

*FIRST CERTIFICATE SKILLS*  
*Saxon Menné*

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# *FIRST CERTIFICATE SKILLS*

## *Saxon Menné*

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# Introduction for the student

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**This book will prepare you for the Cambridge First Certificate exam in four ways: you will learn how to answer each type of exam question and then have further practice throughout the course; you will have a great deal of training in writing, reading, listening and speaking; you will have a chance to revise and improve your use of major structures; you will revise and extend your vocabulary.**

**As you follow the course, there are various ways in which you can help yourself. Notice the mistakes you make when writing, and check your future work for them. Learn as you go, and don't leave all your revision until the week before the exam. Ask your teacher for extra practice or help in any area that you find difficult. If necessary, improve your handwriting so that your paper is easy for the examiner to mark. Above all, keep calm. If you follow the instructions, think clearly, and use simple English accurately, you should do well.**

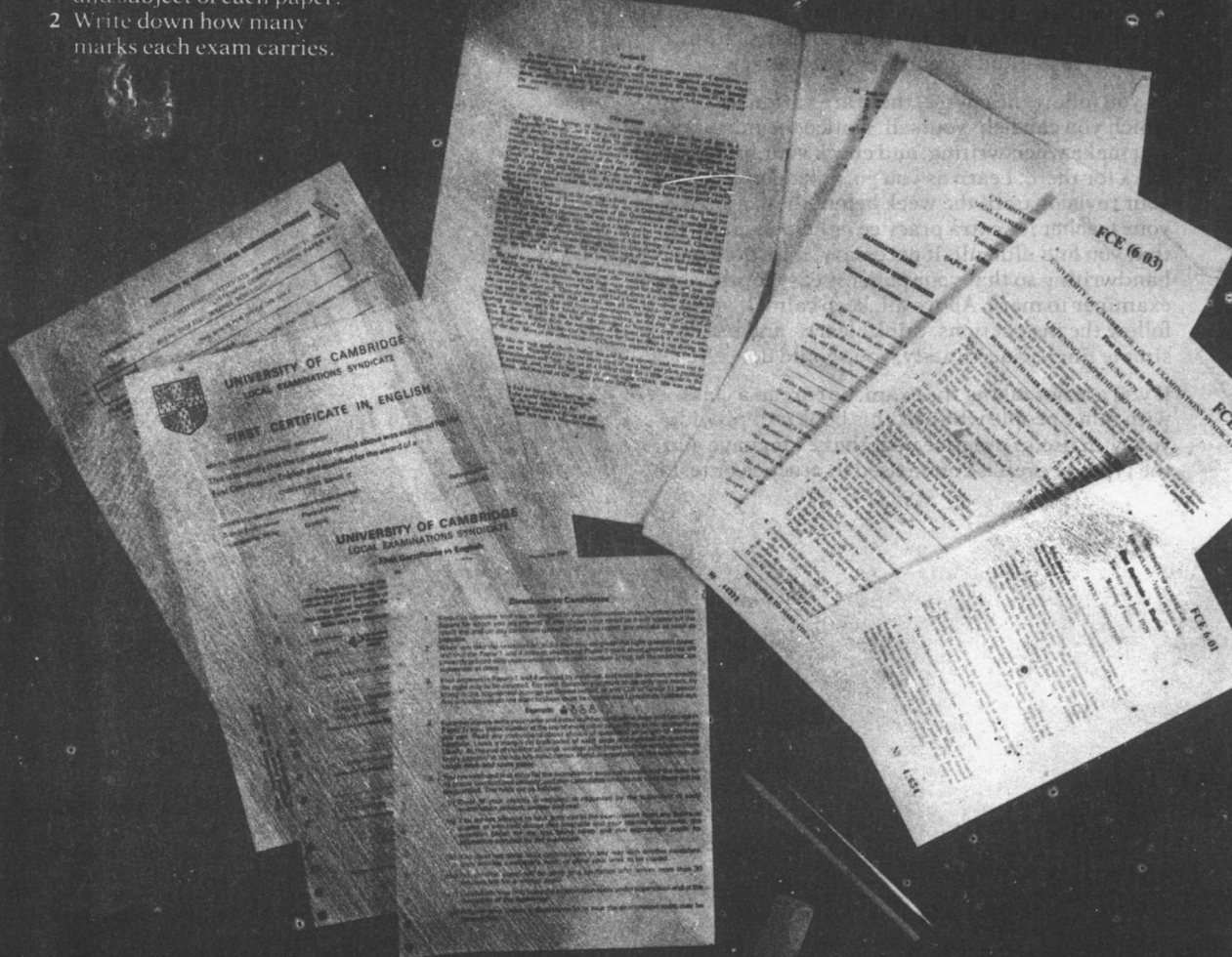
**If you are not taking the exam, but are in a class with other people who are, this book will provide you with useful practice in both the language and the types of exercise often used to practise or test it.**

