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BA thesis

**A Comparative Analysis of Reading Tasks in the Cambridge B1  
Preliminary and the Estonian Year 9 English Examination in Relation to  
CEFR Descriptors**

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## ABSTRACT

Estonian Year 9 English Examination candidates are increasingly prepared using Cambridge B1 Preliminary materials, yet it remains unclear whether these international preparation materials adequately cover the requirements of the national examination. This study investigates two research questions: to what extent are the reading tasks of the Cambridge B1 Preliminary and the Estonian Year 9 English Examination aligned with B1 level as presented in the CEFR, and to what extent are Cambridge B1 Preliminary materials suitable for preparing students for the Estonian Year 9 reading component.

The literature review covers the historical development of the CEFR, the challenges of language proficiency assessment, the process of aligning examinations with the CEFR, the relevant reading descriptor scales from the *CEFR Companion Volume* (2020), and an overview of automated CEFR text analysis tools.

The empirical analysis examines the reading tasks of the Cambridge B1 Preliminary practice test (2024) and the Estonian Year 9 Examination (2025). Three automated text analysis tools are used to assess text complexity, followed by a manual analysis of each task against the CEFR reading descriptor scales. Each task is evaluated on two levels: the linguistic properties of the reading text and the cognitive demands of the task itself. The tasks of both examinations are then compared and the findings discussed in relation to the research questions.

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

**CEFR** (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages) - an international standard for describing language proficiency

**CEFR CV** - Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment. Companion volume

**COE** - Council of Europe

## INTRODUCTION

The motivation for this study stems from personal teaching experience. Having taught English to Estonian students for approximately six years and having prepared a number of them for the Year 9 Examination, the author has drawn on a variety of teaching materials, including both internet resources and Cambridge B1 preparation materials. This experience led to the central question of this study: whether Cambridge B1 Preliminary (*henceforth* B1 Preliminary) materials provide sufficient preparation for the Estonian Year 9 English Examination (*henceforth* Year 9 Exam). It is worth noting that the Year 9 Exam materials include past exam papers, whereas the B1 Preliminary materials do not provide actual exam questions, offering only sample items to illustrate what to expect in the exam. Both examinations, though, assess four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking, and a thorough investigation of the four skills would exceed the scope of a BA thesis. For that reason, the present study focuses exclusively on the reading component, as reading tasks lend themselves more readily to systematic comparison, as they can be evaluated against Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) reading descriptors and assessed for text complexity using established analytical tools, and have clearer and more measurable assessment criteria than listening, speaking or writing.

Understanding what is meant by language proficiency is essential before examining reading tasks specifically, as it forms the foundation upon which reading as a language skill is built. Language proficiency refers to the purposeful application of linguistic knowledge, encompassing pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary, to the comprehension and production of spoken and written texts in context and is therefore understood primarily as the ability to function effectively in a foreign language environment according to one's own communicative needs (Hausenberg et al 2003: 8).

The research questions of the present BA thesis can therefore be specified as follows: to what extent are the reading tasks of the Year 9 Exam and the B1 Preliminary preparation materials aligned with B1 level as presented in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and whether Cambridge B1 Preliminary materials provide sufficient preparation for the Estonian Year 9 English Examination?

The present BA thesis starts with a literature review, which is followed by an empirical analysis of the reading tasks in the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam in relation to CEFR descriptors and a conclusion. Further, a list of references is provided. Finally, the Appendix 1 includes the CEFR descriptors relevant to the research, and the texts from the reading tasks of both exams analysed in the empirical section have been included in the Appendix 2 and 3.

The literature review provides an overview of the CEFR and its historical development, followed by a discussion of the limitations of language assessment and the challenges of aligning examinations with the CEFR. Next, the structure and grading of both the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam is described. It then presents the A2, B1 and B2 level reading descriptors and the relevant text types outlined in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Companion Volume* (henceforth *CEFR CV*) (2020).

While both the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam are designed to evaluate B1 level proficiency, individual tasks often fluctuate in complexity to accurately gauge the full spectrum of candidates' abilities. In alignment with the *Inglise keele põhikooli lõpueksami eristuskiiri* (henceforth *Eristuskiiri*) (2025) and the *Cambridge B1 Preliminary Handbook for Teachers for Exams* (henceforth *B1 Preliminary Handbook*) (2024), which acknowledge proficiency levels ranging from B1+ to B2 levels for higher achieving candidates, this thesis also incorporates the A2 level descriptors to account for tasks that may fall below the B1 threshold. The *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) is discussed as a comparable, though functionally distinct, document to the *Eristuskiiri* (2025), serving as a guidance resource for teachers rather than a

national regulatory body. The *Eristuskiri* (2025) is introduced as the foundational regulatory document for the Year 9 Exam. The literature review concludes with an overview of automated CEFR text analysis tools.

The empirical analysis begins with a description of the research questions, methodology and data used in the study. This is followed by an analysis of the format of the reading components of both examinations. Three automated CEFR text analysis tools are also used to assess the complexity of the reading texts: the Pearson GSE Text Analyzer, the Road to Grammar Text Analyzer and Claude AI. The reading tasks of both examinations are then analysed separately against the CEFR descriptors at A2, B1 and B2 levels, with reference to the *Eristuskiri* (2025) and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024), before being compared with each other. The section concludes with a discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions.

The conclusion presents a summary of the study, including the key findings in relation to the research questions, the limitations encountered, the implications of the findings for language teaching, and suggestions for further research.

# 1 THE CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN SYSTEM OF LANGUAGE ASSESSMENT

Language is a continuously evolving phenomenon, shaped by culture, history and the people who speak it. Assessing the way a language is used presents inherent challenges. The need to compare and assess language proficiency across different contexts led to the development of a shared framework. Over several decades, the CEFR was developed, piloted and implemented as a common reference system, designed to assess learners' linguistic knowledge and communicative ability to the greatest possible extent (COE 2020: 27). The CEFR framework offers a thorough descriptive system for language proficiency, outlining Common Reference Levels (A1-C2) through illustrative descriptor scales, while providing curriculum design options that foster plurilingual (the range of linguistic and cultural resources individuals develop across all the languages they know or have learned) and intercultural education (ability to engage with cultural differences and learn from them) (Beacco et al 2016a as cited in COE 2020: 27).

Both competences are central to the CEFR's broader educational vision, which extends beyond purely linguistic ability. The primary purpose of the CEFR framework is to equip language professionals with the means to continually improve the quality and effectiveness of language learning and teaching practices (COE 2020: 28), serving as a reference and source of reflection rather than a prescriptive guide for curriculum design or lesson planning. However, as a broad policy framework, the CEFR is not sufficiently specific on its own to be directly applied in practice. The documents developed to elaborate it both internationally, such as the *CEFR CV* (2020) and the *CEFR Alignment Handbook* (2022), and nationally, such as the *Eristuskiri* (2025) in Estonia, frame its principles for specific educational purposes. In this way, the CEFR framework aims to balance cross-national comparability, through a shared conceptual system for language learning, with respect for distinct national traditions and

standards in language proficiency assessment (Broek et al 2013: 23). Its shared common reference levels enable the recognition of language qualifications across different educational contexts and national borders, making comparative analysis possible. Before examining the CEFR's descriptors in detail, a brief overview of its historical development helps to contextualise how the framework came to be widely adopted.

## **1.1 The history of the CEFR**

The CEFR emerged as a natural extension of the Council of Europe's sustained efforts in language education throughout the 1970s and 1980s (COE 2020: 27). A key milestone of this period was the development of the Threshold Level, a specification of language learning objectives defining what learners needed to be able to do in a language to achieve independent communicative ability, and its predecessor Waystage, which described a more elementary stage of language ability on the path towards that threshold (COE n.d.: para 2). The CEFR levels (A1 - C2) have a clear historical precedent, with the first references to a potential set of Council of Europe levels rooted in these earlier concepts (Martyniuk 2011: 4).

These developments represented a fundamental shift in what was assessed in language learning. The Threshold Level established that authentic language ability requires understanding context, interpreting meaning and communicating effectively in real situations (COE n.d.: para 2). This shift made language assessment more demanding but also more meaningful, moving away from rote memorisation towards a genuine and contextualised understanding of language use.

The CEFR's action-oriented approach (AOA), which views language learners as social agents who use language to accomplish real-world tasks rather than simply to demonstrate grammatical knowledge, both draws upon and extends the communicative language approach introduced in the mid-1970s through The Threshold Level, which represented the first functional and notional specification of language needs (COE 2020: 27). This transition is

significant because it shifts the focus from the passive assimilation of rules to the active agency of the learner, acknowledging that language mastery is best achieved through purposeful social interaction. The CEFR's AOA replaces traditional grammar-focused progressions with an objective-driven approach that organises learning around authentic, real-life tasks (COE 2020: 28). It is worth noting, however, that in the context of standardised examinations such as the Year 9 Exam and the B1 Preliminary, the notion of individual communicative needs becomes secondary to the institutional requirement of demonstrating a defined level of language proficiency. Both examinations are designed not to assess language use for personal purposes but to certify that candidates have attained at least B1 level competence, as defined by the CEFR. Prior to its official publication in 2001, the CEFR had already begun shaping curriculum design across member states, and with the publication of the *CEFR CV* in 2020, the CEFR descriptive model was renewed, its core constructs further developed and clarified (COE n.d.: para 6).

The CEFR did not emerge without foundation; it was the product of decades of research, piloting and refinement, which gives it credibility as a well-established framework for analysing and comparing language proficiency across different examination contexts. However, translating its descriptors into reliable assessments that measure genuine language ability rather than prior knowledge remains a significant challenge.

## **1.2 The difficulties of assessing language proficiency**

Grammar, style and vocabulary, pragmatics and discourse conventions shift over time and vary across geographical and cultural contexts. This inherently dynamic nature of language presents significant challenges for assessment, as any attempt to measure proficiency risks capturing only a fixed snapshot of an ever-changing system. In reading assessment specifically, it is important that candidates cannot rely on general knowledge alone to arrive at correct answers, but must demonstrate the ability to locate and interpret information from the text

itself; a correct answer arrived at by guesswork rather than genuine comprehension undermines the validity of the assessment (Hausenberg et al 2003: 7).

It is also important to consider which test type to use, as Alderson (2000: 204) claims that the widespread use of certain testing methods, such as multiple choice, does not in itself guarantee validity - convenience and efficiency often drive their adoption at the expense of genuine assessment accuracy. A further challenge is that candidates bring different backgrounds, interests and life experiences to an exam, which may give some an unintended advantage on certain topics. Effective test design, therefore, aims to select texts and construct tasks in a way that minimises the influence of topic familiarity, ensuring that performance reflects language ability rather than subject knowledge. Research suggests that narrative texts are generally easier to process than expository texts, as their story structure and rich content facilitate reading comprehension (Arshad et al 2020: 1292). Good reading tests employ multiple techniques across different texts, mirroring the varied ways readers naturally engage with texts outside of assessment contexts (Alderson 2000: 206). Reading assessment typically focuses on the while-reading and post-reading stages, testing detailed comprehension and analytical skills, though effective readers naturally revisit texts multiple times with varying degrees of intensity (Coombe et al 2012: 212). Understanding how readers engage with texts at each stage is central to ensuring the validity of reading assessment tasks.

Cognitive validity (checking that tasks test actual language ability) extends beyond the mental processes activated during test completion, encompassing the degree to which those processes reflect authentic language use in real-world contexts (Brunfaut 2023: 19). Furthermore, text genre plays a central role in establishing the content validity of a reading assessment (Brown et al 2000: 226).

Assessment is complicated by a range of factors that may affect test performance independently of actual language ability. For example, as Alderson (2000: 87) warns, when

question language exceeds the difficulty of the reading text, poor performance cannot reliably be attributed to reading ability alone. Test anxiety and individual differences in test-taking skills may also affect results independently of actual language ability. As Brunfaut (2023: 20) cautions, there is also a growing risk in language testing of becoming technology-driven rather than technology-enhanced, where the question of *how* we test begins to overshadow the more fundamental question of *what* we test. The four-skill structure of examinations such as the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam represents a partial response to these challenges, providing multiple and varied opportunities for candidates to demonstrate their language ability rather than relying on a single measure.

