

A2 Reading — General English + Workplace English

JBK Independent Learning Program

Layer 1 — The Learning Goal

Workplace Application (how to use this at work): At A2, you can understand short, simple workplace texts such as messages, notices, schedules, and simple instructions about familiar work.

Progression

A2 — Understand the main information.

B1 — Understand the main ideas and important details.

B2 — Understand more complex ideas, relationships, and meanings in longer texts.

1.1 CEFR Learning Objective — A2 Reading

Workplace Application: You will also practice these reading skills with simple workplace information—for example, a short message from a coworker, a work schedule, a notice, or simple instructions.

By the end of this chapter, you will be better able to understand short, simple texts about familiar topics.

Related Workplace English Objectives

- ***understand short, simple workplace texts such as messages, notices, and schedules;***
- ***find information such as times, dates, places, and names;***
- ***understand simple instructions about work tasks you know;***
- ***tell a coworker or supervisor the important information from a short text;***
- ***choose a simple reading strategy (a way to help you learn) for a workplace text.***

You will also learn how to become your own reading teacher. You will use the CEFR (the European scale of language levels, from A1 to C2), learning strategies, AI, and free websites.

1.2 What Will I Learn?

Reading is an important skill for learning and using English.

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- understand the main idea of a short text;
- find important information;

- use context (the words and situation around a word) to guess the meaning of new words;
- use simple reading strategies;
- choose reading activities that match your goal;
- use AI when you need help;
- check if you reached your learning goal; and
- choose what to practice next.

You do **not** need to understand every word to understand a text.

A good reader learns to find the important information and keep reading when some words are difficult.

1.3 Why Should I Care About Reading?

Workplace Application: At work, reading helps you understand short messages, find times and dates in a schedule, read notices and signs, and follow simple instructions.

You read English when you:

- read messages and emails;
- look at signs and information;
- read instructions;
- use websites;
- read about places you want to visit;
- read about work;
- learn about things that interest you; or
- study English.

Good reading skills help you:

- understand information;
- learn new vocabulary;
- follow instructions;
- talk and write more easily;
- learn about the world; and
- become a more independent learner.

1.4 Your Learning Goal

Workplace Application: A useful A2 workplace goal might be: "I can find important information in a short workplace message or schedule." Choose a goal that matches the reading you need to do at work.

There is no one reading goal that is right for every A2 learner.

Your goal should come from your own needs and interests.

You can use the CEFR **"I Can..." statements** to help you choose a goal.

For example:

I can understand short, simple texts about familiar topics.

You can choose a goal about:

- everyday life;
- travel;
- shopping;
- work;
- family and friends;
- instructions; or
- another situation that is important to you.

For example:

I want to understand short information about places I visit.

Or:

I want to understand simple information at work.

Choose a reading goal that is useful to you now.

If you are not sure what your CEFR goal means, you can ask AI to explain it in simple English.

For example:

“Please explain this A2 reading goal in simple English. Give me two examples.”

1.5 How AI Can Help You Learn Reading

Workplace Application: AI can help you practice workplace reading by explaining workplace words in simple English, making questions about a short work message, or creating another short A2 workplace text. You still need to read the original text yourself.

AI gives language learners many new ways to practice.

You can ask AI to:

- explain difficult words;
- explain a text in simple English;
- help you understand the main idea;
- create reading questions;
- create extra reading practice;
- give feedback (comments that help you improve) on your answers;
- help you find a reading activity that is right for you; and
- help you check your understanding.

AI can be your:

Reading Coach • Practice Partner • Learning Assistant

But remember:

AI does not take the place of reading practice.

You still need to read English yourself.

AI can help you find texts, understand them, and practice with them.

You are the learner who does the work.

Layer 2 — The Learning Method

Workplace Application: Use the same A2 reading process with short workplace texts such as messages, notices, and schedules.

2.1 How Can I Improve My Reading?

There are many ways to improve reading.

In this chapter, you will try a few simple strategies that are very useful for A2 learners.

You do **not** need to use every strategy.

This chapter gives you a few useful tools to try.

Later, you can visit the **Resource Library** (a list of free websites and tools in Part 3) to find many more ideas.

2.2 The Reading Learning Process

Workplace Application: For workplace reading, you might read a short message, find the important information, tell a coworker what it says, read it again later, and think about what to practice next.

A simple reading process is:

Read → Understand → Practice → Communicate → Review → Reflect

You can use this process with many different reading activities.

