

B1 Writing — General English + Workplace English

JBK Independent Learning Program

Layer 1 — The Learning Goal

1.1 CEFR Learning Objective — B1 Writing

By the end of this chapter, you will be better able to write connected texts about familiar topics. You will put your ideas in a clear order and support them with reasons, examples, and opinions.

You will also learn how to become your own writing teacher by using learning strategies (ways to help you learn), AI, free resources, and your own learning goals.

1.2 What Will I Learn?

In this chapter, you will learn how to:

- choose a useful writing goal;
- understand a writing assignment;
- plan before you write;
- organize and connect your ideas;
- write a connected text with a beginning, middle, and end;
- give reasons and examples;
- check your writing;
- use AI to help you improve;
- revise your writing;
- evaluate your progress; and
- choose your next writing activity.

At B1, your goal is not to write difficult English.

Your goal is to:

Communicate your ideas clearly and connect them well.

1.3 Why Should I Care About Writing?

Workplace Application (how to use this at work): At B1, writing helps you communicate clearly in familiar workplace situations. You may need to write professional emails, explain a problem, make a request, give information, or describe a work situation with reasons and examples.

You write English for many reasons.

You may need to:

- write an email;
- send a message;
- describe a person, place, or event;
- explain a plan or a problem;
- describe a past experience and how you felt;
- give an opinion and explain it;
- write at work; or
- communicate with friends and family.

Writing also helps you learn English.

When you write, you practice:

- vocabulary;
- grammar;
- sentence structure;
- spelling; and
- communication.

Writing gives you time to think about the English you use.

1.4 Your Learning Goal

Workplace Application: A useful B1 workplace goal might be “I can write a clear email explaining a simple problem,” “I can make a polite request in writing,” or “I can explain a work situation and give reasons.” Choose a goal that is useful to you.

There is no one writing goal that is right for every B1 learner.

Your goal should come from your own needs and interests.

You can use the “I Can...” statements of the CEFR (the European scale of language levels, from A1 to C2) to help you choose a goal.

For example:

I can write simple connected texts about familiar topics and link my ideas in a clear order.

You can choose a goal about:

- everyday life;
- family;
- travel;
- work;
- school;
- hobbies;
- friends; or

- another situation that is important to you.

For example:

I want to write clear emails at work that explain a problem.

Or:

I want to write paragraphs about my experiences and my opinions.

Choose a writing goal that is useful to you now.

1.5 How AI Can Help You Learn Writing

AI gives language learners many new ways to practice.

You can ask AI to:

- explain a writing assignment;
- help you understand difficult instructions;
- help you think of ideas, reasons, and examples;
- give feedback (comments that help you improve) on your writing;
- explain important grammar mistakes;
- explain vocabulary;
- suggest linking words and other ways to express an idea;
- help you check your writing;
- create extra practice; and
- help you choose your next activity.

AI can be your:

Writing Coach • Practice Partner • Learning Assistant

But writing is one skill where you need to be especially careful.

AI should:

help you become a better writer, not write your work for you.

You write.

AI helps.

You revise.

You are the learner who does the work.

Layer 2 — The Learning Method

2.1 How Can I Improve My Writing?

There are many ways to improve writing.

In this chapter, we will introduce a small number of useful strategies for B1 learners.

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

Try different strategies and discover which ones help you.

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

2.2 The Writing Learning Process

Writing has its own useful practice process:

Plan → Write → Review → Revise → Evaluate

This process works together with the JBK Independent Learning Cycle (seven steps to plan and check your own learning):

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

The writing process helps you work on the writing itself.

The JBK cycle helps you plan and check your learning.

You use the writing process in the Practice step of the cycle.

Step 1 — Plan

Workplace Application: Before writing a workplace text, think about your reader, purpose, main ideas, and supporting information. Make a short outline so your ideas are in a clear order.

Before you write, think about your ideas.

For a paragraph, write a few notes. Include your main idea, the details, and your reasons.

For example, if you are writing about a memorable day:

Where?

Boston

When?

Last summer

What happened?

Visited the city with a friend

How did I feel?

Very happy

Why was it special?

My first visit to a big city in the US

A plan helps you put your ideas in a clear order.

Step 2 — Write

Workplace Application: In B1 workplace writing, connect your ideas with simple linking words such as because, but, so, and however. Give reasons or examples when they help the reader understand your message.

