

Self-study for Cambridge First Certificate (FCE) Discussion

*How can you improve your FCE score and English level more generally outside class?
Discuss the things that you decided were priorities above first.*

Discuss the usefulness of the things below and decide on a top two for each section, starting with your priorities. After finishing that exam-style task, also mention any of your own ideas.

Pronunciation/ Speaking

- 1 Answering FCE Speaking exam questions on your own out loud
- 2 Free conversation, e.g. with an online conversation exchange partner
- 3 Learning vocabulary to talk about typical FCE Speaking topics (e.g. accommodation and food)
- 4 Practising the FCE speaking exam together (without a teacher)
- 5 Recording yourself, e.g. doing the FCE Speaking Part Two comparing photos task
- 6 Shadow reading
- 7 Watching YouTube videos of students taking FCE speaking exams
- 8 Writing your answers to real FCE speaking questions

Reading

- 1 Doing an FCE reading exam again, e.g. one month later
- 2 Reading children's fiction
- 3 Reading for pleasure, e.g. fiction written for native English speakers
- 4 Reading graded readers
- 5 Reading magazines
- 6 Reading newspapers
- 7 Reading online
- 8 Reading with a dictionary
- 9 Timed reading exam practice

Writing

- 1 Analysing FCE writing model answers for strengths and weaknesses
- 2 Doing timed exam practice of FCE Writing (even when you might not have a chance to have it marked)
- 3 Doing further work on your writing work (with a dictionary, model answer, etc) after finishing an FCE Writing timed task
- 4 Keeping a list of your typical mistakes
- 5 Learning phrases from model answers
- 6 Learning spelling rules
- 7 Looking back on an old piece of writing and trying to remember what corrections and feedback your teacher gave
- 8 Memorising entire FCE writing model answers
- 9 Studying typical mistakes by FCE candidates
- 10 Studying typical spelling mistakes by native speakers

Listening

- 1 Doing an FCE listening test again, e.g. one month later
- 2 Doing pronunciation work on changes in fast natural speech, e.g. linking between words (elision)
- 3 Learning vocabulary from FCE Listening texts
- 4 Listening again and again to FCE exam listenings
- 5 Reading FCE exam listening transcripts
- 6 Reading and listening to FCE exam listening transcripts (reading and listening at the same time)
- 7 Shadow reading with FCE exam listening transcripts
- 8 Watching TV and movies with English subtitles
- 9 Watching TV and movies with no subtitles

Use of English (grammar and vocabulary)

- 1 Do a FCE Use of English paper again, e.g. two weeks later
- 2 General self-study grammar books, e.g. Murphy's English Grammar in Use
- 3 Learning vocabulary from FCE Reading texts
- 4 Learning vocabulary from FCE Listening texts
- 5 Lots of timed FCE Use of English practice
- 6 Reading for pleasure
- 7 Self-study FCE grammar and vocabulary books
- 8 Self-study FCE grammar books
- 9 Self-study FCE vocabulary books

Ask the whole class and your teacher about any skills and methods above which you aren't sure about, especially your priorities.

The morning of the exam

What should you do on the morning of the exam?

Rank the things to do on the morning of the exam below:

- 1 Doing FCE exam practice
- 2 Getting together with someone (or using Skype or the phone) to just chat in English
- 3 Getting together with someone (or using Skype or the phone) to do FCE Speaking exam practice
- 4 Going through a list of your typical mistakes
- 5 Listening to a radio station with an English speaking DJ
- 6 Listening to an FCE Listening again
- 7 Listening to English language music
- 8 Looking back on some of your old corrected written work
- 9 Reading for pleasure
- 10 Revising some language, e.g. grammar, that typically comes up in the exam

Discuss your ideas as a class.