

Open comprehension

1 In open comprehension reading activities, what is the best way to find the answer to each question?

- Read the whole text in detail.
- Underline key words in the question, then read the first sentence or two of each paragraph.
- Underline key words in the question, then look through the text quickly to locate the information you need.

2 Choose the correct alternative.

- I'm at the bank taking out/back some money.
- My new car cost an arm and a hand/leg so I can't go away this year.
- We need to buy some cakes before they sell off/out.
- Do you have any change for a £20 note/receipt?
- Jane ought to tighten her belt/trousers now she isn't working.
- It's good to have a bargain/budget each month so you don't overspend.

✓ Exam tip

In reading activities with comprehension questions, underline key words in the questions. Then, move your eyes quickly through the text to find specific information like numbers, names or dates. This is called scanning.

3 Answer the following questions in your own words according to the information given in the text.

- What do all the chosen banknote characters have in common?
.....
- Who initially votes for the characters that appear on the banknotes?
.....
- Who is responsible for reducing the long list of names suggested?
.....
- What do the focus groups consider?
.....
- Who has authority over the ultimate selection?
.....
- Why was Alan Turing chosen for the £50 note?
.....
- According to the writer, what kind of future does this tradition have?
.....

The faces of British money

Have you ever wondered about the historical figures who appear on the back of Bank of England notes? This was chosen as a way to honour people who have had a positive influence on British society in the way of leadership, values or innovation. The main rules are that the person chosen has to be real, rather than fictional, and to avoid people who are still alive. It all started back in 1970 with a rather well-known writer: William Shakespeare.



So, what's the process for deciding who will appear? 2014 marked the birth of the Banknote Character Advisory Committee and the introduction of a new method of selection. That year, the visual arts were celebrated. The public was asked to suggest people who they thought deserved to be honoured. This resulted in 29,000 votes and 590 names. Several independent specialists with experience in the chosen field were brought in to help the committee cut down the numbers and produce a long list.

The next stage was to create focus groups to discuss which people would be meaningful to ordinary Britons and which might provoke negative reactions. If there is the possibility of seeing this face every time you pay for something or take money out of the bank, it needs to be right. In addition to this, extensive historical research was carried out. The final decision came down to the Governor of the Bank of England at the time, Mark Carney. So this is how, in 2015, the painter JMW Turner was chosen to appear on the new £20 note.

More recently, using the same system, a scientist was chosen for the latest £50 note; in 2019, Alan Turing, the World War II codebreaker, was selected from a short-list of 12 historical figures. Carney explained that, as well as being a war hero, Turing was extremely influential in the fields of computer science and artificial intelligence. His pioneering work has led to the advancements in technology which we see today.

Since 1970, 17 historical figures have appeared on British notes. However, at a time when physical money is becoming increasingly rare, it is uncertain how long this tradition will last. It's only a matter of time before the UK population becomes totally dependent on cashless means of payment. At that point, the Bank of England will have to find another way to pay back figures from the past.

4 Write a synonym for the below words from the text.

- honour (paragraph 1)
- committee (paragraph 2)
- extensive (paragraph 3)
- pioneering (paragraph 4)
- rare (paragraph 5)

B2 First Part 1

1 In multiple-choice activities where you have to choose the correct word, it's important to know ...

- a the meaning of words.
- b the meaning and grammatical patterns of words.
- c whether words are formal or informal.

2 Find and correct one mistake in each sentence.

- 1 I'm sure you can get that watch cheaper if you shop about.
- 2 How much do you spend each month for clothes?
- 3 I used to have a clothes allowing in my teens.
- 4 My brother always splashes over on designer clothes.
- 5 Don't you think this is great value in money?

✓ Exam tip

In multiple-choice activities where you have to choose the correct word, some of the gaps test your knowledge of the grammatical patterns of words: for example, what preposition follows a verb or an adjective (*believe in, keen on*) or if a verb is followed by a gerund or an infinitive (have **to pay**, consider **buying**). Make a note of this information when you learn new words.

3 For questions 1–8, read the text below and decide which answer (A, B, C or D) best fits each gap. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Example:

- 0 A hardly B any C really D not

Pocket money past and present



In the 80s, my parents used pocket money as a way to get me to do jobs around the house. Now, with my own children, (0) *not* much has changed. I admit (1) using the same method. I (2) to help out or I wouldn't receive my allowance.

What has changed is how children choose to spend (3) cash, according to a study by Alba, (4) examined the contents of school bags. Relatively speaking, they (5) a fortune on mobiles, tablets and other tech items: 33% of the children surveyed splash out on these 'must-haves'.

Another big change was that today's pre-teens seem to be more (6) of the need to be healthy. (7) 28% of parents in the 80s taking sweets to school, only 19% of children do so nowadays. Interestingly, there has been a 77% increase in (8) since the 1980s. Parents should point this out to children who complain they aren't getting enough pocket money!

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|--------------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1 A that | B to | C for | D about |
| 2 A had | B must | C should | D need |
| 3 A your | B her | C their | D his |
| 4 A that | B who | C when | D which |
| 5 A afford | B spend | C pay | D purchase |
| 6 A aware | B realise | C familiar | D sensitive |
| 7 A In spite | B Although | C However | D Despite |
| 8 A receipts | B fees | C payments | D change |