Use your plan to write a connected paragraph.

At B1, use language you know.

Connect your ideas with linking words such as first, after that, because, so, and but.

For example:

Last summer, I visited Boston with my friend. First, we walked around the old part of the city. After that, we ate lunch in a small restaurant near the harbor. I had a very good time because it was my first visit to a big city in the US, and the weather was beautiful.

Your goal is to communicate your message clearly.

Step 3 — Review

Workplace Application: Review a workplace email, explanation, or short report for clear ideas, useful details, linking words, grammar, spelling, and the right tone.

Read your writing carefully.

Look for:

- the order of your ideas;

- linking words;
- subject + verb;
- verb tense;
- spelling;
- punctuation; and
- missing words.

You can also read your writing aloud.

Reading aloud can help you notice:

- missing words;
- grammar problems;
- awkward sentences; and
- sentences that are too long.

Step 4 — Revise

Workplace Application: Revise your workplace writing by improving unclear sentences, adding a missing reason or example, or changing the order of ideas so the reader can follow your message.

Make changes to your writing.

For example:

First draft:

I went to Boston. I visited places. I ate lunch. I was happy.

After checking the writing, you can revise it yourself:

Second draft:

I went to Boston last summer. First, I visited some famous places, and then I ate lunch near the harbor. I was happy because the weather was beautiful.

The important learning happens when **you make the changes**.

The goal is not only to find mistakes.

The goal is to learn from them.

Step 5 — Evaluate

Workplace Application: Ask yourself: Did I communicate my purpose clearly? Did I give enough information? Are my ideas connected? Would a coworker or supervisor understand what I mean?

Look at your writing and your learning goal.

Ask:

- Did I communicate my main idea?
- Did I include the important information?
- Did I give reasons or examples?
- Can another person understand my writing?
- Did I connect my ideas with linking words?
- Did I revise my work?

Then ask:

What should I practice next?

2.3 A Few Writing Strategies

We cannot teach every writing strategy in one chapter.

Instead, we will introduce a few strategies that are especially useful for B1 writing.

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

Plan Before Writing

Write your main idea and three or four supporting points before you begin.

This can help you organize your thoughts.

For example:

Topic: My Favorite Place

- Where?
- What does it look like?
- What do I do there?
- Why do I like it? (Give one reason or example.)

Use a Clear Structure

A paragraph can have a clear structure:

Beginning → Middle → Ending

For example:

Beginning: Introduce your main idea.

Middle: Give details, reasons, or examples.

Ending: Give your opinion, feelings, or a short conclusion.

A simple structure helps the reader follow your ideas.

Use Words You Know

Do not stop every time you do not know a difficult word.

Try to use words you already know.

If you cannot express an idea, you can ask AI:

“I don’t know how to say this idea in English. Give me three simple ways to express it.”

Then choose the expression that fits your meaning.

Rebecca Oxford Learning Strategies

Rebecca Oxford (a researcher who studied how people learn languages) described many strategies that language learners can use.

You do not need to learn or use all of them.

For B1 writing, here are some useful examples.

Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies help you plan and check your own learning.

Planning

Before writing, decide:

- What do I want to write?
- Why am I writing?
- What do I need to practice?
- How much time do I have?

For example:

Today I want to practice writing about a past experience. I will make a short plan, write one paragraph, and check my past-tense verbs.

Monitoring

While writing, ask yourself:

- Am I answering the question?
- Am I writing about the right topic?
- Can I understand what I am writing?
- Do I need to change something?

You do not have to wait until the end to check your work.

Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies (ways to practice the language itself) help you **work with the English you are learning**.

Taking Notes

Before writing, make short notes.

Write:

- important ideas;
- useful words;
- names;
- places; and
- information you want to include.

Do not write the whole text in your notes.

Use the notes to help you write.

Organize Your Ideas

Put your ideas in a simple order.

For example:

First → Next → Then → Finally

This can help you write about events in the correct order.

To give reasons and examples, you can use because, so, for example, and however.

Use a Model

Read a short example of the type of writing you want to produce.

Notice:

- the putting ideas in order;
- useful expressions;
- sentence patterns; and
- vocabulary.

Then write your own text.

Do not copy the example.

Use it as a model.

For more Oxford strategies, visit the **Resource Library**.