The challenges outlined above are not unique to the assessments that form the focus of this study but are inherent to standardised language assessment more broadly, highlighting the importance of rigorous frameworks and processes to ensure that examinations genuinely measure what they claim to measure. One such framework is the process of aligning examinations with the CEFR, a structured and expert-led procedure designed to validate the claimed link between an examination and the framework's proficiency levels.

### **1.3 Aligning exams with CEFR**

According to the publication *Aligning Language Education with the CEFR: A Handbook* (henceforth *CEFR Handbook*) (2022: 14), the alignment of tests with the CEFR follows five interrelated stages: familiarisation, which ensures all participants have a shared understanding of the CEFR; specification, which involves mapping a resource to the framework; standardisation training, which ensures the resource accurately reflects the intended CEFR levels; standard setting, which identifies the threshold indicating a candidate has met the proficiency requirements; and validation, which involves gathering sufficient empirical evidence to confirm the claimed link between the resource and the CEFR, each building on the previous (British Council et al 2022: 19-67). Whether both examinations have

fully adhered to these procedural stages falls outside the scope of this study. The purpose of presenting this framework here is rather to illustrate the complexity involved in aligning examinations with the CEFR.

Linking an examination to the CEFR is fundamentally an argument-building process centred on validity, requiring the examination to first establish its internal validity (the consistency and stability of the examination), the soundness of its construct (the degree to which a test actually measures the specific knowledge or skills it claims to measure), and the consistency of its results, before external validity (the degree to which exam results correspond to the level claimed within an external framework such as the CEFR) can be claimed (Martyniuk 2011: 8). Validity is central to the entire purpose of CEFR alignment. Without it, a claimed B1 level result carries no meaningful weight beyond the context in which the exam was taken. However, both the Year 9 Exam and the B1 Preliminary are institutional products, continuously developed and reviewed by teams of professionals, which suggests that validity is an ongoing concern rather than a one-time exercise, a point that connects directly to the limitations of the alignment process discussed in the following section.

A number of common challenges arise in the process of linking examinations to the CEFR. Firstly, it is reported that following the recommended procedures proves challenging without a complete set of calibrated performance samples and test items, which are essential both for standardisation training and for use in cross-validation studies (an independent verification process used to confirm that a test is accurately aligned to the claimed CEFR level) (Martyniuk 2011: 9). Secondly, the alignment procedures are frequently treated as a one-off exercise rather than being embedded in the ongoing test development process, undermining the consistent maintenance of standards across examination cycles (Martyniuk 2011: 9).

The *CEFR Handbook* (2022: 6) was designed to serve a broad audience, from policymakers and teacher educators to classroom teachers, while also supporting the technical processes that

alignment requires. Rather than investigating the alignment process itself, the CEFR serves as an analytical tool, the common framework that enables a meaningful comparison of different examinations in general and their reading components in particular. The following section introduces the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam, providing an overview of their structure and assessment criteria.

#### **1.4 The structure and grading system of Cambridge B1 Preliminary and Estonian Year 9 Examination**

The B1 Preliminary, as described in the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024: 5), consists of four components: reading, writing, listening and speaking. The four components together provide a complete overview of the candidates' language ability across all skills, and at approximately 2 hours and 12 minutes, the examination is designed to assess this comprehensively. As the present study focuses exclusively on the reading component, the remaining sections of the examination are not discussed further here. The 2024 B1 Preliminary practice test was selected as it is the most recent practice publication available at the time of writing and one that the author has used directly in teaching.

The *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024: 5) explains that candidates scoring between 140 and 159 points are awarded the B1 Preliminary English Test certificate at Level B1 (Grade B or C). Those achieving higher scores, between 160 and 170 points, receive a certificate at Grade A, indicating they have demonstrated ability at Level B2. In contrast, if candidates perform below the B1 threshold but score within the 120-139 range, they are issued a certificate stating they demonstrated ability at Level A2. The examination is therefore not limited to assessing B1 level alone; depending on their score, candidates may be assessed as performing at A2, B1 or B2 level, which is why it is necessary to address all three CEFR levels in this study.

The Year 9 Exam is similarly structured around four skills, governed by the *Eristuskiri* (2025), which serves as the foundational specification document for the examination. The 2025 version was chosen as it is the most recent and detailed version available at the time of writing. According to the *Eristuskiri* (2025: 6), the Year 9 Exam consists of four parts: listening, reading, writing and speaking, lasting 150 minutes in total. As this study focuses on the reading component, the remaining sections are not discussed further.

The Year 9 Exam in Estonia is designed so that a score of 50 percent or above corresponds to B1 level proficiency and a score of 90 percent or above corresponds to B1+, with scores below 50 percent suggesting performance below B1 level (Harno.b 2025: 4). This layered scoring structure is comparable to that of the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024), which similarly spans multiple CEFR levels depending on the candidates' score, though extending to B2 for its highest achieving candidates. As both examinations therefore cover a range of proficiency levels, the CEFR descriptors at A2, B1 and B2 level are presented in the following section to establish the reference framework for the analysis.

## **1.5 The CEFR reading descriptors**

Based on the reading skills identified in both examination specifications above, the following CEFR scales are relevant to the present analysis. The *CEFR CV* (2020) was selected as the primary reference for its descriptor scales, as it contains the most current and comprehensive set of CEFR descriptors available, replacing those of the original 2001 publication. The illustrative descriptor scales comprise independent, self-contained descriptors and are not principally designed for assessment purposes, nor do they constitute assessment scales in the conventional sense as the term is typically understood within the field of language assessment (COE 2020: 41). Since the focus of this study is on the reading components of the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam, only the relevant descriptors and materials are addressed here.

According to the *CEFR CV* (2020: 53), reading is categorised according to both purpose and genre, encompassing the following types: reading correspondence; reading for orientation, which includes skimming (reading a text rapidly to determine whether it should be read in more detail) and scanning (looking through a text rapidly to locate particular information); reading for information and argument; and reading as a leisure activity (reading undertaken for enjoyment rather than a specific informational purpose).

General reading descriptors in *CEFR CV* (2020: 54) are described as follows: the A2 level, readers can understand short, simple texts that use very common, everyday words about familiar topics. At B1, readers reach a satisfactory level of comprehension, being able to read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to their interests. Finally, at the B2 level, readers become much more independent. They can adapt their reading speed and style depending on the text, and while they have a large vocabulary, rare idioms may present a challenge.

Beyond the overall reading comprehension descriptors, the *CEFR CV* (2020) further categorises reading according to purpose and genre, each with its own scale describing the specific competences involved. The “Reading correspondence” scale describes the ability to understand personal and formal written communication of varying length, complexity and register (COE 2020: 54). The “Reading for orientation” scale describes the ability to skim and scan texts of varying types to locate specific information and assess relevance, with reading speed becoming a factor at B2 level (COE 2020: 55). The “Reading for information and argument” scale describes the ability to read texts carefully and in depth on subjects ranging from familiar everyday topics to more specialised areas, requiring varying depths of understanding (COE 2020: 56). The “Reading instructions” scale describes the ability to understand written directions and procedural texts, ranging from simple notices to detailed and complex instructions (COE 2020: 58). The “Reading as a leisure activity” scale describes the

ability to read fiction and non-fiction texts for pleasure across a wide range of text types, topics and levels of linguistic complexity (COE 2020: 58). Together these scales provide the analytical framework making it possible to assess whether the task types and texts used in each examination correspond to the expected reading competences at A2, B1 and B2 level.

In addition to the reading comprehension and purpose-based scales outlined above, the *CEFR CV* (2020: 59) identifies reception strategies, which describe the inferencing strategies readers use to support comprehension, including exploiting visual and structural text features such as illustrations, headings and formatting, deducing meaning from surrounding context, and using linguistic clues such as word roots, prefixes, suffixes and connectors to gather meaning. At A2 level, readers can use context, format and typographic features to identify text type and deduce the probable meaning of unknown words. At B1 level, readers are expected to draw on the text by exploiting titles, headings, logical and temporal connectors, and contextual clues to infer the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary. At B2 level, readers are expected to employ a broader range of comprehension strategies, actively identifying main points and verifying their understanding through contextual clues (COE 2020: 59).

The vocabulary range scale covers the range and variety of vocabulary a language user has at their disposal, from basic everyday words at lower levels to a rich pool of vocabulary including idioms and colloquialisms at higher levels. The *Companion Volume* explicitly notes that this scale applies to both reception activities (reading and oral comprehension) and production and interaction activities (oral and written) (COE 2020: 131), making it directly relevant to the assessment of reading tasks. By establishing what the CEFR describes as reading ability at A2, B1 and B2 level, it becomes possible to assess the degree to which the task types and texts used in both examinations correspond to the expected competences at those levels.

When assessing task complexity, two dimensions need to be considered: the linguistic demands of the reading text, evaluated against the vocabulary range and overall reading

comprehension scales, and the cognitive demands of the task itself, evaluated against the reception strategies scale and the purpose-based reading scales outlined above. While the CEFR descriptor scales provide the qualitative framework for the task analysis, automated text analysis tools offer a supporting quantitative assessment of text complexity, which is discussed in the following section.

## **1.6 Automated CEFR text analysis tools**

CEFR analysers are digital resources designed to evaluate text complexity against framework levels, facilitating an efficient analysis that guides both the creation of materials and classroom delivery (Siripol et al 2025: 3285). Generally, the simpler text analysers use a corpus or a vocabulary list and count words and measure sentence length (Siripol et al 2025: 3286). Unlike corpus-based tools, AI-powered analysers draw on advanced natural language processing (NLP - a branch of artificial intelligence that enables computers to analyse and interpret human language) techniques to evaluate a broader range of linguistic features, including vocabulary sophistication, grammatical complexity and sentence structure, using transformer-based architectures trained on diverse multilingual corpora (Siripol et al 2025: 3286). There are also tools that are validated against standardised English testing systems but use vocabulary lists and readability measures (Siripol et al 2025: 3285). Understanding how these tools function and what their limitations are is essential for interpreting the results they produce.

As most automated CEFR analysers generate quantitative results based on varying metrics, their ability to provide a descriptive account of a text's complexity remains limited (Siripol et al 2025: 3287). The main issue with various CEFR analysers is their credibility; many do not explain how they calculate their scores, making it difficult to verify whether the results accurately reflect CEFR levels. Research suggests that automated text level detection can be effective, though the quality of classification depends largely on the text corpus on

which the tool is based (Siripol et al 2025: 3284). The rapid development of artificial intelligence has given rise to a growing number of automated text analysis tools capable of estimating the CEFR level of reading texts. Instead of only using expert judgment, these tools assess text complexity more quickly and with less dependence on expert judgment. However, the considerable variation in results across tools for the same texts raises concerns about their reliability and standardisation, which are of direct relevance to educators, materials developers and language assessment professionals (Siripol et al 2025: 3290). To address these limitations, it has been recommended that quantitative tool results be interpreted alongside qualitative analysis, combining automated assessments with human judgment to provide a more comprehensive and reliable evaluation of text difficulty (Siripol et al 2025: 3292).

The literature review has provided the necessary background to support the analysis that follows, covering the CEFR framework, its alignment processes, the examination specifications and the tools used to assess text complexity.

## 2 THE ANALYSIS OF THE CAMBRIDGE B1 PRELIMINARY AND ESTONIAN YEAR 9 READING TASKS

### 2.1 Research questions, methodology and data

The present chapter analyses the reading tasks of the 2024 B1 Preliminary preparation materials and the 2025 Year 9 Exam. The research questions guiding this analysis are as follows: (1) to what extent are the reading tasks of the Cambridge B1 Preliminary exam materials and the Estonian Year 9 English Examination aligned with B1 level as presented in the CEFR? (2) To what extent are Cambridge B1 Preliminary materials suitable for preparing students for the Estonian Year 9 reading component?