You use this process in the Practice step of the JBK Independent Learning Cycle (seven steps to plan and check your own learning).

Step 1 — Read

Workplace Application: Before reading a workplace text, look at the title, subject line, sender, and date. Ask: What is this about? What do I need to find?

Read the text once.

Look at:

- the title;
- pictures, if there are any;
- headings; and
- other information that can help you.

Ask yourself:

- What is this about?
- Who is it for?
- What do I already know about this topic?

Do not worry about every new word.

First, look for the big picture.

Step 2 — Understand

Workplace Application: In a workplace text, look for important information such as times, dates, places, names, and tasks.

Read the text again.

Try to find:

- the main idea;
- important information;
- key words; and
- useful expressions.

If you see a new word, first try to guess its meaning from the sentence.

Ask yourself:

What could this word mean here?

You can check the word later.

You do not need to understand every word to understand the text.

Step 3 — Practice

Workplace Application: Practice with a short workplace text by answering simple questions or finding a time, date, or task.

Practice using the reading strategy you have chosen.

You can:

- read the text again;
- find the main idea;
- find important information;
- guess the meaning of new words;
- answer questions; or
- write one sentence about the text.

Choose the practice that helps you reach your goal.

Step 4 — Communicate

Workplace Application: Use the information you read. For example, tell a coworker the time of a meeting or explain a simple instruction.

Use what you read.

You can:

- tell someone what the text is about;
- answer questions;
- discuss the topic with AI;
- write a short summary; or
- use new vocabulary in your own sentences.

Reading is more useful when you use it to talk or write.

Step 5 — Review

Workplace Application: Check important workplace information again, such as a time, date, or instruction. Make sure you understood it correctly.

Read the important part again later.

You might review the text:

- the next day; and
- one week later.

Notice what is easier the second or third time.

Reviewing helps you remember:

- information;
- vocabulary; and
- useful expressions.

Step 6 — Reflect

Workplace Application: Ask yourself: What workplace information was easy to understand? What was difficult? What do I need to practice next?

After your reading practice, ask yourself:

- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- What helped me understand?
- Did my strategy help?
- What should I practice next?

Thinking about your practice helps you become a more independent learner.

2.3 A Few Reading Strategies

Workplace Application: Use these strategies with short workplace texts. For example, preview a notice, look for the main idea of a message, or guess a new work word from context.

We cannot teach every possible reading strategy in one chapter.

Here are a few that are very useful for A2 reading.

Later, you can find more strategies in the Resource Library.

Before Reading — Preview the Text

Look at:

- the title;
- pictures;
- headings; and
- important words.

Ask yourself:

What do I think this text is about?

This helps you prepare before you read.

While Reading — Look for the Main Idea

Read the text once.

Do not try to understand every word.

Ask yourself:

What is this text mostly about?

Then write one sentence.

This is often more useful than trying to translate every sentence.

When You See a New Word — Guess from Context

Do not stop right away to use a dictionary.

Read the words around the new word.

Ask:

What could this word mean here?

Then check your answer later.

You will not always guess correctly.

That is okay.

The important thing is to practice using context.

After Reading — Read Important Parts Again

Read the most important part again.

Ask yourself:

- What is the main idea?
- What information is important?
- What did I understand better the second time?

Review can help you understand the text more clearly.

2.4 Personal Learning Strengths

Workplace Application: Think about how you learn best with workplace reading. You might highlight important information, make short notes, or talk about a work message with another person.

There is no single **best** way to learn English.

People enjoy different kinds of learning activities.

Howard Gardner was a researcher. He wrote about different kinds of intelligence. His work can give you some useful ideas.

For example:

- **Linguistic** — reading stories, articles, and information;
- **Interpersonal** — discussing what you read with another person or AI;
- **Intrapersonal** — keeping learning notes and thinking about your progress; and
- **Spatial** — using pictures, headings, and other things you can see to help you understand a text.

You may find that some activities work better for you than others.

But try other activities too, not only your favorites.

A strategy that is not your favorite can still be useful when you need it.

Use your strengths, and keep trying other ways of learning.

For more ideas, visit the **Resource Library**.

2.5 Weekly Study Plan

Workplace Application: Change one or more activities to a workplace reading activity—for example, reading a work schedule, a notice, or a short message.

