

R.5-6 · Preliminary reading: lexical and open cloze

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

What this topic covers

Reading Parts 5 and 6 are the clozes at B1: **Part 5**, six gaps with **four** options each (vocabulary and collocation); **Part 6**, six gaps with **no options** (grammar words).

- Part 5 is the A2 shelf with a fourth option and meaner choices: the four words are often near-synonyms, and only one **collocates**.
- Part 6 is the open cloze: articles, prepositions, pronouns, auxiliaries, linkers – the small words, one per gap.
- Memory hook: Part 5 is a **chess opening** – many moves look natural, one is right. Part 6 is still the kitchen: cook the word yourself.

Part 5: the near-synonym minefield

Four options that all mean almost the same thing: *say / tell / speak / talk*.

- **Collocation decides.** *She _____ me a story.* → **told** (*tell a story*). *say* takes the words, *speak* takes languages, *talk* takes *about*.
- Check the preposition after the verb: *listen **to**, depend **on**, good **at***. The gap often owns its neighbour.
- △ **Meaning alone is not enough.** All four options “fit” the meaning; the grammar of the company they keep decides. The sentence is a party; the wrong word doesn’t know anyone.

Part 6: the open cloze, B1 edition

Same kitchen as A2 Part 5, with a bigger menu: the grammar words now include the B1 machinery.

The gap’s job	The B1 answers
articles / prepositions	a, an, the / in, on, at, by, for, with
pronouns / relatives	it, they, who, which, that, where
auxiliaries and modals	is, are, was, has, had, would, could
linkers	but, so, because, although, if, when
fixed phrases	<i>there is/are, as soon as, used to</i>

- The relative pronouns join the menu: *the shop _____ I bought it* → **where**. B1’s grammar pays its rent here.

- △ One word per gap, spelled right, capital letter when the gap opens a sentence. The A2 rules never retired.

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **The four-option friendliness is fake.** At A2, two options were obviously wrong. At B1, all four look friendly. Slow down and check collocation.
- △ **Chinese verb-noun pairs don’t map.** *is do homework, is make a mistake* – the pair must be learned as a pair. The cloze is where unlearned pairs come to collect their debt.
- △ **Read the sentence after the gap too.** The answer often hides in the next line, especially prepositions: *“she insisted _____ going”* – the gap and its after-word decide together.
- △ **Don’t leave the *have/has/had* chain broken.** *“I _____ never seen snow”* → **have**. The perfect needs its helper; the gap is often exactly that helper.

Try it

Part 5 style: *“We _____ a lot of photos during the trip.”* A) made B) took C) did D) got → **took** (*take photos*).

Part 6 style: *“The film _____ we watched last night was amazing. I had never seen anything like it.”* → **that/which**. The relative clause from B1 topic 9, collecting marks.

Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. *She _____ me a story.* – **told**. *tell a story*; the collocation decides.
2. *listen _____ music* – **to**. The gap often owns its neighbour.
3. *the shop _____ I bought it* – **where**. The relative joins the menu.
4. *I _____ never seen snow.* – **have**. The perfect needs its helper.
5. *fàn cuòwù* – **make a mistake**. Pairs are learned as pairs; the cloze collects debts.