The analysis begins with an overview and comparison of both examinations covering their structure, grading system and reading components. This is followed by a presentation of the automated CEFR text analysis tool results and a detailed manual task analysis of the reading tasks against the CEFR reading descriptor scales. The tasks are then compared and the findings discussed in relation to the research questions. The 2025 Year 9 Exam is selected as the most recent available, and a single exam year is chosen to keep the scope manageable. The 2024 B1 Preliminary practice test is selected as the most recent practice publication available at the time of writing, and one that the author has used directly in teaching.

The analysis is conducted in several steps. First, the reading texts are run through three automated CEFR text analysis tools, the Pearson GSE Text Analyzer, the Road to Grammar Text Analyzer and Claude AI, to obtain an initial assessment of text complexity. The results are summarised in Table 1. Where results vary significantly or vocabulary items are flagged at a higher level, these are noted for further investigation.

Second, the reading tasks and texts from both examinations are examined to establish what skills each task is designed to assess with reference to the specification documents: the *Eristuskiri* (2025) for the Year 9 Exam and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) for the

B1 Preliminary. The tasks and texts are then analysed manually against the CEFR reading descriptor scales presented in the literature review. During this stage, less frequent vocabulary items are verified using the online version of *Cambridge Dictionary* (n.d.) to confirm their CEFR level. The vocabulary range scale (see Appendix 1, Table 4) is used to assess vocabulary level, and the overall reading comprehension scale (see Appendix 1, Table 5) is used to determine the general reading level. The reception strategies scale (see Appendix 1, Table 3) is applied to identify the inferencing and linguistic skills required and then each text is also categorised according to the relevant purpose-based reading scale: reading correspondence, reading for orientation, reading for information and argument or reading as a leisure activity (see Appendix 1, Table 5), with some texts fitting more than one category. Both text complexity and task demands are assessed separately and the findings for each task are summarised in a table (see Table 2).

Finally, the tasks from both examinations are compared with each other to assess the degree to which the task types and task demands are similar, and to determine whether the B1 Preliminary materials provide adequate preparation for the Year 9 Exam reading component.

## **2.2 The format of the reading components of the Cambridge B1 Preliminary and Estonian Year 9 Examination**

According to the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024: 7), the reading paper of the Preliminary consists of six parts and 32 questions to be completed within 45 minutes, with each question worth one point. It includes a three-option multiple choice task, a matching task, a four-option multiple choice task, a gapped longer text with five sentences missing, a four-option multiple-choice cloze task and an open cloze task. They require candidates to read a short text and identify its main message, demonstrate detailed comprehension of the text, show understanding of detailed content, gist, inference, global meaning, and the writer's attitude and opinion, show awareness of how clear and well-structured texts are formed, choose the correct

vocabulary for the gaps in the text and demonstrate their grammatical knowledge and demonstrate their knowledge of grammatical structures, phrasal verbs, and fixed phrases. The text genres in the reading part might include notices and signs, packaging information, notes, emails, cards, text messages and postcards, newspapers and magazines, simplified encyclopaedia entries and other non-fiction books, brochures and leaflets, and websites (Cambridge 2024: 7).

In contrast to the *BI Preliminary Handbook* (2024), the *Eristuskiri* (2025: 6) describes the reading component of the examination as four tasks completed within 60 minutes, with a maximum total score of 30 points. The reading tasks require candidates to demonstrate a range of reading comprehension sub-skills, including understanding essential information in authentic everyday texts, detailed comprehension and locating specific information; drawing conclusions and understanding indirectly presented information; understanding the line of argumentation, sequence of events and linking devices within a text; linguistic accuracy and vocabulary range; and the formation and use of grammatical forms and spelling.

Unlike the *BI Preliminary Handbook* (2024), which describes six reading task types, the *Eristuskiri* (2025: 7) outlines five possible task types. The tasks require candidates to select the correct answer from three given options, match a heading, statement or question with a text passage, match sentences, parts of sentences or paragraphs removed from the text back into the text, select the correct word from a given set and form the correct word form. They assess the understanding of the main idea, detailed comprehension and the ability to locate specific information, the ability to draw conclusions and understanding of implicitly presented information, understanding of the line of argumentation or sequence of events, and understanding of cohesive links within the text, linguistic accuracy and range of vocabulary and the knowledge of grammatical forms and spelling. In the Year 9 Exam there is no open cloze task.

However, the 2025 Year 9 Exam paper contains only four tasks, meaning that candidates may practise all five task types in preparation but are assessed on four in the actual examination. This could be seen as a positive feature, as the candidates are exposed to a broader range of task types during preparation, while the actual examination is slightly less demanding in terms of task variety, while still assessing the expected learning outcomes of grade 9.

The *Eristuskiri* (2025) and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) approach content specification differently. The *Eristuskiri* (2025) specifies the reading text genres: including letters and notices, news and feature articles, reviews, promotional texts, announcements, interviews and literary texts, and states that the total length of reading texts is approximately 1200 words. As the national curriculum does not prescribe specific vocabulary and grammar topics, the *Eristuskiri* (2025) relies on The *B1 Preliminary and Preliminary for Schools Vocabulary List* (henceforth *B1 Preliminary Vocabulary*) (2025) as external reference frameworks for topic selection. The *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024), by contrast, provides its own vocabulary list directly, offering a more self-contained reference for candidates and teachers. The *B1 Preliminary Vocabulary* (2025) specifies the topics: ‘clothes and accessories’; ‘colours’; ‘communications and technology’; ‘education’; ‘entertainment and media’; ‘environment’; ‘food and drink’; ‘health, medicine and exercise’; ‘hobbies and leisure’; ‘house and home’; ‘language’; ‘personal feelings’; ‘opinions and experiences (adjectives)’; ‘places: buildings, countryside, town and city’; ‘services’; ‘shopping’; ‘sport’; ‘the natural world’; ‘time’; ‘travel and transport’.

A comparison of the two topic lists reveals both overlaps and notable differences. The *B1 Preliminary Vocabulary* (2025) covers specific everyday categories such as ‘clothes and accessories’; ‘food and drink’; ‘health and medicine’; and ‘travel and transport’, while the Year 9 Exam organises content around wider thematic categories. Many *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) topics can be included under the *Eristuskiri* (2025) category of ‘me and others’, which

encompasses personal feelings, opinions, hobbies and leisure. However, a significant distinction is that the *Eristuskiri* (2025) includes location-specific topics, particularly ‘home’, ‘local environment and Estonia as home’ and ‘countries and their culture’, which have no direct equivalent in the *B1 Preliminary Vocabulary* (2025) topic framework. This is understandable given that the two examinations were created in different contexts with different aims: *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) materials are designed for international use and cannot be expected to include location-specific cultural content about Estonia.

Having established an overview of both reading components, the analysis proceeds to examine the task complexity using automated CEFR text analysis tools before moving to the manual task analysis against the CEFR descriptor scales.

### **2.3 Text complexity analysis using automated tools**

In order to analyse the complexity level of the reading texts in both the B1 Preliminary and the Year 9 Exam, three automated online text analysis tools were employed: the Pearson GSE Text Analyzer, the Road to Grammar Text Analyzer, and Claude AI. The Pearson GSE Text Analyzer and the Road to Grammar Text Analyzer were selected due to their widespread use in language education research, both tools are freely available, have no text length restrictions and are user friendly. Claude AI was included to compare the results of an AI-powered language model against more traditional corpus-based tools to compare how different types of tools assess text complexity.

The Pearson GSE Text Analyzer is an AI-powered tool that estimates the proficiency level of a text on both the Global Scale of English (GSE) and the corresponding CEFR scale, accepting texts of between 10 and 500 words (Pearson n.d.). The Road to Grammar Text Analyzer estimates the CEFR level of a text by comparing each word against a list of the 10,000 most frequently used words in English, taking into account both word complexity and average sentence length (Road to Grammar n.d.). Claude AI (Anthropic 2025) does not function like a

traditional software with a *fixed* scoring engine. Instead, it uses pattern recognition and probabilistic reasoning based on its training data, which includes thousands of CEFR-aligned texts. Each reading text from both examinations was analysed using the selected tools, and the results were compared to assess the consistency of the text level assignments in relation to the claimed B1 level of both examinations.

The tools often produced discrepant results. Notably, the format in which data was entered into the Road to Grammar Text Analyzer affected the results, when answer options were copied as a list, the assessed level was higher than when the same information was presented line by line. The input format issue was identified after the Road to Grammar Text Analyzer assigned a C2 level to one task, which is not consistent with a B1 level examination and prompted further investigation into how the data had been entered. It was also noted that Claude AI assigned the same CEFR level to all texts, which is unexpected given that both examinations acknowledge higher proficiency levels for stronger candidates (B2 for the B1 Preliminary and B1+ for the Year 9 Exam); some variation in the text complexity would therefore be expected. To investigate this further, several tests were conducted with Claude AI using different input formats: the full text with the task instructions, the text without the task, the full text and task descriptions with the answer options included, and the text with answers only. Despite these variations, Claude AI consistently assigned B1 level to all tasks regardless of input format. It is possible that it identified the texts as belonging to a specific B1 level examination and assigned the level on that basis.

This highlights an important methodological limitation that needs to be taken into account when interpreting the results. The full results of the automated text analysis are presented in Table 1. Overall, the tasks received similar level assessments, ranging from B1 to B2, with one exception at C1 level. The following discussion focuses on the tasks with the most discrepant results.

**Table 1.** CEFR Level Assessments of Reading Texts by Automated Tools

|                                                               | <b>Pearson GSE<br/>Text Analyzer</b> | <b>Road to<br/>Grammar Text<br/>Analyzer</b> | <b>Claude AI</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Cambridge B1 Preliminary practice reading tasks (2024)</b> |                                      |                                              |                  |
| Part 1                                                        | B1                                   | B2                                           | B1               |
| Part 2                                                        | B1+                                  | B1                                           | B1               |
| Part 3                                                        | B1+                                  | B1                                           | B1               |
| Part 4                                                        | B1+                                  | B2                                           | B1               |
| Part 5                                                        | B1+                                  | C1                                           | B1               |
| Part 6                                                        | B1                                   | B2                                           | B1               |
| <b>Estonian Year 9 Examination reading tasks (2025)</b>       |                                      |                                              |                  |
| Task 1                                                        | B2                                   | B2                                           | B1               |
| Task 2                                                        | B1                                   | B1                                           | B1               |
| Task 3                                                        | B1+                                  | B2                                           | B1               |
| Task 4                                                        | B1+                                  | B2                                           | B1               |

The text of Part 4 received three different results (B1, B1+ and B2), with each tool giving a different assessment. This may be because it is a longer gapped text containing some B2 level vocabulary, and it is possible that only some of the tools account for the proportion of higher-level words in the text. The Part 5 received results of B1, B1+, C1 with no B2 level result. The C1 assessment is notable given that the text is very short. A comparison with Part 6, which is of similar length but requires candidates to supply answers independently rather than select from given options, is noteworthy as the same tool assessed Part 6 at B2 level.

Similarly to the B1 Preliminary, the most discrepant results in the Year 9 Exam were found in the final text. Task 3 received three different assessments: B1, B1+ and B2. It is a matching task with several short texts containing some B2 level vocabulary and proper nouns, both of which may affect the level assessment differently across tools. Task 4 also received varied results: B1, B1+ and B2. This might be because of the text having words in brackets in their base forms, which could be on lower frequency and move the CEFR level up.

In summary, the three tools produced notably different results. Claude AI assigned B1 level to all tasks, which is not consistent with the expectation that both examinations contain texts of varying complexity to differentiate between candidates. The findings suggest that

Claude AI, as a large language model, is not well suited to this type of text level assessment task and that its results require critical evaluation. This may be a useful finding for future researchers considering the use of AI-powered language models for similar analyses. The Pearson GSE Text Analyzer produced the most consistent and plausible results, with the majority of tasks assessed at B1+ level, two at B1 and one at B2, a distribution that aligns with the grading structures described in both the *Eristuskiri* (2025) and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024), which acknowledge the possibility of higher level results for stronger candidates. The Road to Grammar Text Analyzer produced the most variable results, with three of the texts at B1 level, six at B2 and one at C1, with no B1+ level results. The absence of B1+ results suggests the tool may not support half-level assessments. The C1 result is difficult to account for, and when the same text was tested with a different input format, the tool returned a C2 level assessment, a result that is not plausible for a B1 level examination. These variations highlight the inherent limitations of automated analysis, as different algorithms may prioritise different linguistic features. Given this lack of uniformity, the automated scores are treated as preliminary estimates to be interpreted alongside the qualitative CEFR-based analysis.