Day	Activity	Time
Monday	Read a short text for the main idea	20 min
Tuesday	Read again and find important information	20 min
Wednesday	Practice guessing new words from context	20 min
Thursday	Review vocabulary and useful expressions	20 min
Friday	Discuss or summarize what you read	20 min
Saturday	Read something new	20 min
Sunday	Review and reflect	20 min

You do not have to follow this plan exactly.

Change it to match your own goal and schedule.

Homework Assignment

Choose one short A2 reading text related to your goal. Read it with the reading process in Section 2.2. Write the main idea, two pieces of important information, and one new word. If you use AI, read the original text yourself first.

2.6 My Strategy Record

Keep a record of the strategies you try.

My reading goal:

Date	Strategy	Activity	How effective?	What did I learn?

For example:

Today I learned that looking for the main idea helps me understand a text.

Or:

I need more practice guessing new words from context.

Over time, this record shows you which strategies help you most.

Layer 3 — The Learning Tools

Choose Your Tier

This layer has four tiers. A tier is a way to practice with the tools you have. Each tier adds to the tiers before it.

- **Tier 1 — Paper and People:** a short text on paper, a notebook, and a partner.
- **Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet:** any phone with a voice recorder, and your notebook.
- **Tier 3 — Limited Data:** light reading websites, voice notes, and AI in text.
- **Tier 4 — Good Internet:** AI and all websites.

3.1 Partner and AI Roles

Tier 1 — Paper and People

Reading Partner: You and your partner read the same short text. Tell each other the main idea.

Word Helper: Your partner helps you with new words. A paper dictionary helps too.

If you have no partner, write the main idea in one sentence in your notebook.

Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet

Recorder: Read a short text aloud and record it. Listen. Which words were difficult?

Notebook: Write new words and the main idea in your paper notebook.

Text Messages (SMS): A partner sends you a short message in English. Read it, and answer in English. SMS does not need internet, but it can cost money. Use it sometimes.

If you have a smartphone, you can save short texts when you have internet. Then you can read them again with no data.

Tier 3 — Limited Data

Light Websites: Text pages use very little data. Breaking News English and VOA Learning English are in the Low-Data Edition of the Resource Library (its short list of websites that use little data).

Voice-Note Partner: Send a partner a short voice note. Say the main idea of a text.

AI in Text: Type your question to AI. Text uses very little data.

Tier 4 — Good Internet

For A2 reading, AI can be your:

- **Reading Coach**
- **Practice Partner**
- **Learning Assistant**

3.2 AI Functions

AI can help you:

- explain difficult English;
- create reading practice;
- create questions;
- give feedback on your answers; and
- create more practice.

These are only some possibilities.

You will find more in the **Resource Library**.

3.3 AI Tasks

Workplace Application: You might ask AI to make questions about a short workplace message, explain workplace words in simple English, or create another short A2 workplace text.

For example, you can ask AI to:

- explain difficult vocabulary;
- help you find the main idea;
- create five questions about the text;
- explain a short reading text; or
- create a similar reading activity.

Choose the task that matches your current goal.

3.4 Scripts and AI Prompts

Every tier has the same three tasks: explain vocabulary, find the main idea, and make reading practice. Only the tool is different.

Tier 1 — With Paper and a Partner

Explain Vocabulary: Write five new words. Guess the meaning from the sentence. Then check with your partner or a paper dictionary.

Find the Main Idea: Write the main idea in one sentence. Ask your partner: “Do you agree?”

Make Reading Practice: Write three questions about a text. Give the text and the questions to your partner. Then change roles.

Tier 2 — With Your Phone

Explain Vocabulary: In your notebook, write each new word and one example sentence. Record yourself saying the sentences.

Find the Main Idea: Read a text on paper. Record the main idea in one or two sentences. The next day, read the text again and listen. Is your main idea still right?

Make Reading Practice: Write three questions about a text and record them. One week later, play the questions and answer them.

Tier 3 — Voice Notes and Text Prompts

Explain Vocabulary: Look up words in Cambridge Dictionary. It is in the Low-Data Edition and uses very little data.

Find the Main Idea: Send a partner a voice note. Say the main idea of a text in one or two sentences.

Make Reading Practice: The prompts (the messages you write to AI) under Tier 4 are text prompts. They use little data, so you can use them too.

Tier 4 — AI Prompts

Prompt 1 — Explain Vocabulary

“I am an A2 English learner. Please explain these words in simple English. Give me one short example sentence for each word.”