2.4 Personal Learning Strengths

There is no one best way to learn.

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

For example:

- **Linguistic** — writing stories, messages, and descriptions;
- **Logical-Mathematical** — organizing ideas and checking sentence patterns;
- **Spatial** — using pictures, charts, and simple diagrams to plan writing;
- **Interpersonal** — sharing your writing with another person or AI; and
- **Intrapersonal** — writing about your own experiences and thinking about your progress.

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

Use your strengths.

But try other activities too, not only your favorites.

A strategy that is not your favorite can still help you reach your goal.

2.5 Weekly Study Plan

Day	Activity	Time
Monday	Plan and write a connected paragraph	20 min
Tuesday	Check organization, linking words, and grammar	20 min
Wednesday	Write an email that explains a problem	20 min
Thursday	Revise an earlier piece of writing	20 min
Friday	Ask AI for feedback	20 min
Saturday	Write about a personal topic	20 min
Sunday	Review and reflect	20 min

Change the plan to match your own needs.

Your learning plan should help you reach your goal.

2.6 My Strategy Record

Keep a record of the strategies you try.

My writing goal:

Date	Strategy	Activity	How effective?	What did I learn?

Over time, you may find out things such as:

Planning helps me write more easily.

or:

Reading my writing aloud helps me find mistakes.

This information helps you become a more independent learner.

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:** paper, a notebook, and a partner.
- **Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet:** any phone with a voice recorder, and text messages (SMS).

- **Tier 3 — Limited Data:** free writing checkers, voice notes, and AI in text.
- **Tier 4 — Good Internet:** AI, all websites, and online resources.

3.1 Partner and AI Roles

Tier 1 — Paper and People

Reader: Your partner reads your paragraph and tells you what is clear and what is not clear.

Writing Partner: You and your partner write about the same topic. Then you compare your ideas and your linking words.

If you have no partner, wait one day. Then read your writing again with fresh eyes.

Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet

Recorder: Read your writing aloud and record it. Listen with your paper in front of you. Mark missing words and sentences that are too long, and rewrite them on paper.

Text Messages (SMS): Write short messages in English to a partner, for example to explain a change of plans. SMS needs no internet, but your plan may charge for each message, so use it sometimes.

Tier 3 — Limited Data

Writing Checkers: LanguageTool checks grammar and spelling. Cambridge Write & Improve gives feedback on a whole text. Both are in the Low-Data Edition of the Resource Library (its short list of websites that use little data).

AI in Text: Paste your paragraph and ask for feedback. Text uses very little data.

Tier 4 — Good Internet

For B1 writing, AI can be your:

- **Writing Coach**
- **Practice Partner**
- **Learning Assistant**

3.2 AI Functions

AI can help you:

- explain writing instructions;
- give feedback on your writing;

- explain important mistakes;
- suggest simple ways to express an idea;
- create more practice; and
- help you choose your next activity.

These are only a few ideas.

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

3.3 AI Tasks

For example, you can ask AI to:

- explain a writing assignment;
- give feedback on your paragraph;
- explain three important grammar mistakes;
- suggest simple ways to express an idea; or
- create a short writing activity.

3.4 Scripts and AI Prompts

Every tier has the same three tasks: understand the assignment, improve the organization, and get language feedback. Only the tool is different.

Tier 1 — With Paper and a Partner

Understand the Assignment: Read the assignment with a partner. Underline what you must do, who the reader is, and how long the text should be.

Improve Organization: Give your plan to a partner before you write. Your partner checks: is there a beginning, a middle, and an ending?

Get Language Feedback: Your partner marks up to three important mistakes. You correct them yourself.

Tier 2 — With Your Phone

Understand the Assignment: Record yourself explaining the assignment in your own words. Listen before you start.

Improve Organization: Read your paragraph aloud and record it. Listen. Do the ideas follow First → Next → Then → Finally? Mark any changes on your paper, and rewrite the paragraph.

Get Language Feedback: Send your partner two or three sentences by SMS. Ask for one correction.

Tier 3 — Checkers and Text Prompts

Understand the Assignment and Improve Organization: The prompts (the messages you write to AI) under Tier 4 are text prompts. They use little data, so you can use them too.

Get Language Feedback: Use Cambridge Write & Improve or LanguageTool. Read the feedback, and make the changes yourself.

