READING AND USE OF ENGLISH / PART 7

C1 Advanced: Gapped Text

Two original C1-level reading tasks, with twelve missing paragraphs and a concise explained answer key.

2	6	1
complete tasks	gaps per task	extra paragraph

How to approach the task

1 **Track references**

Identify exactly what this, those and such a decision refer to.

2 **Check both sides**

A paragraph must connect with what comes before and after.

3 **Follow the argument**

Notice contrasts, changes in time and the writer's viewpoint.

Worked connection

A text ends with: *The volunteers struggled to find funding.*
A missing paragraph begins: *Those financial difficulties forced the team to reconsider its plans.*
Clue: 'Those financial difficulties' refers directly to the funding problem.

Related lesson and interactive practice

Read **C1 Advanced Reading Part 7: Gapped Text Tips & Practice** on My English Teacher.

TASK A / TEXT (PAGE 1 OF 2)

The Archive of Almost-Lost Sounds

How can a city preserve the sounds of a changing neighbourhood?

Instructions

Read this text carefully. Six paragraphs have been removed. Choose from paragraphs **A-G** on the options page. There is **one extra paragraph** you do not need to use.

At eleven fifty-nine every morning, Leila Hart used to stand outside the old market and wait for a clock to strike. She had photographed the building for years, but a neighbour's remark that the bell was beginning to sound different made her realise how little attention she had paid to its voice. With the market due to close, she bought a recorder, confident that preserving its distinctive chime would be straightforward. A week with a microphone altered that assumption.

GAP 1 _____ Write A-G

That decision made her earliest recordings unexpectedly rich. The bell was accompanied by delivery drivers calling to one another, a café owner stacking chairs and the sudden rush of commuters across the square. When Leila played the recordings to local traders, several recognised voices before they recognised the bell. They began telling stories about ordinary routines she had never considered worth recording.

GAP 2 _____ Write A-G

The question of whose memories counted became urgent when plans for a new shopping development were announced. Publicity material promised to make the district cleaner, quieter and more attractive. Leila's growing collection, however, included the clatter of early-morning deliveries and the shouting of market workers. She had assumed that everyone would regard their disappearance as a loss.

GAP 3 _____ Write A-G

TASK A / TEXT (PAGE 2 OF 2)

The Archive of Almost-Lost Sounds

Continue reading, then turn to the missing paragraphs on the next page.

This disagreement prompted Leila to organise listening sessions rather than asking residents to approve a finished exhibition. In the library, neighbours argued over the same thirty-second recording: one heard a lively public square, while another remembered years of interrupted sleep. The meetings also exposed a further difficulty. Preserving a sound did not necessarily mean that everyone wanted it made available to strangers.

GAP 4 _____ Write A-G

That cautious approach frustrated a sponsor who had imagined an instantly searchable online archive. Leila refused to publish material simply because it had already been recorded. Instead, she offered contributors several choices: public access, an edited extract, a supervised listening session or no release at all. The project became slower, but the people whose voices appeared in it were more willing to take part.

GAP 5 _____ Write A-G

The exhibition eventually attracted a larger audience than anyone had expected. What surprised Leila, though, was not the number of visitors but their willingness to challenge her descriptions. A supposed factory whistle turned out to be a ship's horn, and a familiar rhythm came from an early delivery route rather than a train. She began to treat the collection as a record that could be revised, not a sealed account of the past.

GAP 6 _____ Write A-G

Today, visitors can hear two versions of several recordings: the original label and the later account that corrected it. Leila is happy with that arrangement. Her archive does not claim to reproduce a neighbourhood exactly as it once was; instead, it reveals how differently people experience the same place. The sound of the market bell is still there, but it no longer speaks on its own.

Now consider paragraphs A-G. Only one paragraph fits each gap.

TASK A / MISSING PARAGRAPHS

Choose paragraphs A-G

Read every option before deciding. Each paragraph can be used once only; one does not fit.

A Unexpectedly, those restrictions encouraged a more imaginative exhibition. Visitors could listen to narrated fragments and decide whether to hear a longer recording, while some personal stories appeared only as written descriptions. A blank space on the audio map marked material that contributors had chosen to keep private. Absence, Leila discovered, could communicate just as powerfully as sound.