Having established an initial assessment of text complexity using automated tools, the following sections present the manual analysis, which examines three distinct aspects of each task: the vocabulary level of the text, the text type and genre, and the cognitive demands of the task itself. These three aspects are analysed separately to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of both the reading texts and what the candidate is required to do with them.

## **2.4 Analysis of the Cambridge Preliminary B1 reading tasks**

The B1 Preliminary reading component consists of six tasks (called “parts” in the examination paper and therefore marked P1, P2, P3 etc in *Table 2* below), each testing different skills ranging from text comprehension to grammatical knowledge. The task types include multiple choice, matching, gap-fill and open cloze tasks. Each task is analysed on two levels:

the properties of the reading text, including its genre, topic and vocabulary, and the task demands, that is, what the candidates are required to do to complete the task. The findings for all tasks are summarised alongside the Year 9 Exam results in Table 2 in the following section.

The original task materials are presented in Appendix 2.

**Table 2.** CEFR Descriptor Analysis of Cambridge B1 Preliminary and Estonian Year 9 Exam Reading Tasks

|                                      | <b>Cambridge B1 Preliminary<br/>(2024)</b> |           |           |           |           |           | <b>Estonian Year 9 Exam<br/>(2025)</b> |           |           |           |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                                      | <b>P1</b>                                  | <b>P2</b> | <b>P3</b> | <b>P4</b> | <b>P5</b> | <b>P6</b> | <b>T1</b>                              | <b>T2</b> | <b>T3</b> | <b>T4</b> |
| <b>Vocabulary range</b>              | A2                                         | A2        | B1        | B1+       | A2        | B1        | B1                                     | B2        | B1+       | B1+       |
| <b>Reception strategies</b>          | A2                                         | B1        | B2        | B1        | B2        | B2        | B1                                     | B1        | B1        | B1        |
| <b>Overall reading comprehension</b> | A2                                         | B1        | B1+       | B1        | A2        | B1        | B1                                     | B1        | B1        | B1        |
| Reading correspondence               | B1                                         |           |           |           |           |           |                                        |           |           |           |
| Reading for orientation              |                                            | B1        | B1        |           |           |           |                                        |           | B1        |           |
| Reading for information and argument |                                            | B1        | B1        | B1        | B1        |           | B1                                     | B1        | B1        | B1        |
| Reading instructions                 | B1                                         |           |           |           |           |           |                                        |           |           |           |
| Reading as a leisure activity        |                                            |           | B1        |           |           | B1        |                                        |           |           |           |
| <b>Task difficulty</b>               | B1                                         | B1+       | B2        | B1+       | B1+       | B2        | B1                                     | B1        | B2        | B1+       |
| <b>Total CEFR level</b>              | B1                                         | B1+       | B1+       | B1+       | B1+       | B1+       | B1                                     | B1        | B1+       | B1+       |

Part 1 (see Appendix 2) presents five short real-world texts of varying types (a walker's notice, library sign, a text message, a missing cat notice and a student travel card notice). In terms of text properties, the texts use familiar everyday language with high frequency vocabulary on concrete everyday topics with the vocabulary range on A2 level (see Appendix 1, Table 4). The texts are short and not complex, which places them at A2. In terms of task demands, the candidates must choose the correct answer from three similar options for each text, which requires detailed reading to discriminate between similar meanings. The similar answer options make the task slightly more demanding than the texts alone would suggest. The reception strategies are at A2 (see Appendix 1, Table 3), as the texts are very short, and the

overall meaning is quickly and easily found. The task corresponds to the following B1 CEFR descriptor scales: “Reading instructions” and “Reading correspondence” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). The overall level of the task is B1, as the simplicity of the texts is balanced by the cognitive demand of choosing between similar answer options.

Part 2 (see Appendix 2) features two sections: five short descriptions of young people interested in visiting a science festival and eight short descriptions of various science festival event brochures. Although the total length of the task is long due to the number of texts, the individual texts are short and use high frequency vocabulary at A2 level (see Appendix 1, Table 4) with only a few less frequent words. In terms of task demands, the candidates are asked to match the five descriptions of young people to the eight science festival event descriptions, demonstrating detailed comprehension at B1+ level. There are more texts than people to match, meaning that elimination alone is insufficient. The similar content of the events demands more thorough and time-consuming reading to differentiate between them. The reception strategies are at lower end of B1 (see Appendix 1, Table 3), as the texts are short and the festival event titles are straightforward, making the overall meaning quickly accessible. The task corresponds to the following B1 CEFR descriptor scales: “Reading for information and argument” and “Reading for orientation” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). The overall level of the task is at B1+, as the texts are accessible at A2 to B1 level, but the task demands push it higher, requiring comprehensive reading to differentiate between similar options without the possibility of elimination.

Part 3 (see Appendix 2) contains a longer article about creating a school garden, it is a straightforward text on a familiar everyday topic, accompanied by five questions each with four answer options. In terms of text properties, it has mostly high frequency vocabulary, but it includes some less frequent items: at B1 level ‘annoyed’, ‘amazed’, ‘tasty’, ‘prepared’, ‘disappointed’, ‘keen’ and at B2 level ‘impressed’, ‘growing’, ‘developed’, ‘originally’,

‘fence’, placing the overall vocabulary range at B1 level (see Appendix 1, Table 4). In terms of task demands, the candidates must choose the correct answer from four options that are not directly stated in the text, requiring detailed comprehension, gist and inference skills, which corresponds to B2 level reception strategies (see Appendix 1, Table 3). The task corresponds to the following B1 CEFR descriptor scales: “Reading for information and argument”, “Reading as a leisure activity”, and “Reading for orientation” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). Although the text in its complexity is at B1+, vocabulary at B1 level and the task demands correspond to B2 level, the overall task is assessed at B1+ level.

Part 4 (see Appendix 2) features a longer article about the gymnast Nadia Comăneci, from which five sentences have been removed, with eight sentence options provided to fill the gaps. In terms of text properties, the vocabulary range is generally at A2 level (see Appendix 1, Table 4) but includes some less frequent items: at B1 level 'gymnastics', 'spectacular', 'directly', 'amazingly' and 'talent', and at B2 level 'retired', 'setting', 'developed' and 'moreover', pushing the overall vocabulary to B1+ level. In terms of task demands, the candidates must select the correct sentence from eight options, three of which are extra and do not fit. The extra sentences are not similar in meaning, which makes the selection process clearer once the overall meaning of the text is understood. However, a good understanding of both the surrounding text and the overall text flow is necessary to find the correct answer, consistent with B1 level reception strategies (see Appendix 1, Table 3), though the task difficulty reaches B1+ level. The task corresponds to the B1 CEFR descriptor scale of “Reading for information and argument” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). The text is at B1+ level in terms of vocabulary, and completing the task requires the candidates to understand both the surrounding text and the overall flow of the text to find the correct answer, which raises the overall task level to B1+.

Part 5 (see Appendix 2) presents a short article or a simplified encyclopaedia entry about garlic, an everyday topic using familiar high frequency vocabulary at A2 level (see

Appendix 1, Table 4). With only seven sentences the text itself is at A2 level. In terms of task demands, the candidates must choose the correct answer from four options to fill the gap, making guessing difficult and requiring genuine knowledge of collocations and good vocabulary range. The options given are very similar in meaning, for example, the first gap offers 'styles', 'types', 'ranges' and 'contents', demonstrating that the candidates need a good knowledge of vocabulary, grammatical accuracy and complementation (a grammatical structure in which a word, phrase or clause is required to complete the meaning of another word). This also pushes the reception strategies to B2 level (see Appendix 1, Table 3). The task corresponds to the B1 CEFR descriptor scale of “Reading for information and argument” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). The task assesses vocabulary knowledge and grammatical accuracy alongside reading comprehension, with the emphasis falling more heavily on language knowledge than on text comprehension. As the text itself is at A2 level but the task demands are more challenging, the overall task level is assessed at B1+.

Part 6 (see Appendix 2) contains a very short story about working in a bicycle repair shop. The story is short with overall vocabulary at A2 but still includes a few less frequent words: at B1 level ‘manage’, ‘teenage’, ‘gap’, ‘obviously’ and at B2 level ‘fixed’, which raises the vocabulary range to lower B1 level (see Appendix 1, Table 4). In terms of task demands, the candidates must complete each gap with one word without options given, requiring independent production of the grammatical structure, phrasal verb or fixed phrase. While the answers are not complex once identified, the absence of options makes this more cognitively demanding than multiple choice or word bank tasks, which puts the task difficulty at B2. The reception strategies here are at B2 level (see Appendix 1, Table 3), indicating the need for good comprehension and use of contextual clues. The task corresponds to the B1 CEFR descriptor scale of “Reading as a leisure activity” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). Although the task difficulty is at B2 level, the overall task is assessed at B1+ level, as the text is very short and the number

of gaps is limited, which reduces the overall cognitive demand. The absence of options nonetheless makes this the most cognitively demanding task in the B1 Preliminary reading component.

Overall, the six B1 Preliminary reading tasks present a varied and well-structured assessment of reading ability. While the difficulty fluctuates across the tasks rather than progressing linearly, there is a general pattern whereby more demanding task requirements are balanced by shorter or simpler texts, keeping the overall level consistently at B1 to B1+ throughout. The final two tasks are the shortest in terms of text length, yet they are among the most cognitively demanding. Task 6, which requires independent word production without options, demonstrates that text length alone does not determine task difficulty. Taken together, the six tasks cover all relevant CEFR purpose-based reading scales, while also assessing vocabulary across a range from A2 to B2 level, reception strategies at varying levels, and grammatical knowledge. The variety of tasks ensures that the reading component tests more than just text comprehension as language knowledge and analytical skills are also assessed. The analysis shows that the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) reading tasks are broadly at B1+ level, which is appropriate given that the Cambridge Assessment English awards a B2 certificate to its highest achievers. Tasks set at a straightforward B1 level would not adequately differentiate between candidates or justify the B2 award; the slightly higher task demand serves this purpose while keeping the examination accessible to B1 level candidates.

## **2.5 Analysis of the Estonian 2025 Year 9 Examination reading tasks**

The Year 9 Exam reading component consists of four tasks ranging from gap-fill and matching to multiple choice. While the *Eristuskiri* (2025) describes five possible task types, the actual examination paper contains four tasks, meaning the candidates can practise all five task types in preparation but are assessed on four in the actual exam. Unlike the B1 Preliminary, which only provides practice materials, the Year 9 Exam tasks analysed here are taken from

the actual 2025 examination paper. The same two-level analysis applied to the B1 Preliminary tasks is used here, with the findings summarised in Table 2.

Task 1 (see Appendix 3) features a short feature article on an environmental swimmer with a word bank of function words and grammatical forms to fill the gaps; the text is not very complicated, and the vocabulary range is at lower B1 level (see Appendix 1, Table 4) with very few lower frequency words. The task requires the candidates to read and decide which word best fits into each gap. The word bank options are similar in meaning, which helps the candidates demonstrate knowledge of prepositions, articles, linking words and basic grammar forms, placing the task difficulty at B1. Reception strategies are also at B1 level (see Appendix 1, Table 3), demanding basic text comprehension and grammar skills. The task corresponds to the B1 CEFR descriptor scale of “Reading for information and argument” (see Appendix 1). The task is primarily a language knowledge task by design but requires a degree of reading comprehension to select contextually appropriate answers which puts the overall level at B1.

