

# Functional Skills

## English

Level 1 Reading R2

Read and Understand Texts in Detail

V2

**Functional Skills English:**

Level 1

**Skill standard:**

Reading R2

**Coverage and Range:**

Read and understand texts in detail.

'This requires learners to recognise main points, ideas and primary themes as well as demonstrate some discernment, judgement and selection when reviewing materials or texts.

'*Skimming* of a newspaper article, for example, to gain an overall impression and understanding the main purpose and central theme, and scanning for the location of more detailed information (for example identifying information about costs in a report) is necessary.

'Detailed reading is expected, to understand the specific information presented and to capture necessary but less apparent facts, particulars, dates and so on...It is necessary to know when detailed reading is required in order to fully understand meaning, to avoid missing vital components and to capture essential information for use elsewhere.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> QCA Functional Skills guidance: amplification of the standards June 2008 QCA/08/3700

## Ways of Reading

There are a number of different ways of reading a text depending on the types of information you are searching for and the text itself. Obviously, you would not read Tolstoy's *War and Peace* in the same way you would read a train station's timetable. Instead, it is important you adapt the way you read a text to fit its purpose.

Typically, when reading a text for specific information, ideas or main points, there are three useful methods. These are:

- Scanning – allowing your eyes to search for **keywords** in a text, rather than reading and understanding every word.
- Skimming – reading in order to get the 'gist' of the text by reading the title and headings and picking out sentences that are key to the purpose of the text. Again, it is not necessary to read and understand every word when skim reading.
- Detailed Reading – when you read and understand every word in a text in order to make sure you do not miss any information or inferences in the text.

## Scan Reading

Typically, you scan read texts such as timetables, cookery books, dictionaries and reference books, though you scan read most texts if you are searching for very specific information. It is an excellent way of saving time when reading dense texts.

Some tips:

- Before scanning, have a clear picture in your mind of what information you need (e.g. which train you hope to catch or which part of a recipe you need).
- Use contents pages, indexes, titles, page numbers and subheadings to identify where the information is likely to be.
- Let your eyes search the text, skipping over irrelevant information. Do not read every word.

**Exercise 1a**

You are a contestant in a televised baking competition. Under pressure, you have forgotten how much sugar your apple pie mix needs and don't have time to read through a whole cooking book to find the recipe. Use the contents page below to help you quickly find the recipe.

<u>Pie in the Sky: 101 Dreamy Pie Recipes</u>	
1. Introduction	
• <i>Why pie?</i>	03 - 5
• <i>Pie Squared: The genius of pie</i>	06 - 10
2. Types of Pastry	
• <i>Basic pastry tips</i>	11 - 13
• <i>Short crust &amp; other varieties</i>	14 - 20
3. Savoury Pies	
• <i>Mushroom pies</i>	22 - 30
• <i>Meat pies</i>	31 - 45
• <i>Vegetable pies</i>	46 - 52
• <i>Fish pies</i>	53 - 56
• <i>Other pies</i>	
4. Sweet Pies	
• <i>Apple pie</i>	58 - 59
• <i>Cherry pie &amp; variants</i>	60 - 65
• <i>Berry based pies</i>	66 - 70
• <i>Other fruit pies</i>	71 - 79
• <i>Other sweet pies</i>	80 - 88
5. Seasonal Pies	
• <i>Spring</i>	90 - 94
• <i>Summer</i>	95 - 99
• <i>Autumn</i>	100 - 105
• <i>Winter</i>	106 - 110
6. Glossary and indexes	111- 133

1. Which pages contain the apple pie recipe?

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**Exercise 1b**

You have found the apple pie recipe, but time is short and you still don't know how much sugar your mixture needs. Scan read the recipe below.

**Apple Pie**

**Ingredients –**

- Pastry: plain flour (220 g), pinch of salt, butter (135 g), cold water (6 tsp).
- Filling: 3 large cooking apples, sugar (50 g).

**Instructions –**

1. Preheat oven to 200°C/400°F/Gas Mark 6
2. Remove lumps from flour with sieve
3. Add and rub butter until mixture resembles breadcrumbs
4. Add cold water and mix
5. Divide pastry into two halves
6. Cover one half of pastry with apples and add sugar
7. Place other half over pie and press edges
8. Cook for 30 minutes

1. How much sugar does your recipe need?
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**Exercise 2**

Scan reading is particularly useful when dealing with timetables. You want to attend an Aqua Swim Class at your local swimming pool. Unfortunately, you are only free from 8pm (20:00) onwards. Scan read the timetable below.