# 1 Exams

## Listening

Listen to the information about the First Certificate exam.

- 1 Write down the number and subject of each paper.
- 2 Write down how many marks each exam carries.



## Exam training

The first thing to practise is reading exam questions. It's easy, when you read quickly, to misunderstand or forget something. In every exam, some people answer questions in the wrong way, and so they lose a lot of marks. Here is a set of instructions and questions for the composition paper. Read each one, write down the important words in it, and then choose the statement that matches it best.

Write three only of the following composition exercises. Your answers must follow exactly the instructions given, and must be of between 120 and 150 words each.

- 1 The instructions are to write a maximum of
  - a 150 words on the whole paper.
  - b 400 words on the whole paper.
  - c 650 words on the whole paper.

You have been asked to organize a tour by motor coach through several countries, lasting two weeks. Write a detailed list, to be handed to members of the party, of the proposed route, timing, requirements for the journey and any other information you think the travellers will require.

- 2 You must write
  - a a programme for the tour organizer.
  - b a letter to the tourists.
  - c a programme for the tourists.

In some countries food supplies are barely enough to feed growing populations. How do you think this problem could be solved?

- 3 You must write
  - a a description of some poor countries.
  - b suggestions for feeding the world's population.

Your brother is undecided about taking a new job. Write the conversation between you and him in which you try to persuade him to take the job. Write in dialogue form, giving only the name of each speaker followed by the words spoken.

- 4 You must write
  - a a dialogue where your brother gives you advice.
  - b a dialogue about your brother's future career.

While you were on your way to an important appointment something happened which seriously delayed you. Say what you did to get to the meeting, and also to inform those concerned that you would be late.

- 5 You must write
  - a the conversation you had when you were late for a meeting.
  - b a story about being late for a meeting.

You have been asked to write a leaflet which is enclosed with a new product (camera, electric appliance, toy, prepared food, etc.) explaining how it is to be used and mentioning its special advantages. Write the leaflet, naming the product and the manufacturer, and giving any details you wish.

- 6 You must write
  - a a leaflet persuading people to buy something.
  - b a leaflet describing how to use something.

## Speaking

Paul and Kirsten are students at a university.  
Kirsten sees Paul.

KIRSTEN Paul, coming to the pub? What's that?

PAUL It's a book.

KIRSTEN I can see that! But you never read books.

PAUL There's an exam on Thursday.

KIRSTEN I know, but it's only an oral exam. That's easy.

PAUL It's still an exam, and I want to give a good impression.

KIRSTEN Forget it, and come to the pub.

PAUL Oh, go away! You're a bad influence on me.

KIRSTEN Well, you want to practise speaking, not reading.

PAUL That's true, I suppose.

KIRSTEN Coming, then?

PAUL OK.

KIRSTEN What's the book about, anyway?

PAUL It's about how to do well in interviews and exams. It's very useful.

KIRSTEN Let's see what you say on Thursday!

1 Read the dialogue aloud in pairs.

2 Answer these questions.

- 1 Does Kirsten want to study?
- 2 How much does Paul usually read?
- 3 Is there a written examination on Thursday?
- 4 Does Paul stay and read his book?



## Vocabulary

Find a phrase in the dialogue that can replace the words in *italics*.

