

Top Tips – FCE Reading Part Two

Tip 1 The first thing students should always do is cross off the missing sentence that has been given as an example. It's amazing how often students waste time trying to fit this in elsewhere.

Tip 2 Students should always remember that there is an extra sentence that does not fit anywhere. If they have time, the last thing they should do is check that the part they have left over really doesn't fit in any of the gaps.

Tip 3 As well as the referencing and linking devices mentioned in the lesson plan, it can also be useful for students to look at how the topics change over the length of the text and whether the text follows a chronological order.

Tip 4 Teachers should insist that students get into the habit of underlining the language that helps them complete the task (e.g. expressions like 'after that'), and then underline the language that it refers / links to (e.g. 'the birthday party'). Being strict on this in class and for homework will make it much easier on the students during the exam, and also makes it easier to discuss students' answers as a class.

Tip 5 A great activity for referencing devices is to write out some dialogue selected from a TV program, radio play or clip from a film, underline some of the pronouns etc. in it, and get students to watch / listen for what is being referred to. For example, if a character says 'You can take it or leave it', students should listen for what 'it' refers to. You will need to make sure that the sentences you choose are not too densely packed in the text, maybe only one per minute of film / tape. It can also be useful to choose sentences with difficult vocabulary, as you can then pre-teach this before they watch / listen. The combination of this pre-teaching and a fairly straightforward task can really help the students understand the text, so it provides great motivation as well as perfect exam practice

Tip 6 As always, if students don't know they should guess, as a blank space is always zero points and there are no deductions for guesses.

Tip 7 There is nothing really to be gained from filling in the missing sentences in the same order as the text, so it is always best to start with the one students feel most sure about after having read through all of the gapped text and the missing bits (and having underlined the relevant parts, of course).