Tier 4 — AI Prompts

Prompt 1 — Understand the Assignment

“I am a B1 English learner. Please explain this writing assignment in simple English. Tell me what I need to do and what information I should include. Don’t write the answer for me.”

Prompt 2 — Improve Organization

“Here is my B1 writing. Please tell me if my ideas are in a clear order. Tell me two things that work well and two things I could improve. Don’t rewrite my text.”

Prompt 3 — Get Language Feedback

“Here is my B1 writing. Please identify the three most important grammar or vocabulary problems. Explain why they are problems and let me correct them myself. Don’t rewrite the whole text.”

You can change these prompts to match your own goals.

3.5 Choose Your Writing Practice

Workplace Application: Choose a B1 workplace writing task that needs connected writing, such as a professional email, a short explanation, a polite request, or a description of a familiar work situation.

You do not need to use every resource or activity.

Choose one that matches your current goal.

You can choose General English or Workplace English.

You can also choose a writing situation that is useful to you.

Option 1 — Everyday Writing

Choose a writing activity about everyday life.

For example:

- compare your weekday and weekend routines;

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- describe a person who is important to you and explain why;
- describe a place and give your opinion of it;
- tell the story of a recent experience; or
- write a message that explains a change of plans.

Option 2 — Workplace Writing

Workplace Application: At B1, keep your workplace writing clear and connected. Focus on one purpose, and add useful details, reasons, or examples.

Choose a workplace writing activity.

For example:

- write an email that makes a polite request;
- write a message to a colleague;
- describe a work problem and suggest a solution;
- ask for information; or
- write a short report about something that happened at work.

Option 3 — Personal Goal

Choose a writing activity that helps with your own goal.

For example:

I want to write clear emails that explain problems.

or:

I want to write about my travel experiences and my opinions.

If you are not sure what activity to choose, ask AI:

“Please recommend a B1 writing activity that will help me reach this goal: [my goal].”

Practice in Your Tier

- **Tier 1 — Paper and People:** Write on paper. Ask a partner to read it and tell you one thing to improve.
- **Tier 2 — Phone, No Internet:** Write a short message to a partner by SMS. Or read your text aloud and record it. Listen, mark the problems on paper, and rewrite.
- **Tier 3 — Limited Data:** Check your text with Cambridge Write & Improve or LanguageTool.
- **Tier 4 — Good Internet:** Get feedback with the AI prompts in Section 3.4.

Choose one activity for now.

You can try another activity 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?

Who is my reader?

When and how will I practice?

3. Choose

Which activity or resource will I use?

Use the Resource Library or ask AI for help.

4. Practice

Complete the writing activity.

Use one or two strategies.

Use AI if it helps you.

5. Evaluate

Did my reader understand my message?

Did I give reasons or examples?

6. Reflect

What did I learn?

What worked well?

What was difficult?

Did AI help me?

7. Improve

What will I practice next?

You might:

- write a longer text with more reasons or examples;
- practice linking words;
- write an email;
- try the same activity again;
- try the activity without AI; or
- choose a slightly more difficult task.

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

3.7 This Week's Practice

Plan one writing practice for this week. Choose one B1 writing task related to your goal.

My writing goal:

Writing activity:

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

Strategy I will use:

When will I practice?

After you practice, fill in your Learning Record (your notes before and after each practice) in Section 3.8 and your Strategy Record (a table of the strategies you try) in Section 2.6.

3.8 My Learning Record

Workplace Application: Record the workplace situation, your writing goal, useful expressions, the strategy you used, what was difficult, and what you want to improve next.

Use this record before and after each writing practice.

Before I Write

My writing goal:

What will I write?

Resource / model / person / AI:

My writing strategy:

What will I focus on?

When will I practice?

After I Write

What did I write about?

What did I learn?

What worked well?

What was difficult?

What did I improve?

What will I practice next?

Workplace English

What workplace writing situation am I practicing?

What is my purpose and who is my reader?

What important information, reason, or example will I include?

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

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

3.9 The Writing Revision Cycle

Remember that writing gives you an important chance:

First Draft → Feedback → Revision → Second Draft

You write the first draft (your first version of the text).

You get useful feedback.

You decide what to change.

You write the second draft.

The goal is not to make the writing perfect.