Task 2 (see Appendix 3) presents a longer feature article about building a gardening business written in informal language, accompanied by seven incomplete statements each with three possible options to complete them. The overall vocabulary range is at B2 (see Appendix 1, Table 4) with some less frequent words at: B1 ‘brand-new’, ‘guys’, ‘provide’, ‘proud’, ‘aim’, ‘working’, ‘option’, at B2 ‘reputation’, ‘values’, ‘statement’, ‘headquarters’, ‘gardening’ and at C1 level ‘long-time’, ‘focus’. The task requires the candidates to read the text and decide which option correctly completes each statement; requiring comprehensive reading and B1 level reception strategies (see Appendix 1, Table 3) to locate information and deduce meaning from the text. The options themselves are dissimilar, meaning that strong text comprehension makes it straightforward to choose the correct option, placing the task difficulty at B1 level. The task corresponds to the B1 CEFR descriptor scale of “Reading for information and

argument” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). Although the vocabulary range reaches B2 level, the task difficulty is not very high placing the overall task at B1 level.

Task 3 (see Appendix 3) contains five short reviews about different alternative high schools in the US with nine statements about the texts. The vocabulary range is at B1+ (see Appendix 1, Table 4) containing some B2 level vocabulary, for example, ‘household’, ‘inspire’, ‘curiosity’, ‘fixed’, ‘philosophy’, ‘creatively’, ‘growing’, ‘nationwide’. The task asks the candidates to read and decide which text each statement is about. The statements can be used more than once, which prevents eliminations and demands a detailed comprehension, pushing the task difficulty to B2. The candidates need to derive meaning from the context, with the reception strategies being at B1 level (see Appendix 1, Table 3). The task corresponds to the following B1 CEFR descriptor scales: “Reading for orientation” and “Reading for information and argument” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). The texts are accessible at B1 level with the vocabulary at B1+ level, but the tasks’ cognitive demand places the difficulty at B2. However, as the texts are short, the overall task is placed at B1+ level.

Task 4 (see Appendix 3) features a short notice about a job opportunity at a post office in Antarctica, with base form of words given in brackets throughout the text. The vocabulary is mostly familiar with some less frequent B2 level words such as ‘contribute’, ‘traditionally’, ‘base’, ‘physical’, ‘magical’, ‘unique’, which push the vocabulary range to B1+ (see Appendix 1, Table 4). The task requires the candidates to produce the correct word form from the base form given in brackets to complete each gap. The task is primarily a language knowledge task requiring morphological and grammatical knowledge, but text comprehension is also essential to form a contextually correct word form, putting the task difficulty at B1+ level. Due to the need for good reading comprehension and word recognition, the reception strategies are at B1 level (see Appendix 1, Table 3). The task corresponds to the B1 CEFR descriptor scale of “Reading for information and argument” (see Appendix 1, Table 5). The text itself is short, but

the presence of some less frequent vocabulary, and the need for morphological and grammatical knowledge push the overall level to B1+.

Overall, the four Year 9 Exam reading tasks present a progression from B1 to B1+ level. The first task is the most straightforward, with vocabulary at B1 level and a task difficulty that is consistent with B1, making it the most accessible of the four tasks. The second task features a higher vocabulary range reaching B2 level, but as it is primarily a reading comprehension task with answers directly locatable in the text, the overall level remains at B1. The third and fourth tasks both sit at B1+ level overall: the third due to the cognitive demand of matching statements that can be reused, which prevents elimination and raises the task difficulty to B2, and the fourth due to the morphological and grammatical knowledge required to produce the correct word form. In both cases, the shortness of the texts keeps the overall level from reaching B2. The reading component as a whole covers a range of task types and reading skills, with vocabulary ranging from B1 to B2 level and task demands ranging from B1 to B2, placing the overall reading component firmly at B1 to B1+ level.

## **2.6 Comparison of the reading tasks of the two exams**

Both examinations operate a grading system whereby above-average performance indicates a higher level of proficiency. Candidates achieving above-average results in the B1 Preliminary receive a B2 certificate, while their counterparts in the Year 9 Exam are awarded a B1+ classification. In terms of structure, the B1 Preliminary reading component consists of six parts with a maximum of 32 points completed in 45 minutes, whereas the Year 9 Exam reading component comprises four parts with a maximum of 30 points completed in 60 minutes. Both examinations include three-option multiple choice, matching and gap-fill tasks. The B1 Preliminary additionally contains a four-option multiple choice cloze task and an open cloze task, which are absent from the Year 9 Exam. The *Eristuskiri* (2025: 6) specifically identifies two tasks assessing the range and accuracy of vocabulary and grammar. Both

examinations draw on a variety of everyday text types, including newspaper articles, literary texts and non-fiction, among others. A notable difference, however, is that Cambridge Assessment English awards a formal B2 certificate to its highest achievers, while Harno in Estonia uses the B1+ designation.

Both the *Eristuskiri* (2025) and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) clearly identify which skills each task assesses, including both reading comprehension and language knowledge. In the B1 Preliminary preparation materials, the first four tasks focus on reading comprehension while the last two directly test vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. In the Year 9 Exam, three tasks focus on reading comprehension while one assesses vocabulary and grammatical knowledge. Both examinations combine reading comprehension with language knowledge assessment, suggesting that B1 Preliminary materials provide relevant preparation for the Year 9 Exam in this respect. The B1 Preliminary materials test grammatical knowledge in two tasks compared to one in the Year 9 Exam, which is partly a consequence of having more tasks overall, but also means that B1 Preliminary materials provide more extensive practice of grammatical knowledge within a reading context. It is also notable that both examinations featured texts on similar topics in the years analysed, including gardening, a female athlete and school-related content, suggesting that B1 Preliminary material preparation would already have familiarised candidates with these topics, though whether this is consistent across years would require further investigation.

The following comparison examines the tasks by type. Part 1 and Task 2 are both three-option multiple choice tasks. Part 1 features different short texts whereas Task 2 is a longer article about a gardening business. The vocabulary range is very different: Part 1 is at A2 and Task 2 at B2, as Task 2 presents the longest text in the Year 9 Exam with many less frequent words, pushing the vocabulary range higher. Reception strategies are also dissimilar; Part 1 texts are not very demanding to comprehend, whereas Task 2 requires more time to read and

process. The task difficulty is at the same level for both, at B1, and the overall level is also B1. This demonstrates that text length does not determine the level of the task.

Part 2 and Task 3 are both matching tasks. Part 2 asks candidates to match people to science festival event descriptions while Task 3 requires matching different high school descriptions to the correct statement, which can be used more than once. The vocabulary range differs: Part 2 is at A2 while Task 3 is at B1+. Reception strategies are at B1 for both, though task difficulty differs: Part 2 is at B1+ and Task 3 at B2, as the statements in Task 3 can be used more than once, making elimination impossible. The overall level is the same for both at B1+, though Part 2 sits at the lower end and Task 3 at the higher end of that range.

Part 3 is a gapped article about creating a school garden, which is a similar text type to Task 2, which is an article about a gardening business, though the evaluation results differ considerably. The vocabulary range is at B1 for Part 3 and B2 for Task 2, as Task 2 is a longer text with less frequent words. Reception strategies are at B2 for Part 3, as good overall reading comprehension is necessary to identify the correct answer from four similar options, and at B1 for Task 2. Task difficulty is at B2 for Part 3 due to the four answer options requiring careful discrimination, while Task 2 is at B1 as answers are directly locatable in the text. Overall, Part 3 is slightly more demanding at B1+ compared to Task 2 at B1.

Part 4 is a longer gapped text requiring candidates to select the correct sentence from a list of options, comparable to Task 3 in which statements are matched to texts. Both are assessed at the same task difficulty of B2 and overall level of B1+. Part 5 is a short multiple choice cloze task with four options, which is similar in type to Task 1 but tests different linguistic knowledge: Task 1 tests function words and grammatical forms whereas Part 5 tests content words, specifically collocations and vocabulary range. The task difficulty is at B1+ for Part 5 and B1 for Task 1, with the overall level at B1+ for Part 5 and B1 for Task 1.

Part 6 is a short open cloze task where candidates must supply one word independently. Although there is no equivalent open cloze task in the Year 9 Exam, it is comparable to Task 4 where candidates must form the correct word from a given base form. The vocabulary range is at B1 for Part 6 and B1+ for Task 4, reception strategies at B2 for Part 6 and B1 for Task 4, and task difficulty at B2 for Part 6 and B1+ for Task 4. The overall level is B1+ for both. Although these are different task types, Part 6 provides valuable practice for the type of independent language production required in Task 4, giving candidates the opportunity to draw on their own linguistic knowledge.

The analysis shows that although not all task types are identical across the two examinations, they are sufficiently similar to make B1 Preliminary materials effective preparation material. Both examinations demonstrate a similar pattern whereby shorter, less complex texts tend to have more demanding task requirements, keeping the overall level consistently at B1 to B1+. These findings provide the basis for addressing the research questions, which are discussed in the following section.

## **2.7 Results and discussion**

The analysis demonstrates that the reading tasks of both examinations are well aligned with B1 level as described in the *CEFR CV* (COE 2020). The alignment is evident at multiple levels: the vocabulary range, reception strategies and purpose-based reading scales are all clearly recognisable in the tasks of both examinations. This alignment works through a chain: the CEFR CV provides broad guidelines rather than prescriptive specifications, which means that documents such as the *Eristuskiri* (2025) and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) serve the essential function of translating those guidelines into concrete task descriptions that can be used in practice. Both documents make this connection clear - their wording and terminology closely reflects the language of the *CEFR CV*, which is to be expected given that both are grounded in the same framework. The fact that both the *Eristuskiri* and the *B1 Preliminary*

*Handbook* (2024) are regularly reviewed and updated by their respective governing bodies, Harno in Estonia and Cambridge Assessment English internationally, suggests that the alignment procedures are an ongoing process, and that the claimed alignment with B1 level can be trusted.

The analysis of the reading component supports the conclusion that B1 Preliminary materials are suitable for preparing students for the Year 9 Exam reading component. Comparing the skills described in the *Eristuskiri* (2025) with the demands of the B1 Preliminary tasks, a clear overlap emerges: the B1 Preliminary tasks address all the skills required by the *Eristuskiri* (2025) and in some cases provide additional practice, as B1 Preliminary has more tasks overall. The open cloze task, which is not present in the Year 9 Exam, offers valuable extra practice in independent language production. Similarly, while the Year 9 Exam word formation task has no direct equivalent in B1 Preliminary, the grammatical knowledge it requires is practised through other B1 Preliminary tasks. Both examinations also featured similar topics in the years analysed, texts about gardening, a female athlete and school-related content, though whether this overlap is consistent across years would require further investigation, as the materials compared are from different years.

The use of automated CEFR text analysis tools in this study revealed both their potential and their limitations. The automated tools provided a quick initial assessment but required careful critical evaluation. The manual analysis in this study attempted to address the cognitive validity of the tasks by assessing both text complexity and task demands separately, rather than relying solely on automated tool results. The significant discrepancies between tools highlighted the importance of applying judgement about what each tool actually measures and how data is entered. Most notably, AI-powered language models were found to be unsuitable for this type of text level assessment task. This is a useful finding for future researchers considering the use of AI-powered language models for similar analyses.

The findings of this study have direct implications for language teaching practice. B1 Preliminary materials provide varied and challenging practice that builds candidates' confidence across a wider range of task types than those tested in the Year 9 Exam. A combined approach – B1 Preliminary materials for varied task practice and the past Year 9 Exam papers for format familiarisation – would provide a well-rounded preparation strategy for Year 9 candidates. As the *CEFR CV* (COE 2020: 131) notes, vocabulary range applies to both receptive and productive skills, meaning that reading preparation builds language skills that extend beyond reading alone. It should be noted, however, that this study examined only the reading component of both examinations. To gain a complete picture of whether B1 Preliminary materials are suitable preparation for the Year 9 Exam as a whole, all four skills would need to be studied. Additionally, analysing multiple years of the Year 9 Exam would allow for more well-founded conclusions about the consistency of task types, difficulty levels and topic coverage over time.

## CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine two research questions: to what extent are the reading tasks of the Cambridge B1 Preliminary and the Estonian Year 9 English Examination aligned with B1 level as presented in the CEFR, and to what extent are Cambridge B1 Preliminary materials suitable for preparing students for the Estonian Year 9 reading component.