1. On what day(s) are there Aqua Swim Classes? Please tick your choices.

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday

2. On what day can you attend an Aqua Swim Class?

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Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
06:00 - 09:00	Free Swim	Closed	Free Swim	Free Swim	Closed	Free Swim	Closed
09:00 - 10:00	School Swim	School Swim	Mother & Toddler	Mother & Toddler	School Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim
11:00 - 12:30	School Swim	School Swim	GP Referrals	Free Swim	School Swim	GP Referrals	Aqua Aerobics
12:30 - 13:30	School Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	School Swim	Aqua Swim Class	Private Hire
13:30 - 15:00	Free Swim	Aqua Aerobics	Free Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	Swim Lessons	Private Hire
15:00 - 16:30	GP Referrals	Aqua Swim Class	Free Swim	Aqua Aerobics	Free Swim	Private Hire	Private Hire
16:30 - 17:30	Swim Club lower	Young at Heart	Swim Club lower	Swim Club lower	Water Fun Day	Private Hire	Free Swim
18:30 - 20:00	Swim Club Higher	Swim Lessons	Swim Club Higher	Swim Lessons	Aqua Aerobics	Private Hire	Free Swim
20:00 - 21:00	Triathlon Club	Swim Lessons	Aqua Swim Class	Triathlon Club	Free Swim	Swim Club Higher	Free Swim
21:00 - 22:00	Free Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	Free Swim	Closed

## Skim Reading

Skim reading is an excellent technique to save time when you are reading a text. It allows you to quickly decide whether or not the text is interesting or relevant and if you need to read it in more detail.

Some tips:

- Use any images or titles that will help you understand quickly what the text is about.
- Keep in mind likely key words or phrases when skim reading to help you identify the important sections of the text
- As you read, always think about the meaning of the text – what is it trying to tell you? What is the topic?
- Read the first sentence of every paragraph. Is the information you need likely to be in that paragraph?

## Exercise 3

Skim reading is an excellent way of identifying whether a text is worth reading in detail. Read the two texts below.

1. Select the meaning of the article from the options below.

### Cycle Safety

Although the number of cyclists on the road is growing year upon year, many people are still reluctant to leave the car at home in favour of riding a bike. One major reason for this is the perceived danger of the roads for the cyclist. However, by following a few guidelines the commute to work can become a real pleasure – and more importantly, safe.

A common mistake many first-time cyclists make is a general ignorance of the Highway Code. Wear bright clothing (preferably reflective), don't skip red lights, ensure that your brakes are well maintained and working properly, and, if riding at night, always have white lights at the front and red lights at the back of your bike. It is also worth seriously considering wearing a helmet.

Other safety tips include making eye-contact with drivers so you know they have seen you, adopting an upright position on the bike so you can easily be spotted, and never undertake a vehicle – just because they have not signalled they are turning left, doesn't necessarily mean they won't!

The Highway Code also suggests that new cyclists, or those returning to the road after a long break, consider undertaking a cycle training program.

By following these safety tips and staying vigilant on busy roads, cycling to and from work – indeed, anywhere – can become a real source of pleasure to brighten up even the worst day. Unless it's raining...

- a. You should avoid busy roads.
- b. You shouldn't ride on roads without proper cycle training.
- c. Cycling is good for your health.
- d. Cycling is safe as long as you follow proper safety guidelines.

2. Select the meaning of the article from the options below.

### Fluent English Key to Job Hunt

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

More than three quarters of a million people in England and Wales speak English so poorly that they are likely to find it difficult to get work, according to official figures published yesterday.

Nine out of ten people said English was their main language. Of the rest, almost three million (6.4 per cent) said they could speak English “well” or “very well”, while 785,000 said they spoke it poorly including 138,000 who were unable to speak English or Welsh.

People who are not proficient in English had a lower rate of employment and were more likely to be in low-level jobs than those with English as their main language, according to analysis of 2011 census released yesterday.

Half of those aged 16-64 whose English was poor or worse were in work compared with 71 per cent of those whose main language was English and 65 per cent of those who could speak English well or very well, the Office for National Statistics said.

A third of women with poor or no English were working compared with 68 per cent of men. Half of the women who were not working were “looking after home or family”, according to the census. Three quarters of those aged between 16 and 64 who had poor or no English were in unskilled jobs, 20 per cent were in skilled trades and 17 per cent were machine operatives.

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article3990100.ece>



English is the globe's *lingua franca*. The ability to speak and read it is crucial for success in the job market.

