READING AND USE OF ENGLISH | PART 6

B2 First: Gapped Text

Two original practice texts with twelve questions, exam strategies and explained answers. Learn to recognise how writers connect ideas across a longer text.

6	7	2
questions per task	choices per task	marks per answer

Four clues that help you find the right sentence

1 **Look backwards and forwards**

Read the sentence before the gap and the sentence after it. The answer must connect with both.

2 **Follow reference words**

Trace this, that, these, it, he, she and they to the people or ideas they refer to.

3 **Watch changes and contrasts**

Words such as instead, yet, however and therefore reveal the writer's logic.

4 **Check the whole passage**

Do not select an option just because it repeats a word. Read the text again after you finish.

Quick example

Mina stared at the empty noticeboard. [0] By lunchtime, it was covered in messages from neighbours.

Missing sentence: She pinned up a note asking for ideas. Why? The note explains where the messages came from.

Related lesson: B2 First Reading Part 6 - tips and practice. Open the lesson on My English Teacher.

PRACTICE 1 · READ THE TEXT

The Museum of Unfinished Things

A small exhibition asks an unexpected question: must everything be completed?

Questions 37–42: Six sentences have been removed. Choose the sentence A–G that fits each gap. One sentence is extra.

On the first Thursday of every month, a former post office in Bristol opens its doors to a very unusual exhibition. Visitors do not find polished sculptures or famous paintings. Instead, they see a half-knitted jumper, a wooden chair with only three legs, and an enormous map with one corner left blank. Each object has a label explaining why its owner stopped working on it. [37] What surprises most newcomers is not the number of unfinished projects, but how readily their owners admit to abandoning them.

The museum's founder, Mara Ellis, came up with the idea while clearing out her father's workshop. On the top shelf stood a model boat, carefully painted on one side and bare wood on the other. Her father had talked about finishing it for years, but after his death the boat looked painfully incomplete. [38] Instead of throwing it away, Mara wrote down everything she remembered about his plans and placed the boat in her front window.

A neighbour asked whether she could display a half-sewn coat alongside the boat. Soon, more objects arrived: an abandoned screenplay, a pair of shoes waiting to be repaired and a wedding-cake design sketched on an old envelope. Mara rented a vacant shop for a weekend exhibition, expecting that only people from her street would come. [39] By Sunday evening, visitors had left hundreds of notes describing unfinished projects hidden in their own homes.

Not everyone welcomed the experiment. One visitor complained that showing unfinished work encouraged laziness. Another wondered whether people had become too impatient to complete anything. Mara listened, but she disagreed with both of them. [40] Some contributors had stopped because of illness or family responsibilities, while others had discovered that their interests had changed. Describing all those decisions as failures, she felt, missed the point.

Today, the museum also runs monthly workshops. Visitors can bring an abandoned project, ask for advice and decide whether to continue it. One woman returned to a novel she had put aside for ten years; another donated her boxes of fabric to a local school. The aim is not to persuade everyone to finish what they started. [41] That distinction matters to Mara, who has seen people leave a workshop feeling relieved after choosing to give something away.

At the entrance is the original model boat, still unfinished after all these years. Mara says several visitors have offered to paint the remaining side, but she has always refused. She does not think it needs fixing, although she sometimes wonders what her father would have made of the museum. [42] Visitors often stand in front of it longer than they spend looking at any other object in the room.

PRACTICE 1 · OPTIONS A–G

Choose the missing sentences

Read all seven sentences. Match six to gaps 37–42 in the article. One sentence does not fit. Use each letter only once.

A She realised that the unfinished boat told a story which a completed version might have hidden.

B It is to help them decide what still deserves their time and what they are ready to let go of.

C For her, the reasons behind leaving a project unfinished mattered far more than the fact that it was unfinished.

D The museum's founder believes that these explanations can be as interesting as the objects themselves.

E Several local artists have since offered to teach visitors the skills needed to repair old furniture.

F Instead, a queue formed outside before the doors opened, and people kept arriving throughout the weekend.

G To her, that patch of bare wood is precisely what makes the boat worth displaying.

Write your answers

37	38	39	40	41	42
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Extra sentence (unused): _____

PRACTICE 2 · READ THE TEXT

The Evening the Stars Returned

One coastal community tries something unusual with its streetlights.

Questions 37–42: Six sentences have been removed. Choose the sentence A–G that fits each gap. One sentence is extra.