The analysis demonstrates that both examinations are well aligned with B1 level. The reading tasks in both examinations correspond clearly to the CEFR reading descriptor scales: the vocabulary range, reception strategies and purpose-based reading scales are all clearly recognisable in the tasks of both examinations. This alignment works through a chain: the *CEFR CV* (2020) provides broad guidelines rather than prescriptive specifications, and documents such as the *Eristuskiri* (2025) and the *B1 Preliminary Handbook* (2024) translate those guidelines into concrete task descriptions. The alignment process for both examinations has been conducted by established governing bodies - Harno in Estonia and Cambridge Assessment English internationally - which suggests that the alignment is an ongoing and reliable process.

The analysis also confirms that B1 Preliminary materials are suitable for preparing students for the Year 9 Exam reading component. Comparing the skills described in the *Eristuskiri* (2025) with the demands of the B1 Preliminary tasks, a clear overlap in reading skill emerges and, in some cases, provide additional practice. Both examinations also featured similar topics in the years analysed, though whether this is consistent across years would require further investigation. The task-by-task comparison also revealed a consistent pattern across both examinations: shorter, less complex texts tend to have more demanding task requirements, keeping the overall level at B1 to B1+. The findings of this study have direct implications for language teaching practice. Using B1 Preliminary materials for varied task

practice and past Year 9 Exams papers for format familiarisation would provide a well-rounded preparation strategy for teachers working with Year 9 candidates.

The use of automated CEFR text analysis tools in this study revealed both their potential and their limitations. The tools provided a quick initial assessment but required careful critical evaluation. Most notably, AI-powered language models were found to be unsuitable for this type of text level assessment task. This is a useful finding for future researchers considering the use of AI-powered language models for similar analyses.

Several other limitations of this study should be acknowledged. The analysis was limited to the reading component of one year of each examination. Language skills are inherently interconnected and cannot be fully separated - the reading component also tests grammatical and vocabulary knowledge, which means that a strict separation of skills is not fully achievable. To gain a complete picture of whether B1 Preliminary materials are suitable preparation for the Year 9 Exam as a whole, all four skills would need to be studied. Additionally, analysing multiple years of the Year 9 Exam would allow for more well-founded conclusions about the consistency of task types, difficulty levels and topic coverage over time. The reasons why the Cambridge B1 Preliminary awards B2 to its highest achievers while the Estonian Year 9 Examination uses B1+ are not addressed in either specification document and would warrant further investigation. Finally, whether Estonia-specific cultural content features consistently in the Year 9 Exam, and how this might affect the suitability of international preparation materials, remains an open question for further study.

Despite these limitations, the study provides a positive and well-founded answer to both research questions. Both examinations are well aligned with CEFR B1 level, and B1 Preliminary materials provide suitable preparation for the Year 9 Exam reading component.

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## APPENDIX 1

**Table 3.** Reception strategies (COE 2020: 59)

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>B2</b> | Can use a variety of strategies to achieve comprehension, including watching out for main points and checking comprehension by using contextual clues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>B1</b> | Can exploit different types of connectors (numerical, temporal, logical) and the role of key paragraphs in the overall organisation in order to better understand the argumentation in a text.<br>Can extrapolate the meaning of a section of a text by taking into account the text as a whole.<br>Can identify the meaning of unfamiliar words/signs from the context on topics related to their field and interests.<br>Can extrapolate the meaning of occasional unknown words/signs from the context and deduce sentence meaning, provided the topic discussed is familiar. |
|           | Can make basic inferences or predictions about text content from headings, titles or headlines.<br>Can watch or listen to a short narrative and predict what will happen next.<br>Can follow a line of argumentation or the sequence of events in a story, by focusing on common logical connectors (e.g. however, because) and temporal connectors (e.g. after that, beforehand).<br>Can deduce the probable meaning of unknown words/signs in a text by identifying their constituent parts (e.g. identifying roots, lexical elements, suffixes and prefixes).                 |
| <b>A2</b> | Can use an idea of the overall meaning of short texts and utterances on everyday topics of a concrete type to derive the probable meaning of unknown words/signs from the context.<br>Can exploit their recognition of known words/signs to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words/signs in short expressions used in routine everyday contexts.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|           | Can exploit format, appearance and typographic features in order to identify the type of text: news story, promotional text, article, textbook, chat or forum, etc.<br>Can exploit numbers, dates, names, proper nouns, etc. to identify the topic of a text.<br>Can deduce the meaning and function of unknown formulaic expressions from their position in a text (e.g. at the beginning or end of a letter).                                                                                                                                                                  |

**Table 4.** Vocabulary range (COE 2020: 131)

|           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>B2</b> | Can understand and use the main technical terminology of their field, when discussing their area of specialisation with other specialists.                                                                                                                                              |
|           | Has a good range of vocabulary for matters connected to their field and most general topics.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|           | Can vary formulation to avoid frequent repetition, but lexical gaps can still cause hesitation and circumlocution.                                                                                                                                                                      |
|           | Can produce appropriate collocations of many words/signs in most contexts fairly systematically.<br>Can understand and use much of the specialist vocabulary of their field but has problems with specialist terminology outside it.                                                    |
| <b>B1</b> | Has a good range of vocabulary related to familiar topics and everyday situations.<br>Has sufficient vocabulary to express themselves with some circumlocutions on most topics pertinent to their everyday life such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel and current events. |
| <b>A2</b> | Has sufficient vocabulary to conduct routine everyday transactions involving familiar situations and topics.                                                                                                                                                                            |
|           | Has sufficient vocabulary for the expression of basic communicative needs.<br>Has sufficient vocabulary for coping with simple survival needs.                                                                                                                                          |

**Table 5.** Reading descriptors from the *CEFR CV* (2020: 48-59)

| <b>Descriptor</b>                    | <b>A2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>B1</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>B2</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Overall reading comprehension</b> | <p>Can understand short, simple texts on familiar matters of a concrete type which consist of high frequency everyday or job-related language.</p> <p>Can understand short, simple texts containing the highest frequency vocabulary, including a proportion of shared international vocabulary items.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <p>Can read straightforward factual texts on subjects related to their field of interest with a satisfactory level of comprehension.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>Can read with a large degree of independence, adapting style and speed of reading to different texts and purposes, and using appropriate reference sources selectively. Has a broad active reading vocabulary, but may experience some difficulty with low-frequency idioms.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Reading correspondence</b>        | <p>Can understand a simple personal letter, e-mail or post in which the person writing is talking about familiar subjects (such as friends or family) or asking questions on these subjects.</p> <p>Can understand basic types of standard routine letters and faxes (enquiries, orders, letters of confirmation, etc.) on familiar topics.</p> <p>Can understand short, simple personal letters.</p> <p>Can understand very simple formal e-mails and letters (e.g. confirmation of a booking or online purchase).</p> | <p>Can understand formal correspondence on less familiar subjects well enough to redirect it to someone else.</p> <p>Can understand the description of events, feelings and wishes in personal letters well enough to correspond regularly with a pen friend.</p> <p>Can understand straightforward personal letters, e-mails or postings giving a relatively detailed account of events and experiences.</p> <p>Can understand standard formal correspondence and online postings in their area of professional interest.</p> | <p>Can read correspondence relating to their field of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning.</p> <p>Can understand what is said in a personal e-mail or posting even where some colloquial language is used.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Reading for orientation</b>       | <p>Can find specific information in practical, concrete, predictable texts (e.g. travel guidebooks, recipes), provided they are produced in simple language.</p> <p>Can understand the main information in short and simple descriptions of goods in brochures and websites (e.g. portable digital devices, cameras).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                               | <p>Can scan through straightforward, factual texts in magazines, brochures or on the web, identify what they about and decide whether they contain information that might be of practical use.</p> <p>Can find and understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents.</p> <p>Can pick out important information about preparation and usage on the</p>                                                                                                             | <p>Can scan quickly through several sources (articles, reports, websites, books, etc.) in parallel, in both their own field and in related fields, and can identify the relevance and usefulness of particular sections for the task at hand.</p> <p>Can scan quickly through long and complex texts, locating relevant details.</p> <p>Can quickly identify the content and relevance of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics,</p> |

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|---------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                             | <p>Can find specific, predictable information in simple everyday material such as advertisements, prospectuses, menus, reference lists and timetables.</p> <p>Can locate specific information in lists and isolate the information required (e.g. use the Yellow Pages to find a service or tradesman).</p> <p>Can understand everyday signs and notices, etc. in public places, such as streets, restaurants, railway stations; in workplaces, such as directions, instructions, hazard warnings.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>labels on foodstuff and medicine.</p> <p>Can assess whether an article, report or review is on the required topic.</p> <p>Can understand the important information in simple, clearly drafted adverts in newspapers or magazines, provided there are not too many abbreviations.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <p>deciding whether closer study is worthwhile.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Reading for information and argument</b> | <p>Can identify specific information in simpler material they encounter such as letters, brochures and short news articles describing events.</p> <p>Can follow the general outline of a news report on a familiar type of event, provided the contents are familiar and predictable.</p> <p>Can pick out the main information in short news reports or simple articles in which figures, names, illustrations and titles play a prominent role and support the meaning of the text.</p> <p>Can understand the main points of short texts dealing with everyday topics (e.g. lifestyle, hobbies, sports, weather).</p> <p>A2</p> <p>Can understand texts describing people, places, everyday life and culture, etc., provided they use simple</p> | <p>Can understand straightforward, factual texts on subjects relating to their interests or studies.</p> <p>Can understand short texts on subjects that are familiar or of current interest, in which people give their points of view (e.g. critical contributions to an online discussion forum or readers' letters to the editor).</p> <p>Can identify the main conclusions in clearly signalled argumentative texts.</p> <p>Can recognise the line of argument in the treatment of the issue presented, though not necessarily in detail.</p> <p>Can recognise significant points in straightforward news articles on familiar subjects.</p> <p>Can understand most factual information that they are likely to come across on familiar subjects of interest, provided they have sufficient time for rereading.</p> <p>Can understand the main points in descriptive notes such as those on museum exhibits and explanatory boards in exhibitions.</p> | <p>Can obtain information, ideas and opinions from highly specialised sources within their field.</p> <p>Can understand specialised articles outside their field, provided they can use a dictionary occasionally to confirm their interpretation of terminology.</p> <p>Can understand articles and reports concerned with contemporary problems in which particular stances or viewpoints are adopted.</p> <p>Can recognise when a text provides factual information and when it seeks to convince readers of something.</p> <p>Can recognise different structures in discursive text: contrasting arguments, problem-solution presentation and cause-effect relationships.</p> |