- a. Young people don't speak English properly.
- b. People not proficient in English find it harder to gain employment.
- c. It doesn't matter how well you speak English.
- d. It's impossible to find work if you don't speak English.



**Exercise 4**

Skim read the article below to get the 'gist' of the text.

## **Pupils who do not achieve good GCSEs in English and maths must continue to study the subjects in post-16 education**

The Department for Education has announced that all pupils who fail to achieve a good pass - C or better - in English or maths GCSE by the time they finish secondary school, must continue to study the subjects in post-16 education until they get these qualifications. From 2015, this will impact all young people up to the age of 18, as a raised 'participation age' means they must remain in some form of education or training.



The announcement follows one of Alison Wolf's recommendations from her 2011 review of vocational education, which exposed the limited value of many of the vocational qualifications currently on offer for young people. She also highlighted that it was "shocking" that the system of funding schools and colleges post-16 "actively discouraged 16 to 19 year olds from catching up with their English and maths." Education Secretary Michael Gove has said that English and maths "are, quite simply, the most important vocational skills a young person can have", and the news has been broadly welcomed by educationalists including the NUT and AOC.

1. Write below your impressions of the text. What are its main points? ***Learner carries answer forward***

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**Exercise 5a**

In some cases it is advisable to first skim read a text to decide whether it is interesting and then scan read it to find specific information.

Dear Sir / Madam

I am writing to invite you to the bksb Local Community Centre fundraising event this coming Thursday from 10am until 2pm. There will be various stalls in the centre's forecourt selling regional food, clothes and handcrafted gifts. From 10am until 1.30pm the café will be serving warm food, as well as tea, coffee and homemade cakes. Entrance is £1 for adults and 50p for children.

All the money raised will be used to maintain the community centre for the future.

We hope to see you and your family there.

bksb Local Community Centre

1. Skim read the letter above. What is it about? Select **one** answer.
  - a. The community centre is opening on Thursday.
  - b. The community centre is inviting you to a fundraising event.
  - c. The community centre is hosting a car boot.
  
2. Now scan read the letter. At what time does the event finish?  

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**Exercise 5b**

Here is the newspaper article again.

**Fluent English key to job hunt**  
**Richard Ford Home Correspondent**

More than three quarters of a million people in England and Wales speak English so poorly that they are likely to find it difficult to get work, according to official figures published yesterday.

Nine out of ten people said English was their main language. Of the rest, almost three million (6.4 per cent) said they could speak English “well” or “very well”, while 785,000 said they spoke it poorly including 138,000 who were unable to speak English or Welsh.

People who are not proficient in English had a lower rate of employment and were more likely to be in low-level jobs than those with English as their main language, according to analysis of 2011 census released yesterday.

Half of those aged 16-64 whose English was poor or worse were in work compared with 71 per cent of those whose main language was English and 65 per cent of those who could speak English well or very well, the Office for National Statistics said.

A third of women with poor or no English were working compared with 68 per cent of men. Half of the women who were not working were “looking after home or family”, according to the census. Three quarters of those aged between 16 and 64 who had poor or no English were in unskilled jobs, 20 per cent were in skilled trades and 17 per cent were machine operatives.

1. Skim read the article. Which paragraph is likely to contain information on the number of people in England and Wales who said they ‘spoke English poorly’?  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Scan read the article. What percentage of those between 16 and 64 with poor or no English work in ‘skilled trades’?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Detailed Reading

Sometimes in order to fully understand a text it is important that you undertake what is called a 'detailed reading'. Detailed reading is when, unlike skimming and scanning, you read and understand every word in a text.

Detailed reading allows you to pick out a wide range of information that you could otherwise miss. For example, if you carefully read a text you may realise that certain information is understood from the text (inferred), rather than being directly said. Likewise, you may notice disclaimers, additional information, dates and particulars in the text. You may also notice how information is presented in a particular way to suit its purpose.

Carefully read the example below.

The hotel is situated conveniently close to the motorway, so in a matter of minutes of stepping out your room you can be on the road again, driving to your next meeting or on your way home, happy you chose to spend the night at Presidential Inns.

This short text infers two pieces of important information when choosing a hotel:

- First, by saying that the hotel is 'conveniently close to the motorway' the text is telling us that a motorway, liable to be busy, is very possibly next to the hotel: it is likely then to be noisy at night.
- Secondly, the text shows us who the hotel is marketed at, as the hotel expects its customers to be 'driving to your next meeting or on your way home.' This means that the hotel expects its customers to be travelling business people: it is unlikely then to be a suitable hotel for a family vacation.