Prompt 2 — Help Me Find the Main Idea

“I am an A2 English learner. I read this text, but I don’t understand the main idea. Please help me find it. Don’t give me the answer right away. Ask me questions first.”

This is an important way to use AI.

AI can help you **think about the text** instead of only giving you the answer.

Prompt 3 — Create Reading Practice

“I am an A2 English learner. Please create a short reading text about [topic]. Then ask me five questions about it.”

You can change these prompts to match your own goals.

3.5 Choose Your Reading Practice

Workplace Application: Choose a short workplace reading activity that is right for your A2 level and your workplace reading goal.

You do not need to use every resource or activity in this chapter.

Choose one that matches your current goal.

You can choose General English or Workplace English.

You can also choose the kind of English that is most useful to you: American English, British English, or International English.

Texts for Any Tier

General English: a short message, a notice, a menu, a short story, or a short news story.

Workplace English: a work message, a schedule, a notice, or simple instructions.

Tier 1 — Paper and People

- Read a short text on paper: a notice, a leaflet, or a page from your textbook. Use the reading process in Section 2.2.
- Tell a partner the main idea.

Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet

- Read a text again after one week. Read it aloud and record it. Is it easier now?
- A partner can send you a short English message by SMS. Read it and answer it.

Tier 3 — Limited Data

- Read a Level 1 or Level 2 story on Breaking News English. It is in the Low-Data Edition.
- The three options under Tier 4 are text prompts. They use little data, so you can use them too.

Tier 4 — Good Internet

Option 1 — Everyday Reading

Choose a short reading activity about an everyday topic.

Ask AI:

“I am an A2 learner. Please suggest a General English reading activity about a useful everyday situation. I would like [American/British/International] English.”

Option 2 — Workplace Reading

Choose a short reading activity related to a workplace situation.

Ask AI:

“I am an A2 learner. Please suggest a Workplace English reading activity for a situation I may have at work. I would like [American/British/International] English.”

Option 3 — Personal Goal

Choose a reading activity that helps with your own CEFR goal.

Ask AI:

“I am an A2 learner of [General English/Workplace English]. Please suggest a useful reading activity for this situation: [describe your situation]. I would like [American/British/International] English.”

Choose only one activity for now.

You can try more activities later.

3.6 The JBK Independent Learning Cycle

Now use the learning system you learned in Part 1.

Note: The JBK Independent Learning Cycle is the author's own model. It is inspired by the European Language Portfolio (ELP), a record of your language goals and progress.

1. Assess

What can I do now?

2. Plan

What is my goal?

When and how will I practice?

3. Choose

Which activity or resource will I use?

The Resource Library can help you.

4. Practice

Complete the activity.

Use AI if it helps you.

5. Evaluate

Did I reach my goal?

Did I understand the main idea?

6. Reflect

What did I learn?

What worked well?

What was difficult?

7. Improve

What will I practice next?

Assess → Plan → Choose → Practice → Evaluate → Reflect → Improve

3.7 How Do I Know If I Reached My Goal?

Workplace Application: Your evidence might include telling someone the main idea of a work message or finding a time, date, or task in a workplace text.

Your CEFR goal might be:

I can understand short, simple texts about familiar topics.

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Now ask:

How do I know if I can do this?

You can collect simple evidence (things that show your progress).

For example, can you:

- tell someone what the text is about?
- answer a few questions about the text?
- find the most important information?

If you can do these things, you have evidence that you are reaching your goal.

If you are not sure what evidence to collect, you can ask AI:

“My goal is: I can understand short, simple texts about familiar topics. What can I do to check if I reached this goal? Please give me three simple things I can try.”

The important question is not:

“Do I think my reading is good?”

The better question is:

“What can I do that shows me I am reaching my goal?”

3.8 This Week’s Practice

Plan one short reading practice for this week.

My reading goal:

Text or resource:

The strategy I will use:

My tier (1, 2, 3, or 4):

When will I practice?

After you practice, fill in your Learning Record (your notes before and after each practice) in Section 3.9 and your Strategy Record (a table of the strategies you try) in Section 2.6.

3.9 My Learning Record

Use this record before and after each reading practice.

Before I Read

My reading goal:

What will I practice?

Resource or activity:

My strategy:

When will I practice?

After I Read

Source:

Topic:

Main idea:

Important information:

New vocabulary:

Useful expressions:

Strategy I tried:

How much did it help?