B Those accounts exposed the weakness of her original labels. A shutter being pulled down was not simply an interesting metallic noise: to one shopkeeper, it marked the end of a family's business. Leila began collecting short interviews alongside the recordings, noting whose experience each account represented. Otherwise, one person's recollection might easily have been mistaken for the history of an entire street.

C Meanwhile, a national radio station proposed turning the collection into a weekly programme about the history of public transport. Its producers offered to supply archive footage and interview retired drivers from across the country. The plan was appealing in its own right, but it would have required Leila to abandon her detailed work in the neighbourhood for several months.

D A former night-shift worker explained why. Her voice was recognisable in a recording made outside the market at dawn, but she did not want an account of a difficult period in her life available online indefinitely. She agreed to let Leila keep the material on condition that access was limited. Consent, it turned out, needed careful thought long after the microphone had been switched off.

E Initially, she tried to capture the bell without interference. Every attempt was spoiled, as she saw it, by buses braking, mobile phones ringing or people crossing the square. Yet after comparing recordings from different days, she noticed that the supposed interruptions were themselves changing. She stopped treating background noise as contamination and began documenting it as part of the setting.

F This willingness to revise her work was tested when an engineer challenged one of the archive's most popular recordings. He demonstrated that the tone visitors called the market bell had actually been produced by a warning device installed nearby. Rather than quietly replacing the description, Leila kept the earlier interpretation beside the correction, allowing the archive to show how an apparently reliable memory had developed.

G Not everyone considered those sounds worth saving. Residents above the unloading bay had complained for years about engines starting before sunrise, and several welcomed the prospect of a quieter street. For them, the archive risked turning a genuine nuisance into a sentimental attraction. Leila realised that she was documenting competing experiences of change, not assembling a soundtrack everyone would miss.

TASK B / TEXT (PAGE 1 OF 2)

The Hillside That Refused to Be a Park

What should happen to an untidy patch of urban nature?

Instructions

Read this text carefully. Six paragraphs have been removed. Choose from paragraphs **A-G** on the options page. There is **one extra paragraph** you do not need to use.

From the road, the slope above the disused quarry looked like a neglected piece of land waiting for improvement. There were broken stones, thistles and the remains of a fence that had never enclosed anything successfully. When a local group proposed turning it into a public park, the first drawings showed neat lawns, a viewing platform and a wide path suitable for pushchairs. The organisers expected that clearing the site would be the easiest part of the project.

GAP 7 _____ Write A-G

Armed with that discovery, the group revised its drawings. Instead of covering the whole slope with grass, it proposed keeping substantial areas of scrub and placing paths around them. The plan was praised by several conservation groups, but it introduced an uncomfortable question: what would happen to the people who already used the hillside in ways the designers had not anticipated?

GAP 8 _____ Write A-G

The volunteers therefore tested temporary routes rather than putting permanent paths straight into the ground. They watched where people walked, invited comments and discovered that a gap in the old fence offered the safest entrance. Some proposed routes were rejected immediately. The trial also showed how quickly a line that seemed harmless on a drawing could disturb nesting areas.

GAP 9 _____ Write A-G

TASK B / TEXT (PAGE 2 OF 2)

The Hillside That Refused to Be a Park

Continue reading, then turn to the missing paragraphs on the next page.

Yet small signs and seasonal diversions did not solve a larger problem. Who would look after the hillside once the excitement of the project had faded? The council could pay for essential safety work but not for constant gardening, while local volunteers were understandably reluctant to promise years of unpaid maintenance. The familiar picture of a park with regularly cut grass was beginning to look unrealistic.

GAP 10 _____ Write A-G

The arrangement worked until a particularly dry summer. The grass on the upper slope turned brittle, and several residents feared that leaving wild vegetation untouched had created a fire hazard. The group could no longer present the choice as one between nature and unnecessary tidiness. It had to decide which kinds of intervention would actually make the hillside safer without destroying what made it valuable.

GAP 11 _____ Write A-G

The following spring, native flowers returned to areas that had been carefully cleared, and the new benches were used more often than the planners had predicted. There were still disagreements about dogs, litter and the best routes across the hill, but these no longer seemed proof that the project had failed. The site was becoming a place whose future people could discuss without expecting an instant solution.