|                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                      | <p>language.</p> <p>Can understand information given in illustrated brochures and maps (e.g. the principal attractions of a city).</p> <p>Can understand the main points in short news items on subjects of personal interest (e.g. sport, celebrities).</p> <p>Can understand a short factual description or report within their own field, provided simple language is used and that it does not contain unpredictable detail.</p> <p>Can understand most of what people say about themselves in a personal ad or post and what they say they like in other people.</p>                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Reading instructions</b>          | <p>Can understand regulations, for example safety, when expressed in simple language.</p> <p>Can understand short instructions illustrated step by step (e.g. for installing new technology).</p> <p>Can understand simple instructions on equipment encountered in everyday life – such as a public telephone.</p> <p>Can understand simple, brief instructions, provided they are illustrated and not presented in continuous text.</p> <p>Can understand instructions on medicine labels expressed as a simple command (e.g. “Take before meals” or “Do not take if driving”).</p> <p>Can follow a simple recipe, especially if there are pictures to illustrate the most important steps.</p> | <p>Can understand instructions and procedures in the form of a continuous text, for instance in a manual, provided they are familiar with the type of process or product concerned.</p> <p>Can understand clearly expressed, straightforward instructions for a piece of equipment.</p> <p>Can follow simple instructions given on packaging (e.g. cooking instructions). an understand most short safety instructions, (e.g. on public transport or in manuals for the use of electrical equipment).</p> | <p>Can understand lengthy, complex instructions in their field, including details on conditions and warnings, provided they can reread difficult sections.</p> |
| <b>Reading as a leisure activity</b> | <p>Can understand enough to read short, simple</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>Can read newspaper/magazine</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <p>Can read for pleasure with a large degree of independence, adapting</p>                                                                                     |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>stories and comic strips involving familiar, concrete situations described in high frequency everyday language.</p> <p>Can understand the main points made in short magazine reports or guide entries that deal with concrete everyday topics (e.g. hobbies, sports, leisure activities, animals).</p> <p>A2</p> <p>Can understand short narratives and descriptions of someone's life composed in simple language.</p> <p>Can understand what is happening in a photo story (e.g. in a lifestyle magazine) and form an impression of what the characters are like.</p> <p>Can understand much of the information provided in a short description of a person (e.g. a celebrity).</p> <p>Can understand the main point of a short article reporting an event that follows a predictable pattern (e.g. the Oscars), provided it is composed clearly in simple language.</p> | <p>accounts of films, books, concerts, etc. produced for a wider audience and understand the main points.</p> <p>Can understand simple poems and song lyrics provided these employ straightforward language and style.</p> <p>Can understand descriptions of places, events, explicitly expressed feelings and perspectives in narratives, guides and magazine articles that employ high frequency everyday language.</p> <p>Can understand a travel diary mainly describing the events of a journey and the experiences and discoveries of the writer.</p> <p>Can follow the plot of stories, simple novels and comics with a clear linear storyline and high frequency everyday language, given regular use of a dictionary.</p> | <p>style and speed of reading to different texts (e.g. magazines, more straightforward novels, history books, biographies, travelogues, guides, lyrics, poems), using appropriate reference sources selectively.</p> <p>Can read novels with a strong, narrative plot and that use straightforward, unelaborated language, provided they can take their time and use a dictionary.</p> |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## APPENDIX 2

### Cambridge 2024 Practice Reading Tasks

**Part 1. Questions 1-5. For each question, choose the correct answer.**

**1. Walkers: Stay on the path and close all gates behind you to prevent sheep escaping from the fields.**

The notice is:

A telling walkers which of the paths to use.

B explaining where walkers can see farm animals.

C giving walkers instructions on how to behave.

**2. SCHOOL LIBRARY RULES. When using your phone, please remember that other people are studying here, and keep noise to a minimum.**

A You can only use your phone in the library to do your schoolwork.

B Make sure you use your phone as quietly as possible in the library.

C You must ask for permission to use your phone in the library.

**3. Dad,**

**The school hockey match didn't finish on time – my bus drove past as I was leaving school!**

**If you're still at work, could you come and fetch me? Otherwise, Mum'll do it.**

**Mel**

A Mel may already be too late to get a lift home with her dad.

B Mel is worried that neither of her parents can pick her up from school.

C Mel's bus left while she was still playing a hockey match after school.

**4. Black cat missing - third time this year!**

**Likes garages - please check yours.**

**Last seen Saturday 11.45 p.m.**

**Call 07567221053.**

A The owner first noticed the cat was missing on Saturday.

B People should look for the missing cat in their garage.

C The cat has never been lost before.

**5. To get student travel cards, two types of identification must be shown, one showing address and one date of birth.**

A Students need to prove their age and where they live to receive travel cards.

B Students need to carry ID cards as well as travel cards when travelling.

C Students need to write their address and date of birth on their travel

**Part 2. Questions 6-10. For each question, choose the correct answer. The young people below are all interested in visiting an event at a science festival. On the opposite page there are descriptions of eight science festival events. Decide which event would be most suitable for the young people below.**

6. Paula wants to know about experiments carried out in cold conditions, and would love to meet someone with experience of this. She's also interested in history and seeing scientific equipment used in the past.
7. Sam would like to find out about important scientific discoveries by watching something that's fun and exciting. He also wants to get some information about interesting science websites for teenagers.
8. Jen wants to know about developments in technology that could affect her life, and is interested in ideas that scientists have got from nature. She'd also like to see science projects that are designed by young people.
9. Filip would like to know how science is used to find out about ancient people and cultures, and he wants to watch a film about important scientists. He'd enjoy completing a fun challenge too.
10. Sara wants advice about becoming a scientist, and ideas about experiments to do at home. Also, because she likes cooking, she'd like to know how science is used in the food industry.

### **Science Festival Events**

#### **A Imagine-it**

Visit Imagine-it to see experiments that teenage scientists have planned themselves for this year's Science Festival. You'll also find out about exciting new things arriving in shops soon, like clothes that can charge your phone, and discover how scientists were inspired by plants to produce light material that copes with the coldest conditions.

#### **B Global Science**

Science is a fun and challenging career for any young person. Come and find out about the different roles' science plays in our everyday lives, from what we wear and eat to how we use technology to communicate. You'll soon be seeing science in use everywhere you look!

#### **C Discovery Zone**

Spend an hour with Professor Max, and hear about the experiments that helped people develop new scientific ideas that changed the world. Expect music, jokes and silly costumes - and the

chance to get on stage and do an experiment yourself! Max has lots of tips for getting information online, specially aimed at school-aged scientists.

### **D Science World**

Ever wondered what the day-to-day life of a scientist working in difficult conditions is like? How do they cook food in the extreme temperatures found in the North Pole or deserts? Watch a presentation from a leading scientist who has funny stories to share about the challenges she's faced.

### **E Research Lab**

Learn to use a range of equipment to measure things like temperature and strength, and discover how to use everyday items to test scientific ideas. Find out about the research done to produce the tasty things you find on supermarket shelves. You can also ask an actual researcher about the best way into a fascinating career like theirs.

### **F Research Centre**

Discover the techniques used to study pieces of cloth and bone that are thousands of years old, to give us an idea of life in the past. Then race to identify different items in teams! After that, enjoy a video about the lives of the world's top researchers, and find out what attracted them to science.

### **G Explore!**

Look at the machines that were taken on early expeditions to Antarctica to measure the ice, and learn about the technology that has replaced them. Best of all, talk to researchers who've actually used this technology during trips to this icy environment. Find out about what they were doing there and why it's important.

### **H Green Zone**

Find out how scientists make discoveries about the natural world, challenging our ideas about what animals understand, and how intelligent they are. You can get involved in certain projects yourself, by collecting data and uploading it to our website.

## **Part 3. Questions 11-15. For each question, choose the correct answer.**

Creating a school garden

by Rosie Banks

Last spring, our teacher had the idea of creating a garden at school. She suggested using some land next to the sports field. She said there would be a fence round the garden, so footballs wouldn't be a problem! Nobody apart from me seemed especially excited when our teacher first mentioned the garden in class. Perhaps they were thinking that gardening's something only

grown-ups do. Anyway, when the teacher asked for volunteers to help in the garden after school, I was the first to sign up. Later on, some of the other students became interested, too.

Our teacher gave us a choice of what to plant. We talked about growing flowers, which we'd be able to give people as gifts, but then we decided it would be better to grow food to eat. Different fruits and vegetables grow at different times of the year, so there would often be something exciting happening in the garden.

Our teacher ordered what we needed, and we got started. We carefully prepared the ground. I saw lots of insects and small animals as we were doing that!

Then we watched and waited. Of course, we watered the ground and removed wild plants we really didn't want amongst our vegetables. It was pretty dull at first, to be honest, until the young plants started appearing. I'm not a particularly patient person, but even I was impressed by the changes that took place from one week to the next. At first there would just be a few tiny leaves, and then suddenly a whole plant! We wondered whether insects might eat some of the young plants, but we were lucky.

Eventually, some of the first colourful vegetables were ready to pick. Over the next few months, we sometimes had loads of one kind of vegetable, and then, a few weeks later, a lot of another. So, we couldn't use them together in the same dish, as I'd originally imagined, which was a shame. But our teacher told us about tasty things we could make with each kind of vegetable and we took them home when they were ready to eat. I gave mine to my mum - I'll learn to cook when I'm older!

### **11. When Rosie's teacher suggested creating a school garden, Rosie**

- A was annoyed by her classmates' lack of interest in the idea.
- B had doubts about the location that the teacher had chosen.
- C decided straight away that she would like to take part.
- D was pleased to hear that adults would be involved too.

### **12. When the students were deciding what to put in the garden,**

- A they had to think about the best season for each plant.
- B their teacher told them what would grow best.
- C they wanted plants that would bring wildlife to the garden.
- D they agreed about what would be most interesting to plant.

### **13. As the plants grew, Rosie was surprised**

- A by how quickly they developed.
- B that some of them never became very big.

C by how difficult it was to keep the garden tidy.

D to discover that she enjoyed looking after them.

**14. How did Rosie feel about the vegetables in the garden?**

A worried that she might waste them

B amazed by how beautiful they looked

C pleased about how delicious they tasted

D disappointed with the variety available at any one time

**15. What would Rosie's teacher say about her?**

A She already knew somethings about growing fruit and vegetables and was happy to share her knowledge.

B She was keen to find out how to do things in the garden and joined in well with all the activities.

C She suggested things that the class could do with the flowers and vegetables they had grown.

D She enjoyed working in the garden a lot, but she's decided not to carry on with it for now.

**Part 4. Questions 16-20. Five sentences have been removed from the text below. For each question, choose the correct answer. There are three extra sentences which you do not need to use.**

Nadia Comăneci: the greatest ever gymnast?

Nadia Comăneci was born in Romania in 1961. She Started doing gymnastics at the age of six. **16.** ...By the age of 13, these things had helped her to win gold medals in almost every gymnastics event at the 1975 European Championships.

A year later, at the Montreal Olympic Games, Nadia got the perfect score of 10.0 for one of the events in which she competed. **17.** ... And she did it when she was still only 14 years old! Even more amazingly, she scored six more 'perfect tens' and won three gold medals! This made her the youngest ever 'all-around' champion. At the following Olympic Games in 1980, Nadia won her fourth and fifth gold medals, but finished second in the all-around competition. She won many other medals and competitions, too, but retired from gymnastics aged just 20.

Although Nadia retired so young, she didn't stop winning awards: in 1984 and 2004 she received the 'Olympic Order'. This is given to people who work hard to promote the Olympics. **18.** ... Setting up a gymnastics school in her hometown in Romania made this possible. Moreover, she always did her best to encourage young people all over the world to take up gymnastics. **19.** ... Gymnasts need to be calm and confident, too, which is useful in all sorts of situations in life.

As gymnastics has developed, gymnasts can do more spectacular moves than Nadia once did, but she still keeps her world record. **20.** ... 14-year-olds are no longer allowed to compete in gymnastics in the Olympics: the current minimum age is 16. It is also, according to Nadia, more difficult to get a perfect ten in modern events, because of the way in which scores are given. So perhaps there really never will be another gymnast like Nadia Comăneci!

- A** She knew that by making people strong, it helped with other sports.
- B** Her coach did not agree with this result.
- C** She worked very hard even then and had a natural talent.
- D** That's why nobody expected what happened next.
- E** And it is unlikely that anyone will ever break it.
- F** She was also keen to carry on being directly involved in her sport.
- G** However, her competitors did better on the other equipment.
- H** No one had ever achieved such a total before.

**Part 5. Questions 21-26. For each question, choose the correct answer.**

What's so good about garlic?

Garlic, a vegetable in the onion family, comes from Central Asia and northern Iran, and people have eaten it for thousands of years. There are several different **(21)** ... as green garlic and wild garlic. It isn't much of a **(22)** ... to grow, and this can be done all year round in **(23)** ... climates.

Garlic has a **(24)** .... favour which people either love or hate, and it is used in a lot of dishes around the world, including many pasta dishes and soups.