## Exercise 6

When you read a text in detail you must read every word. It is therefore unavoidably time consuming. It is important then to know *when* you should read a text in detail. For example, if you wanted to quickly find a departure time for your train at a station, you would not read the whole train timetable, but instead use a more appropriate reading technique. However, if you wanted to learn more about a particular train, you would read a book or a webpage in detail that contained the relevant information.

1. Which of the options below would you be likely to read in detail?  
Circle your answer(s).

**Glossary**

**Novel**

**Blog Post**

**Newspaper  
Article**

**Job  
Advertisement**

**Shopping List**

**Poster**

## Exercise 7

Informative and descriptive texts tend to be longer than other types. These texts often require a detailed reading in order for you to fully understand them. Fortunately, they tend to have chapters or subheadings that allow you to identify which paragraphs contain the information you are looking for.

1. Look at the text below. Which paragraph will contain information on a tiger's habitat? Highlight your answer.

### **BIG CATS – *Panthera***

1. Lions, tigers, jaguars and leopards all belong to the same *Panthera* genus. This means all four of these big cat species are in some way similar and part of the same 'genetic family.' The name *Panthera* comes from the ancient Greek 'pánthēr': the *pan* meaning all and the *ther* meaning prey – it thus means 'predator to all.'

#### **The Lion**

2. For a predator with such a fearsome reputation, it is perhaps surprising that lions are inactive for up to 20 hours a day. Typically they hunt at night or dusk, though it is not unknown for them to hunt during the day.

3. Unlike other big cat species, the lion is notably social and their groups – or 'prides' as they are often called – are highly organised with many lions always assuming the same role in hunts and other social interactions.

4. In the wild, lions live in the Savanah grasslands and in the drier parts of India, as hunting in groups means they do not like too much vegetation.

#### **The Tiger**

5. Unlike lions, tigers are generally solitary animals though a male tiger's territory tends to overlap with several other females' territories. They are typically nocturnal hunters; however they have been known to hunt during the day in some remote areas.

6. Tigers live in a range of different habitats. They tend to live in areas near water with dense vegetation that acts as cover, and that ideally has a secluded spot for a den, such as a cave or a hollow of a tree.

2. Undertake a detailed reading of the text and decide whether the following statements are true or false:

- |  | TRUE                  | FALSE                 |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| a) Both tigers and lions tend to live in large groups    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| b) Lions and tigers belong to the same 'genus'.          | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| c) Both lions and tigers are normally nocturnal hunters. | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| d) Lions are inactive for 20 hours a day.                | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

### Exercise 8

When you are reading longer texts in detail, it is helpful to make notes and underline key words or sentences. It is important that you always bear in mind the following questions when reading long texts in detail:

- What is the main point of the paragraph I am reading?
- How does this point fit with the whole text?

Read the following paragraphs and answer the questions below.

In 1991, Cardiff held the first ever Women's Rugby World Cup. The final, a great success for enthusiasts and those new to the sport, was played between England and USA, with the North Americans winning 19 – 6. Although the first ever Women's Rugby World Cup was not at the time officially recognised by the International Rugby Board, it is now seen as one of the most important events in women's rugby history.

1. What is the main point of this paragraph? Select your answer.

- a. To inform the reader that the first Women's Rugby World Cup was not officially recognised by the International Rugby Board.
- b. To tell the reader that the USA won the first ever Women's Rugby World Cup.
- c. To notify the reader that the first Women's Rugby World Cup is now seen as one of the most important events in the history of the sport.

At the next tournament held in Scotland (though originally planned to be held in Amsterdam) England met the USA for the second consecutive time. However, this time the English were able to avenge themselves for their 1991 defeat, winning in dominant fashion 38 – 23. Again, the Women’s Rugby World Cup was not at the time officially endorsed by the IRB, which even threatened sanctions against official union sides such as New Zealand. This meant that only 11 of the original 16 teams played, with the numbers being brought up to the necessary twelve by a Scottish students’ team.

2. List two important points taken from the above paragraph. [*Learner’s answer is carried forward*].

a. ....  
.....

b. ....  
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3. The two paragraphs are from the same article. What do you think the article is about? Write your answer below.  
[*Learner’s answer is carried forward*].

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.....  
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### Exercise 9

Read the text below and use the information to answer the following questions.

#### **bksb Land Theme Park**

With the new early bird tickets, you can enjoy 50% off the on-the-day ticket price for adults (16+) by booking one week in advance. The offer is only available for visits from the 30<sup>th</sup> of August to the 25<sup>th</sup> of September. This means that instead of £30 per adult, the new price is £15. Children’s tickets will remain £10 per child, except for children under 1 metre (3’ 3”), who go free.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June the new rollercoaster, *The Alphabeast*, opens to the public after extensive testing. Riders will be treated to speeds in excess of 50 mph as they are taken through a 43 m tall construction of the alphabet.