GAP 12 _____ Write A-G

The hillside is still untidy. On a windy day, seed heads bend over the path and stones appear between the grass. Yet it is visited by walkers, studied by naturalists and watched over by residents who once dismissed it as waste ground. The project has challenged a comforting assumption: restoring a place does not always mean making it look more orderly.

Now consider paragraphs A-G. Only one paragraph fits each gap.

TASK B / MISSING PARAGRAPHS

Choose paragraphs A-G

Read every option before deciding. Each paragraph can be used once only; one does not fit.

A When naturalists pointed out that one route passed through a nesting area, the group moved it several metres uphill. It also introduced a short seasonal closure, with signs explaining which species needed protection and for how long. Regular visitors did not all welcome the change, but they could now see that the diversion had a specific purpose rather than being an arbitrary rule.

B Indeed, what finally persuaded some sceptical residents was not a dramatic transformation of the landscape but a change in their own habits. People began pausing to identify birds they had previously walked past, and children noticed insects in places their parents had called empty. The hill was becoming a shared experiment, not a finished attraction to be admired from a distance.

C Their first ecological survey complicated that vision. A botanist found uncommon wildflowers growing in the shallow soil between stones, while beetles had made use of the exposed rubble. Neither would necessarily flourish on a freshly planted lawn. What looked untidy to the organisers was, in places, precisely the environment that allowed these species to survive.

D A separate proposal involved a small café on the quarry's upper edge. Several investors argued that refreshments and a panoramic terrace would attract visitors from other districts. The idea remained popular at council meetings because it promised an income stream, although nobody had yet produced a convincing estimate of the building costs or demand.

E Instead, the partners divided the work according to what each could realistically provide. Council staff would inspect dangerous structures, local naturalists would check sensitive habitats, and residents agreed to organise occasional litter collections. They also set dates for reviewing the arrangement, rather than assuming enthusiasm would last forever. A landscape could be lightly managed without being abandoned.

F For local teenagers, the hillside was already a place to meet and ride bicycles. Dog walkers had their own routes, and an elderly resident used a sheltered corner as a shortcut to the shops. Some feared that protecting the wild areas would mean fencing people out altogether. A successful plan, they argued, needed to consider ordinary users as carefully as the newly discovered wildlife.

G At that point, the project faced its clearest test. Some people wanted everything cut back, but the ecologists recommended removing only the most flammable growth near paths and homes. Small breaks in vegetation were created and the driest material cleared, while sheltered patches were left intact. The compromise required more judgement than simply mowing the whole hillside.

ANSWER KEY / PART 7

Answers and explanations

Check the connection on both sides of each gap. These explanations identify the main clue, not just a repeated word.

TASK A | 1-6

E — 1. The failed attempts to isolate the bell lead to recording its background; 'That decision' then refers to including the whole soundscape.

B — 2. The traders' stories become 'Those accounts', prompting labels that record individual experiences.

G — 3. Residents welcoming quiet contradict Leila's assumption that all the sounds would be missed; 'This disagreement' follows naturally.

D — 4. The worker's concerns explain why some people objected to public access; 'That cautious approach' introduces consent-based options.

A — 5. The restrictions on access lead to an exhibition designed around choices; the following paragraph describes its reception.

F — 6. The archive's willingness to correct labels is tested by the engineer; the ending describes how both versions are displayed.

TASK B | 7-12

C — 7. The discovery of wildlife in rubble challenges the neat-lawn drawings; 'Armed with that discovery' points back to the survey.

F — 8. Existing visitors are introduced as an issue; paragraph F identifies them before the following paragraph describes the route trial.

A — 9. Nesting areas make some trial paths unsuitable; relocating a route explains the 'small signs and seasonal diversions' that follow.

E — 10. The maintenance question calls for a realistic division of responsibilities; 'The arrangement' then refers to that agreement.

G — 11. The fire risk leads to selective vegetation management, before the text describes the following spring's results.

B — 12. Residents' gradual change of attitude develops the idea of ongoing discussion; the conclusion explains why the hill remains untidy.

Extra paragraphs

Task A: **C** (national radio programme) | Task B: **D** (proposed café). Neither idea is developed by the surrounding text.