Example

We're doing *a test*      *an exam*

- 1 *She's not good for me.*
- 2 *It's just a speaking test.*
- 3 *He wants people to be impressed by him.*
- 4 *That seems correct.*
- 5 *What is the subject of the book?*

## Language revision

- 1 Complete the sentences using 'a' or 'an'.

- 1 It's ... oral exam, not ... written one.
- 2 It's ... easy exam, not ... difficult one.
- 3 It's ... European exam, not ... American one.
- 4 It's ... hour exam, not ... half-hour one.

- 2 Which is true?

- a 'An' comes before a written vowel.
- b 'An' comes before a capital letter.
- c There is no logic about using 'an'.
- d 'An' comes before a spoken vowel.

- 3 Write out this text in full, putting in the correct form of the verbs in brackets. Remember to write clearly.

Paul ... (DO) not usually read a lot. More often, he ... (GO) to the pub. The only time he ... (STUDY) hard is when he ... (HAVE) an exam. At least, he ... (TRY) to study. But if a friend ... (SUGGEST) that he ... (PLAY) a game of cards with them, or ... (WATCH) something interesting on television with them, or anything, then he ... (CLOSE) his books and ... (SAY) he will join them. That may be why he ... (PASS) so few exams!

- 4 Divide the verbs in Exercise 3 into two groups:

- 1 those ending in 's' in the third person singular of the simple present.
- 2 those ending in 'es' in the third person singular of the simple present.

- 5 Write down as many spelling rules as you can for the ending of the third person singular in the simple present tense.

## Writing

In pairs, complete this dialogue. Remember to write clearly.

- A There's a test ...      A I'm not ...  
 B Really? ...      B Don't worry, ...  
 A No, ...      A ...  
 B ...

## Vocabulary

gap	practise (vb)	requirements
italics	practice (n)	leaflet
brackets	misunderstand	persuade
phrase	lose marks	information
replace	gain marks	seriously
exactly	give details	(delayed)
write in full	aloud	barely (enough)

## 2 Jobs and work

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### Speaking

Peter and Kate are friends. They are talking in the canteen at lunch-time one day.



KATE Is something worrying you?

PETER I just don't think we're all going to find jobs when we leave this place.

KATE Well, maybe, but you've got nothing to worry about. The newspapers are full of jobs for social workers.

PETER But I'm tired of doing social sciences. I think I'll train to be a psychiatrist, or a doctor. Then I really will be sure of a job.

KATE It takes brains to do that!

PETER There's nothing wrong with my brain, thank you very much. No, it's just a question of choosing the right subject and the right career.

KATE It takes years of training, you know.

PETER I'm in no hurry. Think of the money I'll make in the end.

KATE My uncle's a doctor and I don't envy him. He works all hours. Doctors can be out at night, at weekends. They can be on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It doesn't leave much time for spending.

PETER Yes, that's true. Perhaps I'll be a psychiatrist, then. I'll have regular hours, still work with people, and earn just as much money.

KATE You'll work with people, yes, but with some very funny people. Even dangerous ones.

PETER And I'll end up funnier than they are! Oh well, maybe you're right. Perhaps social work is a good idea after all.

1 Answer these questions on the dialogue.

- 1 Who are these two people, perhaps? A doctor and a psychiatrist?
- 2 How old is Peter, probably? About forty?
- 3 What is Peter trying to decide? To see a doctor?
- 4 What is his decision in the end? To see a psychiatrist?
- 5 What makes him decide that way? The money?

2 Read the dialogue aloud in pairs.

3 Kate and Peter mentioned four points about jobs. Which of these did they mention?

- 1 How interesting the job is
- 2 The working hours and conditions
- 3 The training needed
- 4 The people you work with
- 5 The security of the job
- 6 The pay

4 Think of a job you might apply for. Write down five things you need to know about it and the questions you would ask to find them out.

In pairs, ask each other these questions.

5 What do these people do in their daily work? Use a dictionary to help you if necessary.

- |              |               |             |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1 waitresses | 3 cashiers    | 5 salesmen  |
| 2 nurses     | 4 journalists | 6 policemen |

- 6** Answer these questions seven times: from the point of view of someone working in each of the six jobs listed above and from your own point of view.

