. Read to the end of the sentence.
- Memory hook: each question is a photograph ; only one text is the place it was taken.

Part 3: the longer text

One text, five questions, in order.

- The questions follow the text order – question 2's answer comes after question 1's answer in the text. Use the order as a map .
- Find the part of the text, read two lines before and after, then choose.
- Δ Don't answer from your own knowledge . The text is the truth, even when it's about pandas and you know everything about pandas.
- If a question asks about the writer's **purpose** or **feeling**, find the feeling words (*amazed, disappointed, relieved*), not the facts.

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- Δ **Translating word by word kills time.** 60 minutes for 7 parts is tight. Read for meaning in chunks , not word by word.
- Δ **The word-match trap is designed for you.** If an option copies the text's exact words, be suspicious : Cambridge rewords correct answers and copies wrong ones.
- Δ **Don't leave blanks.** No negative marking – a guess beats a gap.
- Δ **Answer on the answer sheet as you go.** There is no transfer time in Reading & Writing. The answer sheet is the exam; the question paper is scratch paper .

Try it

Read this note: *“Tom – the library closes at 5 today, not 6. Bring my book back before then, or I can't renew it. – Ana”*

1. Ana wants Tom to – A) return the book after 5. B) return the book before 5. C) renew the book himself.
2. The library today – A) opens at 5. B) closes earlier than usual. C) is closed.

Answers: 1 **B** (before then = before 5). 2 **B** (closes at 5, not 6 – earlier than usual). A in question 1 is the word-match trap: it repeats “5” but reverses the meaning.

Now a miniature Part 2. Three friends write about their weekend:

- **A** (Mia): “*I stayed home and watched a film with my brother. The tickets for the match were too expensive.*”
- **B** (Leo): “*My cousins visited, so we all went to the football match. Great seats!*”
- **C** (Zoe): “*I watched the match on TV with my dad. I never pay for tickets.*”

1. Who went to the match? 2. Who mentions the price of tickets?

Answers: 1 **B** – Mia and Zoe both mention the match, but only Leo went; the word *match* is the bait twice. 2 **A** – Leo’s match and Zoe’s *tickets* are both traps; only Mia says they were *too expensive*.

Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. An option copies the text’s exact words. – **Be suspicious.** Correct answers are reworded.
2. Part 2: the question asks *who went with a friend*, and two texts mention friends. – **Read the detail, not the topic word.** Only one text says what the question asks; the other just shares the word.
3. Part 3, question 3 – **its answer sits between answers 2 and 4 in the text.** The order is a map.
4. A question asks how the writer **felt**. – **Find the feeling words**, not the facts.
5. Blank answer at the end? – **Guess.** No negative marking; a guess beats a gap.