The goal is to **learn from the first draft and improve the second one.**

3.10 Responsible Use of AI

Workplace Application: If you use AI with workplace writing, write your own draft first. Ask AI to explain important problems or suggest areas to improve. Then make the changes yourself and check that the final message says what you mean.

When you use AI for writing, remember:

Good use

You write → AI helps → You revise

Poor use

AI writes → You submit

The first process helps you become a better writer.

The second process does not help you learn in the same way.

If you are not sure how to use AI, ask:

“How can I use AI to help me improve this writing without asking AI to write it for me?”

3.11 Visit the Resource Library

You have now learned several basic ways to improve your B1 writing.

But these are only a starting point.

The Resource Library has more writing resources, activities, strategies, and tools.

Look for resources that match:

- your B1 level;
- your writing goal;
- General English or Workplace English;
- your interests; and
- the type of writing you want to practice.

You do not need to try everything.

Choose a few resources that look useful to you.

If you need help choosing, ask AI.

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

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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 English Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
write simple connected texts about familiar topics.	☐	☐	☐
describe a personal experience and my feelings.	☐	☐	☐
communicate my main idea clearly.	☐	☐	☐
organize my ideas in a clear order.	☐	☐	☐
connect my ideas with linking words.	☐	☐	☐
give reasons, examples, and opinions.	☐	☐	☐
use words I know to express my ideas.	☐	☐	☐
check some important grammar mistakes.	☐	☐	☐
check spelling and punctuation.	☐	☐	☐
revise my writing.	☐	☐	☐

My Learning Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
choose a useful writing goal.	☐	☐	☐
understand a writing assignment.	☐	☐	☐
choose a writing strategy.	☐	☐	☐
use AI to support my writing.	☐	☐	☐
ask AI for feedback without asking it to write my work.	☐	☐	☐
use feedback to improve my writing.	☐	☐	☐
record what I practiced and learned.	☐	☐	☐
choose my next writing activity.	☐	☐	☐

My Workplace Skills

I can...	Yes	Sometimes	Not yet
choose a B1 workplace writing goal.	☐	☐	☐
write a connected workplace email or message.	☐	☐	☐
explain a familiar work situation.	☐	☐	☐
make a polite request in writing.	☐	☐	☐
give reasons or examples.	☐	☐	☐
organize my ideas clearly.	☐	☐	☐
revise my writing.	☐	☐	☐
use AI to support my learning without asking it to write my work.	☐	☐	☐

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

Your goal is to **keep improving**.

4.2 Reflection

Workplace Reflection: Think about a workplace text you may need to write. Who will read it? Why are you writing? What information, reasons, or examples will the reader need? What will you practice next?

Think about your experience.

- What was easy?
- What was difficult?
- Which strategy helped me most?
- Did planning help me?
- Did reading my writing aloud help me?
- Did AI help me? How?
- What did I learn from revising my writing?
- What will I try next time?

Answer in a few clear sentences.

Try to give a reason for each answer.

Record your answers in your Learning Notebook.

4.3 Independent Learning Tip

Workplace Application: Practice writing complete workplace messages with a clear purpose. After you write, review the organization and connections between your ideas before focusing on smaller language mistakes.

Don't try to write perfect English.

First, try to communicate your message clearly.

Then:

Plan → Write → Review → Revise → Evaluate

Every time you revise your writing, you have a chance to learn.

And remember:

You write. AI helps. You revise.

That is how AI can help your learning without doing the learning for you.

4.4 Your Next Step

Workplace Application: Choose one B1 workplace writing task for your next practice—such as an email explaining a problem, a polite request, or a short explanation of a work situation.

You have learned several basic strategies and tools for B1 writing.

Now choose one small writing activity.

You might:

- write a paragraph that gives your opinion and reasons;
- write an email;
- describe a person or place and explain why it is important to you;
- write about a recent experience;
- practice one grammar point; or
- revise something you wrote before.

If you are not sure what to do next, ask AI:

“I am a B1 English learner. I have finished this writing activity. Give me three choices for my next writing practice.”

Then choose one.

Your writing will improve step by step.

4.5 Remember

Good writing practice is not:

Write → Finish

It is:

Plan → Write → Review → Revise → Evaluate

And independent learning is:

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

You do not need to become a perfect writer.

You need to become a learner who knows:

what to practice, how to practice, and what to do next.

That is how you become your own English teacher.