- 1 What do you like better in a job?  
a working with people    b working alone
- 2 Which do you prefer at work?  
a being busy    b having little to do
- 3 What do you like better?  
a varied work    b a steady routine
- 4 What is more important to you?  
a the working conditions    b the money
- 5 What is more important to you?  
a independence    b security

In groups of three or four, compare your answers for each profession and for yourselves. If someone else's choice is different from yours, ask him to explain it.

### Exam training

A lot of exams include multiple choice questions. In these, you **have** to choose the best one of four answers, or the best way of completing a sentence. Here is an example.

A nurse's job is

- a to work in a hospital.
- b to drive trains.
- c to cure sick people.
- d to look after sick people.

Which is the best way of completing this sentence?  
Let's look at each way of doing it.

- a to work in a hospital  
*Well, not bad, but porters and cooks and doctors work there too.*
- b to drive trains  
*No, that's simply wrong.*



- c to cure sick people  
*Well, not bad, but that's more the doctor's job.*

- d to look after sick people  
*That seems the best of these four.*

So **d** is the answer and you mark it or write down as instructed on the exam paper.

In pairs, complete the comments below:

- 1 Legal secretaries work
 

a on a law office	No, 'on' ...
b in a law office	That ...
c by a law office	Well, 'by' ...
d round a law office	Well, 'round' ...
- 2 Architects' work is to
 

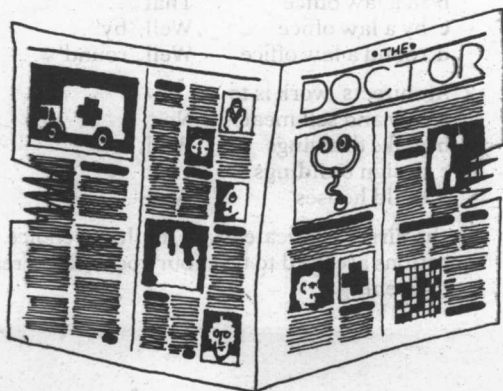
a buy and sell meat	No, ...
b make drawings	Well, ...
c design buildings	That ...
d build houses	Well, ...

In the First Certificate exam, multiple choice questions are used to test your vocabulary, reading and listening.

## Listening

Listen to the passage twice, and choose the best way of completing each sentence.

- 1 You hear
  - a a recorded advertisement.
  - b a phone call from an employer.
  - c a news announcement on radio.
  - d a phone conversation.
- 2 The person speaking works for
  - a a hotel company.
  - b an employment agency.
  - c a construction company.
  - d a multinational company.
- 3 There is information about
  - a people who are working.
  - b industrial news.
  - c local news.
  - d employment news.
- 4 The office job is
  - a working as an accountant.
  - b training to be an accountant.
  - c working for some accountants.
  - d working in a small town.
- 5 The hotel mentioned
  - a was opened recently.
  - b will be started soon.
  - c will be ready in a month or two.
  - d closed about six months ago.
- 6 The other place mentioned is
  - a an electrical company.
  - b a meat shop.
  - c a security company.
  - d a supermarket.
- 7 They want
  - a one more person.
  - b someone to do different jobs.
  - c several people.
  - d someone who wants security.
- 8 The speaker says you can choose between
  - a two jobs described.
  - b ten or twelve jobs.
  - c nearly a hundred jobs.
  - d over a hundred jobs.
- 9 The telephone number mentioned is
  - a 673 2049.
  - b 637 2409.
  - c 637 4029.
  - d 673 0429.
- 10 You can ring back
  - a after six p.m.
  - b at the weekend.
  - c between nine and five.
  - d at any time.



## Language revision

### 1 Form the plurals of these words.

waitress	playboy	landlady
nurse	salesman	guard
clerk	midwife	steward
secretary	chef	businessman
dentist	doctor	witch

List them under three headings: those that add 's', those that add 'es', and the ones that are irregular.

Now think about their pronunciation. List them under four headings: those that add the sound /z/, those that add the sound /s/, those that add the sound /ɪz/, and the irregular ones.