When the council in the coastal town of Greyhaven announced that some streetlights on the seafront would be switched off for one Saturday evening, the response was hardly enthusiastic. Restaurant owners feared empty tables, parents worried about safety, and one resident predicted everyone would trip over the kerb. The organisers had expected questions, but were surprised by how quickly the rumour spread online. [37] The proposal had actually come from a group of amateur astronomers who wanted local people to see how much of the night sky had disappeared behind artificial light.

Leading the project was engineer Leo Grant, who had grown up in Greyhaven when he could still see the Milky Way from his bedroom window. Years later, returning from university, he noticed that the stars had almost vanished. The town was brighter, but the sky seemed strangely smaller. At first he blamed the weather, until he noticed the same thing on perfectly clear nights. [38] That question led him to begin measuring light levels along the promenade and to approach the council with his results.

The council agreed to a two-hour trial but required practical safeguards. Volunteers would mark the walking route, local businesses would keep the lights above their doors on, and emergency services would be informed in advance. Residents would also receive a map showing the route and the places where extra help was available. [39] The compromise did not satisfy everyone, yet it allowed the event to go ahead without leaving the entire seafront in darkness.

Just before nine, clouds rolled in from the sea. Leo watched them cover the few visible stars and considered cancelling the guided walk. Many people had already arrived, some carrying blankets and others holding flasks of tea. Then the wind shifted, opening a wide clear space overhead. [40] Someone near the front of the crowd gasped as a pale band of light became visible above the harbour, and for a moment nobody spoke.

After the walk, the organisers handed out a short questionnaire. They expected enthusiasm from the families who had attended, but were less prepared for the responses from shopkeepers. Several said customers had stayed longer to watch the sky through the windows, rather than leaving as soon as they had finished eating. [41] He had worried that switching off the lights would mean losing trade, but his café had been busier than usual.

The experiment did not lead to the town abandoning electric lighting, nor did it remove every complaint. Instead, the council began reviewing lamps that shone upwards rather than onto paths, and it agreed to repeat the event every spring. Leo thinks that modest outcome is more useful than a dramatic announcement that everyone might soon forget. [42] The town has not become dark, but its residents have started paying attention to what their lights prevent them from seeing.

PRACTICE 2 · OPTIONS A–G

Choose the missing sentences

Read all seven sentences. Match six to gaps 37–42 in the article. One sentence does not fit. Use each letter only once.

A One café owner even asked if the event could become a regular feature.

B The local hotels, meanwhile, were preparing to welcome a record number of visitors that summer.

C Only the decorative lamps facing the beach would be switched off; the crossings and main road would remain lit.

D A change that people understand and support, he argues, has a much better chance of lasting.

E Yet the plan had little to do with saving electricity, as many residents had assumed.

F He began to wonder whether keeping streets safe really meant lighting every empty corner all night.

G Gradually, the dark sky filled with stars that most of the people there had never noticed before.

Write your answers

37	38	39	40	41	42
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Extra sentence (unused): _____

TWO PRACTICE TASKS | 12 ANSWERS

Answer key & useful clues

Check your letters first, then read the clue explaining why each missing sentence fits the surrounding text.

Practice 1: The Museum of Unfinished Things

37 D	The explanations on the labels are introduced just before the gap; these explanations refers back to them.
38 A	The boat seems incomplete, but Mara sees the story behind it; instead of throwing it away then follows logically.
39 F	Mara expects a small audience; instead introduces the unexpected queue, followed by the visitors' notes.
40 C	The objections suggest failure or laziness; the missing sentence shifts attention to contributors' individual reasons.
41 B	The preceding sentence says finishing is not the goal; it explains the real purpose of the workshop.
42 G	The mention of the unpainted side links directly to that patch of bare wood and the visitors' interest.

Extra sentence: E. It is related to the general topic, but does not continue the ideas logically at any gap.

Practice 2: The Evening the Stars Returned

37 E	Residents assume the plan is about electricity; yet corrects that assumption before the astronomers are introduced.
38 F	Leo questions whether all-night lighting is necessary; that question in the next sentence points back to this.
39 C	The proposed safeguards lead to a specific compromise: only decorative lamps go off, not road or crossing lights.
40 G	The wind clears the clouds, revealing stars; the pale band of light in the next sentence continues that discovery.
41 A	He in the sentence after the gap must refer to the café owner introduced in option A.
42 D	Leo favours a modest, lasting change; the missing sentence explains why that outcome matters.

Extra sentence: B. It is related to the general topic, but does not continue the ideas logically at any gap.

Self-check: Give yourself 2 marks for each correct answer. 24 marks are available across both tasks.