Please note: the theme park will close on the 26<sup>th</sup> of September for maintenance and testing and will not re-open to the general public until spring the following year. However, private parties from 7pm onwards will still be available until December the 22<sup>nd</sup> and will resume in March the following year.

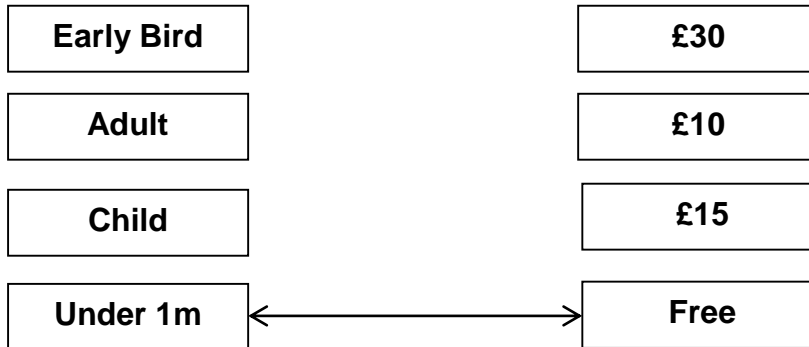
1. Which paragraph contains information about ticket prices?

**Paragraph 1**

**Paragraph 2**

**Paragraph 3**

2. Match the ticket types with their prices. The first one is done for you.



3. How tall is *The Alphabeast*?

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4. On what date does the theme park close to the public and why? [*Learner's answer carries forward*].

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### Exercise 10

Read in detail the three texts below and answer the questions.

#### **Blackpool's Beach Ball B&B – Review**

I cannot recommend a better hotel for anyone wanting to stay near the action of Blackpool! We could hear the clubs from our room all night, which meant there was no missing the party (even after 3am!) and the super thin walls allowed us to get to know our neighbours very well during our weekend stay. The full English breakfast didn't include a vegetarian option – despite the website saying it would – so I was able to stick to my diet without the slightest problem. Excellent!

Yeah, so all in all 1/5 stars...



1. How close do you think the clubs were to the hotel?

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2. Was anything wrong with the full English breakfast? Explain your answer.

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3. Do you think the writer liked their stay at the hotel? Explain your answer.

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### **Scarborough's Crafty Pirate Hotel – Advertisement**

The newly refurbished Crafty Pirate, situated in a quiet residential street, yet only a ten minute walk from the town centre, is open once again for business during the busy summer holiday season.

We have 20 newly refurbished rooms with modern and stylish fittings, late bar and lounge area and a large breakfast buffet with a large range of food and drink options.

At the back of the hotel residents will also find a secure and well-lit car park.

Prices for a family of 4 start from £99 per night.

4. How many rooms does the hotel have?

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5. Has the hotel recently opened for the first time? Explain your answer.

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6. How much does it cost per night to stay at the hotel?

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**Blackpool's Sea View Hotel – Review**

I booked this hotel because it was recommended to me by a friend. When my family arrived there was no one at the reception desk, which set alarm bells ringing off in my head. However, my partner went to find someone and we were checked in and relaxing in our room soon afterwards.

The hotel was easy to find and very clean, the staff were all very helpful and polite, and the hotel's name certainly lived up to its promise, as I do not think there could be another hotel in the same price bracket (£70 per night) with views as stunning as this one.

There were a couple of problems, such as the lack of a breakfast buffet and the hotel's bar/lounge closing after 9pm, but being so close to town, we were able to find somewhere else to go easily enough instead.

7. Why did the reviewer choose this hotel?

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8. List three things the reviewer liked about the hotel.

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9. How far from town is the hotel? Why do you think this?

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**Exercise 11**

Read the forum post below and write a reply telling them which holiday you think they should choose. Ask your tutor to mark your work.

Hello everyone. I was wondering if some kind soul could help me choose which hotel my family and I should stay at during the summer holidays. I've been recommended these three hotels: *Beach Ball B&B*, *Crafty Pirate* and *Sea View*, but I can't decide which one to stay at.

Ideally, we want to stay in Blackpool, close to the sea, somewhere family friendly and for less than £100 per night.

If any of you have read anything about these hotels, I wonder if you'd be kind enough to explain to me which I should choose and why.

Thanks everyone!

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