### 2 Complete each sentence using 'at', 'on' or 'in'.

We start work ... 8.30 a.m.  
 ... about 4 o'clock.  
 ... 31st August.  
 ... the afternoon.  
 ... my birthday.  
 ... lunch-time.  
 ... 1987.  
 ... June.  
 ... the weekend.  
 ... Wednesday.  
 ... Wednesday afternoon.

### 3 Which is true?

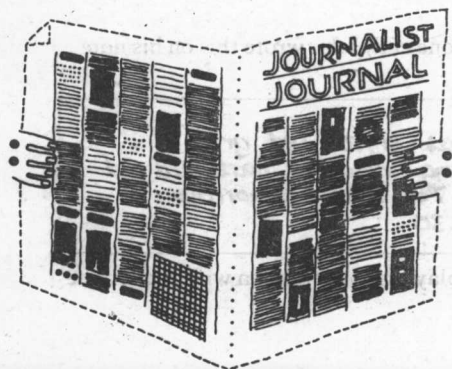
- a 'On' is used for a short or precise time.
- b 'On' is used for long periods of time.
- c 'On' is used when identifying a day.
- d There is no logic about using 'on'.

## Writing

Write out these sentences. Complete and punctuate them, and join them if necessary. Before you write, note which statements are singular and which are plural.

i wouldnt mind being a pop singer because pop singers ...  
 but the worst thing about that must be that a pop singer ...  
 i wouldnt like to be a miner because a miner ...  
 but theres one good thing about mining and thats that miners ...  
 farm workers have quite a hard life they ...  
 but on the other hand a farm worker ...  
 on the whole id prefer to ... because ...

Look at your neighbour's sentences. Check that the verbs agree with the subjects: singular with singular, and plural with plural. Also tell your neighbour if you think his handwriting is unclear. Say which words or letters are easy or difficult to read.



## Vocabulary

career	cashier	routine
employment	journalist	independence
job	salesman	security
apply for	architect	local
training	accountant	cure
legal	nurse	look after
industrial	social worker	in the end

### 3 Household machines

16

#### Speaking

John Walton works for Potters Electrics Ltd. The telephone rings in his office.

JOHN WALTON Service Department. Can I help you?

MRS LUCAS Yes, it's my grill. It's one of those new ones, with a red light.

JOHN WALTON Who's speaking, please?

MRS LUCAS My name's Lucas, Mrs Lucas.

JOHN WALTON Well, Mrs Lucas, what seems to be the trouble?

MRS LUCAS It keeps burning things. And it's brand new.

JOHN WALTON Is it an infra-red grill?

MRS LUCAS That's right. Can you send someone round?

JOHN WALTON What's your address?

MRS LUCAS 32, Hartfield Road, Croydon.

JOHN WALTON Is that h-e-a-r-t?

MRS LUCAS No, it's h-a-r-t. There's no 'e'.

JOHN WALTON And the phone number?

MRS LUCAS 793 0705. When can you get someone round?

JOHN WALTON One of the engineers is in your area tomorrow. What about 8.30 tomorrow morning?

MRS LUCAS Good heavens, no. That's far too early in the morning.

JOHN WALTON When is a good time, then?

MRS LUCAS Well, not before half past ten.

JOHN WALTON I'll check if that's OK.

MRS LUCAS If not, you can telephone me.

JOHN WALTON I'll do my best.

1 Who is Mrs Lucas? John Walton's friend?  
His boss?

What is her problem? Her washing machine?  
Her dishwasher?

What will happen? Will John visit her?  
Will she mend the machine?

When will someone visit her? 8 o'clock?  
On Saturday evening?

2 Ask the questions that led to answers like these in the telephone conversation.

- 1 Not before 10.30.
- 2 Lucas.
- 3 No. There's no 'e'.
- 4 That's far too early.
- 5 It keeps burning things.

3 During the phone call, John wrote this on his note pad.

Mrs Lucas infra-red grill  
overheating new 32 Hartfield Rd  
Croydon 793 0705 tomorrow  
after 10.30

In pairs, role-play his conversation with the service engineer.