1 2 3 4 5

What helped me understand?

What was difficult?

What will I practice next?

Workplace English

Workplace Application: When you read a workplace text, write the situation, the main idea, important information such as times and dates, useful workplace words, and what you want to practice next.

What workplace text did I read?

What important information did I find (time, date, place, task)?

Useful workplace words or expressions:

Keep your Learning Record in your Learning Notebook (your own notebook for this course).

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You do not need to write a lot. A few useful sentences are enough.

3.10 Visit the Resource Library

Workplace Application: Look for short A2 workplace texts that match your goal, such as messages, notices, and schedules.

You have now learned a few basic ways to improve your A2 reading.

But these are only a starting point.

Visit the Resource Library to find more, such as:

- short articles;
- graded stories (stories written for your level);
- dialogues;
- everyday information;
- news for English learners; and
- websites with reading exercises.

Look for resources that match:

- your A2 level;
- your reading goal;
- General English or Workplace English;
- the kind of English you want; and
- your interests.

You do not need to try everything.

Choose a few resources that look useful to you.

If you are not sure which resource to choose, ask AI for help.

For example:

“I am an A2 English learner. I want to read short texts about everyday life. Which resource in the Resource Library would be good for me?”

You can make a short list of resources you like.

Keep your list in your Learning Notebook and try one resource this week.

Layer 4 — Reflection and Growth

4.1 Self-Assessment — “I Can...”

Now that you have finished this chapter, think about what you can do.

My Reading Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
understand the main idea of a short, simple text.	☐	☐	☐
find important information.	☐	☐	☐
guess the meaning of some new words from context.	☐	☐	☐
use simple reading strategies.	☐	☐	☐
understand a short text without understanding every word.	☐	☐	☐

My Workplace Reading Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
understand a short, simple workplace message or notice.	☐	☐	☐
find times, dates, places, and names in a workplace text.	☐	☐	☐
understand simple instructions about a familiar work task.	☐	☐	☐
tell someone the important information from a workplace text.	☐	☐	☐
use AI to practice A2 workplace reading when I need it.	☐	☐	☐

My Learning Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
choose a reading goal.	☐	☐	☐
choose a reading activity that matches my goal.	☐	☐	☐
try a reading strategy.	☐	☐	☐
use AI when I need help.	☐	☐	☐
collect simple evidence of my progress.	☐	☐	☐
think about what helped me learn.	☐	☐	☐
choose what to practice next.	☐	☐	☐

My Workplace Learning Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
choose a short workplace reading activity that matches my goal.	☐	☐	☐
collect simple evidence that I reached my workplace reading goal.	☐	☐	☐
choose my next workplace reading activity.	☐	☐	☐

You do not need to check “Yes” for everything today.

Your goal is to keep improving.

4.2 Reflection and My Next Step

Workplace Reflection: Think about a workplace text you read. What was easy? What was difficult? Did you find the important information? What do you need to practice next?

Think about your experience.

- What was easiest for me?
- What was most difficult?
- Which reading strategy helped me most?
- Did guessing from context help me?
- Did AI help me? How?
- Which resource did I like?
- What would I like to practice next?

Record your answers in your Learning Notebook.

Keep your reflection short.

A few sentences are enough.

4.3 Independent Learning Tip

Workplace Application: At work, first look for the important information, such as a time, date, place, or task. You do not need to understand every word.

Don’t try to understand every word.

First, look for the **main idea**.

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Then look for **important information**.

When you see a new word, try to guess its meaning from the context before using a dictionary.

A little reading practice often is better than a lot of practice once in a while.

Try to read English often, even for only 15–20 minutes.

4.4 Your Next Step

Workplace Application: Your next step might be to read another short workplace text, such as a schedule, a notice, or a message.

You have learned several basic strategies and tools for A2 reading.

They are **not the only ways to improve**.

As you go through the course, you will find more strategies, more ways to use AI, and more resources.

After the course, you can keep learning at your own speed with the Resource Library.

Your learning will grow as you find out:

- what you need;
- what you enjoy;
- what works for you; and
- what you want to improve next.

You don't need to open every door.

Choose the door that helps you reach your current goal.

4.5 Remember

Assess → Plan → Choose → Practice → Evaluate → Reflect → Improve

You are not finished when you complete one reading activity.

You choose your next goal and keep learning.

That is how you become your own English teacher.