

BRITAIN IN FOCUS

Study passages for first certificate

Peter J Davies



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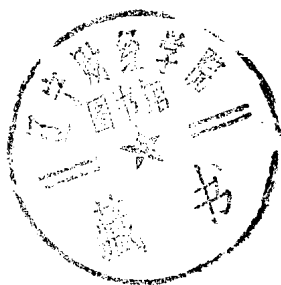


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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

This book has been specially written to meet the needs of First Certificate students who require a broad and informative view of contemporary British life, in addition to practice in the use of English.

The passages, both semi-fictional and non-fictional, which provide a representative view of various aspects of British life, may also serve as source material for first year Proficiency students taking the *British Life and Institutions* option.

Each unit contains

- 1) A study passage, often in dialogue form
- 2) Suggestions for composition using the structures and vocabulary learned in the passage
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- 4) A vocabulary exercise designed to draw attention to the most useful lexical items in the passage
- 5) Open completion items and other multiple-choice exercises designed to test usage of English
- 6) A photograph, on which conversation can be based, as in the First Certificate Interview *or*
- 7) A situations section, carefully related to the passage, in which the student is asked to provide appropriate responses
- 8) An accompanying tape which contains:
 - a) a recording of the passage or dialogue. This can be used for listening comprehension purposes or to provide a sample of good dialogue-reading essential for the First Certificate interview
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It is hoped, therefore, that the student will find that all relevant aspects of the First Certificate syllabus are covered within the following pages and that the passages themselves, graded in order of difficulty, while supplying the necessary language requirements are also stimulating and enjoyable in their own right.

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CONTENTS

1. LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON?..... 7
 A career in coal-mining: vocabulary, use of *going to*, the present, past and conditional tenses, formation of adjectives from nouns, use of the preposition *by*

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 Asking for directions: vocabulary, the present perfect tense, indirect speech, formation of nouns from verbs, *over/under*

4. ON THE BALL..... 24
 Football: vocabulary, *manage to* and *succeed in*, the present perfect tense with *yet*, multiple choice exercise

5. THE NATIONAL HEALTH 30
 A visit to the doctor: vocabulary, the passive, formation of verbs from adjectives, *hard/hardly*, indirect speech

6. CLEANING UP 35
 Conservation: vocabulary, word choice, use of verb phrases, formation of the passive, the present participle

7. RAISING A LOAN 41
 An interview with the bank manager: vocabulary, sentence completion, *borrow/lend*, formation of questions, word choice

8. THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER..... 47
 Bonfire Night celebrations: vocabulary, word choice, formation of sentences from word series, collective words, the use of present participle after certain prepositions

9. SQUATTERS' RIGHTS 53
 Squatters: vocabulary, *to need* followed by the present participle, uses of *about*, direct to indirect speech, word choice

10. PATTERNS OF THE PAST	58
An archeological find: vocabulary, word choice, direct to indirect speech, the use of <i>let</i> and <i>allow</i> , relative pronouns	
11. HOUSE FOR SALE?	64
The property market in Britain: vocabulary, word choice, use of similar words, written monetary amounts, relative pronouns	
12. SCHOOL REPORT	70
A demonstration against Comprehensive schooling: vocabulary, the use of <i>unless</i> , formation of adjectives from nouns, the use of <i>instead of</i> , verb tense choice	
13. IMMIGRANT LIFE	77
Description of a Pakistani family: vocabulary, <i>used to</i> , word choice, <i>to look just like</i> , choice of gerund and infinitive	
14. ACCENT ON ENGLISH	82
Dialects and accents in Britain: vocabulary, word choice, formation of adjectival compounds, the use of <i>such</i> , verb choice	
15. LEFT, RIGHT AND CENTRE	87
Politics and election procedures in Britain: vocabulary, structures after certain verbs, word choice, formation of adjectives from nouns	
16. THE BLUE PENCIL	94
Censorship in Britain: vocabulary, the causative use of <i>have</i> , the use of <i>ought to</i> , word choice, <i>by</i> with the present participle	
17. SIARAD CYMRAEG?	99
Do you speak Welsh? Cultural minorities in Britain: vocabulary, <i>would rather</i> , word choice, formation of verbs ending in -ize (-ise), adjective choice	
18. THE LONG ARM.....	104
The British police force: vocabulary, formation of nouns from verbs, the adjectival use of the present participle, word choice, crime terminology	
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UNIT 1

Like Father, Like Son?