Garlic isn't just used in cooking, but as a traditional medicine, too, because it has a lot of health **(25)** ... Many people believe it can help to **(26)** ... earaches, coughs and colds. Eating garlic can also improve heart health, and it contains vitamins A and C, too.

|                 |              |            |             |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|-------------|
| 21 A styles     | B types      | C ranges   | D contents  |
| 22 A trouble    | B difficulty | C test     | D challenge |
| 23 A mild       | B soft       | C light    | D fair      |
| 24 A heavy      | B large      | C strong   | D hard      |
| 25 A advantages | B rewards    | C benefits | D values    |
| 26 A solve      | B cure       | C fix      | D mend      |

**Part 6. Questions 27-32. For each question, write the correct answer. Write one word for each gap.**

#### My part-time job at a bicycle repair shop

I work part-time in a large bicycle shop at the weekend. The owners are looking for another teenage assistant (27) ... me at the moment, so I hope someone else my age will (28) ... interested in joining me there.

I only work in the shop on Saturdays because the rest (29) ... the week I'm at school. I love being at the shop. Obviously, the bikes are great, but the people (30)... come into the shop are just as interesting. They tell me all about their cycling adventures while they're waiting for their bikes to be fixed. They've given me lots of tips about great places (31)... go cycling, too. I also attend cycling events, where I help fix problems the cyclists have with their bikes.

So (32)... , I've only managed to carry out basic bike repairs, but I'm learning fast and my boss says I'll be a great bike mechanic one day!

## APPENDIX 3

### Estonian Year 9 Exam Reading Tasks. 2025

#### Task 1 (6 points)

Read the text about a modern mermaid and decide which word (A, B or C) best fits each gap (26-31). Write the letter in the gap. An example (0) has been done for you.

#### Modern Mermaid

The Little Mermaid famously (0) A "flipping your fins\*", you don't get too far." Apparently, she had never seen Merle Liivand swim.

Liivand, (26) known as "Eco Mermaid," broke a Guinness World Record by completing a 42.2-km swim using a silicone monofin, which is a single fin used for both feet. The open-water champion swimmer swam the distance near Miami, Florida, in just 11 hours and 54 seconds. To set the record, Liivand (27) not use her arms. Instead, she only used her legs and feet. "Swimming with the monofin is (28) to how dolphins and marine animals swim," she told Guinness. Along the way, she met with a lot of marine life and was even stung by a jellyfish.

The record was not just an athletic achievement, but (29) environmental one too. "It is unfair that we have gotten to the point that fish, dolphins, and turtles are surrounded (30) plastic which ends up in their stomachs, and I feel that we as humans are next," she said.

During her swim, Liivand collected some garbage she saw and placed it in the kayak rowing alongside her. "When I see trash, I get angry," she said. "(31) the end of the day, this is not just about a record; it is about helping the community and the world."

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\* a thin flat part of a fish's body that helps it swim (Oxford Learner's Dictionary)

- |           |        |           |
|-----------|--------|-----------|
| 0 A sang  | B sung | C sing    |
| 26 A who  | B as   | C also    |
| 27 A did  | B do   | C does    |
| 28 A same | B like | C similar |
| 29 A a    | B an   | C the     |
| 30 A by   | B on   | C of      |
| 31 A In   | B On   | C At      |

## Task 2 (7 points)

**Read the text and the statements (32-38) on the next page, and decide which statement is true according to the text. Tick (V) the correct option (A, B or C). An example (0) has been done for you.**

Jason Harker's gardening business

Who would have thought that what started out as a teenager wanting to help his family would turn into a successful gardening and landscaping business? Not me, and I am the one it happened to! I am Jason Harker, owner of the company Blue Iris Landscapes.

My dad was a woodworker by trade. One evening, when he was working, a tool broke and a piece went into his eye, which meant he was not able to work for a while and money was tight. I was sixteen at the time. I wanted to help, and gardening was a hobby of mine, so I started helping out my neighbours, cutting branches off their bushes and doing other things. And it turned out that I knew quite a bit, so I decided this was a way for me to make some money. My first customer was a friend of my mum's. I looked after her garden for her, and I made £5 every two weeks.

I picked up some other small jobs and by the time I had finished my final exams at school, I was working six days a week. I worked by myself for a whole year after my exams, and in the second year, my brother joined me. Over the next ten years, we carried on, and there were just two or three of us working together. But as I got a bit older, I realised I needed to bring in some younger guys, and that is how things started. As of now, the company has been active for twenty-five years. In 2019, the company moved to a brand-new office in Barlaston, where there are 29 employees in the new £1 million headquarters. The company profits have also grown - from £12,500 in the first year to nearly £1.5 million this year.

Customer focus has always been super important for us. It is one of our central values, along with a wish to succeed. Our 'golden rule' is to treat people how you would like to be treated. Our aim is to make a positive difference to our colleagues and clients. We could not have achieved what we have without our brilliant team. It makes me very proud to see that the people who joined us as trainees are now able to buy their first house, and we really try to help them do that. We want to be a company with a great reputation in all the areas we work in. We want our people to enjoy their jobs and provide a great service to our customers, and we want to become a £10 million company within the next 10 years.

Business Live

**0. Jason started gardening for money because he wanted to**

*A support his family.*

B build a business.

C be a good neighbour.

**32. Jason's father could not work because he**

A had an accident at work.

B wanted to learn a new skill.

C lost his woodworking tools.

**33. The first person to employ Jason**

A paid him £5 a week.

B was his mother's friend.

C lived next door to Jason.

**34. Right after finishing school, Jason worked**

A alone.

B with his brother.

C with a team of people.

**35. The company has**

A almost 30 people working at the main office.

B stayed in the same building since it started.

C made almost £1.5 million over the years.

**36. The company cares most about**

A making a lot of money.

B becoming very famous.

C being good to people.

**37. The company is also so successful because it**

A gives work to young people.

B supports its staff in different ways.

C buys houses for long-time workers.

**38. In the next ten years, the company wants to**

A make people think better of them.

B start doing new types of work.

C grow into a bigger business

**Task 3 (8 points)**

**Read the texts (A-E) about interesting schools in the US. Then read the statements (39-46) and decide which text each statement is about. Write the correct letter (A-E) after each statement. The letters can be chosen more than once. An example (0) has been done for you.**

*A Star School*

Almost all the students at Star School are Navajo\* children. It is a special elementary school because it uses solar power for all its energy. The students grow their own food in the school's greenhouses and learn how to cook. They also try to find solutions for the local problem of dirty drinking water. At Star School, the students learn about the 4 Rs, which come from Navajo beliefs: Respect, Relationship, Responsibility, and Reasoning.

\* Native American tribe

*B Brightworks School*

Brightworks turns activities that parents often think are dangerous for children into a full school day. Kids from kindergarten to 12th grade play messily, experiment with fire, take apart household machines, and create art projects, all in a single day. The school is located in a large empty warehouse filled with art and creative spaces designed to inspire a child's imagination.

*C e3 Civic High School*

In San Diego, there is a special high school located inside the New San Diego Central Library. This school is open to students from lower-income backgrounds and offers them access to research equipment, study-abroad opportunities, and project-based learning. These opportunities encourage their curiosity and help their education. The school is located on the sixth and seventh floors of the library. It has movable walls and furniture, as well as a place for school-wide meetings and meals.

*D THINK Global School*

Although based in New York City, THINK Global School is a unique high school. It does not have a fixed location. Instead, students travel to different countries every semester. They learn about local cultures, study natural sciences, and read classic literature. Last year, the students went to Greece for the spring semester. They sailed from one island to another in the Ionian

Sea and learned about philosophy, art, and literature. In each country, students also do charity projects and work in the community.

### *E AltSchool*

AltSchool is a different kind of elementary school compared to traditional ones. It does not use traditional tests, but instead focuses on teaching kids about the latest technology. Students can learn to think creatively and get used to changes in the world. They learn to turn everyday objects into electronic devices, and they use computers to create models for building playhouses. The goal is to help them feel comfortable with what the future brings. AltSchool is growing quickly and has plans to grow nationwide in the future.

This school ...

- (0)A ... teaches kids about important values.
- (39) ... lets students do things they cannot do at home.
- (40) ... wants to build more schools across the country.
- (41) ... has both very young and teenage students.
- (42) ... prepares students for the inventions of tomorrow.
- (43) ... is environmentally friendly.
- (44) ... gives poor students more chances to learn.
- (45) ... is located in a big unused building.
- (46) ... has students who volunteer abroad.

### **Task 4 (9 points)**

**Read the text. Use the correct form of the words in brackets to complete the text (47-55). You must change the word given. You can write only one word in each gap. An example (0) has been done for you.**

Post office in Antarctica

A British charity is searching for people to spend five months in (0) icy (ice) Antarctica, to run the world's most far-off post office on Goudier Island in Port Lockroy. Port Lockroy has been a home for explorers, scientists, and sailors who have made unusual (47) (contribute) to Antarctic history and the harbour has become the most popular visitor destination in Antarctica today.

Traditionally, hundreds of ordinary people apply for these (48) (excite) jobs. If chosen, the team of employees will have to take care of the Port Lockroy base and be responsible for

preserving historic (49) (build) in Antarctica. They will also be (50) (full) responsible for counting Gentoo penguins.

In (51) (add), the team will also look after the interesting museum inside Bransfield House. Finally, they will have to run the gift shop and the post office.

(52) (Success) applicants will live on Goudier Island in the Antarctic Peninsula. Candidates are required to have a good level of physical (53) (fit) as well as environmental awareness. They also need (54) (know) of minimum impact living.

Lauren Elliott, one of the past postmasters, told the BBC that it was the most magical place in the world. She said that the experience was quite unique, as they got to count all the penguins when they hatched. Her team still meets (55). (regular) and she has found friends for life. Lauren thinks that anyone who is considering joining should just pack up their bags and go.

## RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL  
ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

**Jaana Tanilsoo**

**A Comparative Analysis of Reading Tasks in the Cambridge B1 Preliminary and the Estonian Year 9 English Examination in Relation to CEFR Descriptors**

***Cambridge B1 Preliminary* ja Eesti 9. klassi inglise keele eksami lugemisülesannete võrdlev analüüs Euroopa keeleõppe raamdokumendi kirjelduste kontekstis**

Bakalaureusetöö

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Annotatsioon:

Käesolev bakalaureusetöö uurib 2024. aasta *Cambridge B1 Preliminary* ettevalmistusmaterjale ja 2025. aasta Eesti põhikooli 9. klassi inglise keele eksami lugemisosa. Töö lähtub isiklikust õpetamiskogemusest ning uurib, kas *Cambridge B1 Preliminary* materjalid pakuvad piisavat ettevalmistust Eesti 9. klassi inglise keele eksamiks. Töös käsitletakse kaht uurimusküsimust: mil määral on mõlema eksami lugemisülesanded vastavuses „Euroopa keeleõppe raamdokument: õppimine, õpetamine ja hindamine. Sõsarväljaande“ (2020) tasemekirjelduste B1 tasemega ning mil määral sobivad *Cambridge B1 Preliminary* materjalid 9. klassi eksami lugemisosa ettevalmistumiseks.

Teoreetilises osas antakse ülevaade Euroopa keeleõppe raamdokumendi (CEFR) ajaloost ja arengust, keeleoskuse hindamise väljakutsetest, eksamite CEFR-iga seostamise protsessist ning CEFR-i lugemisoskuse kirjeldustest. Samuti antakse ülevaade automaatsetest CEFR-i tekstianalüüsi tööriistadest.

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Analüüs näitab, et mõlemad eksamid on vastavuses CEFR-i B1 tasemega ning *Cambridge B1 Preliminary* materjalid sobivad 9. klassi eksami ettevalmistumiseks. *Cambridge*'i eksamil on rohkem ülesandeid ja suurem ülesandetüüpide valik, mis pakub põhjalikumalt ettevalmistust. Automaatsed tekstianalüüsi tööriistad osutusid kasulikuks esialgse hinnangu andmisel, kuid nõudsid kriitilist hindamist. Tehisintellektil põhinevad keelemudelid ei sobinud seda tüüpi tekstianalüüsiks.

Märksõnad: *Cambridge B1 Preliminary*, põhikooli lõpueksam, Euroopa keeleõppe raamdokument, CEFR, inglise keele testimine, B1 tase, lugemisoskuse hindamine, eristuskiri, lugemiskirjeldused, teksti keerukus, automaatne tekstianalüüs

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