'Are you going to be a miner like your father, Jack?' asked the careers master at the comprehensive school in Nottingham. Jack was now in the science upper sixth and would be leaving school in the summer.

Jack Greenway shook his head. He was a tall boy for his age and well-built too, with broad shoulders and powerful arms. He had captained the school rugby team for the last two terms. No wonder the careers master thought he would make a good coal miner.

'No sir. I don't think so. The wages don't attract me much, and neither do the conditions. My father works on the night shift. He has to crouch in a dark tunnel with water up to his knees. And there's the problem of dust. It gets into his lungs and sometimes when he comes home he can't stop coughing for an hour or more.'

The careers master looked at him with interest.

'You seem to know a lot about underground work?'

Jack nodded. 'He took me down the pit with him once. We travelled half a mile down the main shaft in a lift-cage. When we reached the bottom we had to travel by truck along the railway for another one and a half miles to get to the coal face. It was quite exciting wearing the special helmet and using the coal-cutting gear but I think the novelty would wear off pretty quickly if I had to make it my career.'

'What do you have in mind then?' the careers master asked. 'You seem to have reached a good standard in your 'O' and 'A' level examinations according to what it says here in your file. The choice is very much up to you.'

Jack grinned. 'That's what my father told me. He said why throw away a good education on a few lumps of coal.'

The careers master laughed. 'That sounds like heart-felt advice!'

Jack agreed. 'I've decided to be a different sort of coal digger.'

The careers master looked puzzled and closed the file. 'What do you mean?' he inquired, raising his eyebrows in curiosity.

'I've made up my mind to become a geologist,' Jack answered. 'For some reason or other my father finds that very funny.'

Note:

LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON — a proverb used to describe people who behave like, rather than look like, their parents.

A Now choose the best answer.

- 1 Jack Greenway shook his head because
 - a he was going to be angry
 - b he was going to say no
 - c he was making no response
 - d he was going to argue

- 2 Jack was
 - a too tall for his age
 - b too tall to be a schoolboy much longer
 - c about the right height for his age
 - d taller than many other boys of his age

- 3 The careers master thought that Jack would make a good coal-miner because
 - a coal-miners are good rugby players
 - b he was a strongly-built boy
 - c he was captain of his school team
 - d his father was a coal miner

- 4 What does Jack really mean by *conditions* (line 9)?
 - a good conditions for night work
 - b low wages
 - c bad working conditions
 - d long hours

- 5 Why does Jack's father suffer from a cough?
 - a because he works in water
 - b because he works lying down
 - c because while he is working water gets into his lungs
 - d because he inhales dust while working

- 6 How far did Jack travel by railway to reach the coal face?
- a one mile
 - b two and a half miles
 - c three miles
 - d one and a half miles
- 7 Jack explained that the excitement of being down a coal-mine
- a made him want to be a coal-miner as quickly as possible
 - b would not last long once he was a miner
 - c was a novel way of earning one's living
 - d would not wear off for a long time
- 8 The careers master knew Jack's examination results because
- a he taught him science
 - b he said he had talked to his teachers
 - c he had the results on paper
 - d he had just written them down in a file
- 9 A geologist is concerned with the study of
- a the weather
 - b mining equipment
 - c underground work
 - d rock formations
- 10 How does Jack's father react to his son's proposed career?
He finds the idea
- a amusing
 - b distasteful
 - c pleasant
 - d reasonable

B Find the words in the passage which are similar in meaning to the following:

- (i) coal-digger (ii) weekly earnings (iii) work session
 (iv) underground passage (v) deep hole or coal-mine
 (vi) vertical tunnel (vii) part of mine where coal is actually dug out
 (viii) protective hat (ix) equipment (x) I've decided

C Look at this example from the passage. Then rewrite the sentences in a similar way using *going to*.

Do you intend to be a miner, Jack?
Are you going to be a miner, Jack?

- (i) Do you intend to visit the school shortly?
 (ii) Does your son intend to be a geologist?
 (iii) These pupils intend to leave school in July.
 (iv) Why do you all intend to work abroad?

D Choose A, B or C to fill the blank.

- (i) Jack — science for more than a year now.
A had studied B has been studied C has been studying
- (ii) I — wear a helmet before I was allowed down the mine.
A ought to B must C had to
- (iii) The miners stopped — and listened for sounds of danger.
A to work B working C worked
- (iv) He said he — late for the night shift.
A would be B will be C would have been
- (v) I would tell you what happened in the tunnel if I —.
A had known B knew C have known
- (vi) If he had asked for careers advice I — him some.
A shall give B should have given C would give