AZMOON ENGLISH LAB

ISSUE 03 / B1-B2

40 PAGES

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT YET PERFORMANCE.

Think Under Pressure

Why strong English knowledge still needs concentration, strategy, timing and authentic practice

EDITORIAL DIALOGUE

BEYOND GRAMMAR & VOCABULARY

SMART READING · LISTENING · WRITING

EXAM THINKING

SPEAKING · PRONUNCIATION · PRACTICE

KNOW → PROCESS → PERFORM

EDITORIAL

Knowledge is not the whole exam

S: "I think I should get a good mark this time".

T: "How come?"

S: "I have studied all vocabulary books. C1 and C2. So I expect to get a 7 or even 8, shouldn't I?"

T: "I am afraid not!!

S: "..and I have studied all grammar books recommended by websites and exam references....so I am ready. "

T: "I am sorry to say no."

S: "There is not any type of reading texts that I cannot comprehend fully. So I have to ..."

T: "Still Not!!"

S: "I have passed all general English course and participated in many English classes."

T: "Good to hear it, but I am not gonna lie that you will pass the exam!!"

S: "I can write fast, I can speak fluently, and I understand most of films and news channels..."

T: "I appreciate it, and congratulate it! but No! "

S: "I think you say this because you want to encourage me to study more!"

T: "I never stop encouraging people not to stop learning and exploring!"

S: "Pardon! Can you repeat your sentence please?"

T: "Why? Did it have any new word you did not know?"

S: "No no! Not at all! But I heard two "stops"s and two "not"s and it was confusing."

T: "Then, I think you are not going to get the score you think you will!"

S: "I want to take advantage of learning at any moment ! Can you please say again?"

T: "I do not think not following the rule of 'not articulating no more than once' for someone who has already read substantially and comprehensively can be helpful for his English!"

S: !!!!

T: "Did you come around it?"

S: Well! Yes! Actually not!"

T: "IELTS is not only going to assess your knowledge in English (grammar, vocabulary...). IELTS is a test that needs strong background in
1. Practicing real tests (or at least genuine-like tests) in real exam timing.
2. Concentration.
3. Analysis of information.
4. Appropriate and framework relevant answers.
5. Time managemnet.
6. Drilling and analysing the test aims.
7. An overwhelming number of test practices done before exam.
8. Practicing to think smart, encountering tests which have aimed it.
9. Doing tests and getting feedbacks from an accredited source.
10. Having a deep understanding from every type of questions techniques."

.....

T: "Now tell me, which one of the points above was the reason to ask me to repeat my sentence?"

Source: Amir Barooq

CONTENTS

What is inside Issue 03?

Issue 03 explores the gap between knowing English and performing effectively in an exam.

THIS ISSUE
Forty pages of strategy, language, analysis and practical routines for smarter performance.

04 **Knowledge vs performance**
What the exam actually demands

10 **Reading analysis**
Find the task behind the text

16 **Grammar people use**
Control complex negatives

22 **Phrasal verb story**
A plan that came together

28 **British English**
Everyday planning phrases

32 **Writing upgrade**
Answer the exact question

37 **7-Day exam-thinking sprint**
Train performance habits

07 **Concentration**
Protect attention under pressure

13 **Vocabulary in context**
Precision, not decoration

19 **Listening decisions**
Hear, hold, select

25 **Mistakes clinic**
Six accuracy repairs

30 **Pronunciation lab**
Thought groups and pausing

35 **IELTS Speaking**
Think, frame, develop

39 **Answer key**
Check the reasoning

START HERE

Knowledge must become a timed decision

In an exam, you do not simply show what you know. You select, organise and communicate it while time is moving.

Know

Vocabulary, grammar and topic knowledge.

Notice

The exact demand hidden in the question.

Choose

The most relevant evidence and structure.

Deliver

A clear answer within the available time.

The performance chain

Knowledge -> Attention -> Decision -> Response

COVER FEATURE

Why knowledge can fail under pressure

A learner may know every word in a sentence and still miss the relationship between its ideas.

Speed without selection

Fast reading can become uncontrolled scanning.

Fluency without structure

Continuous speech can hide a weak answer.

Accuracy without relevance

Correct language can still answer the wrong question.

The exam rewards usable control, not a warehouse of facts.

COVER FEATURE

Four gaps between knowing and doing

Retrieval gap

You recognise language but cannot produce it quickly.

Attention gap

You understand the topic but miss a limiting word.

Planning gap

You have ideas but cannot organise them efficiently.

Transfer gap

You know a technique but cannot use it in a new task.

HOMEWORK

TASK

Choose one recent task and identify the gap that affected it most.

TIME

8 minutes

USE

retrieval, attention, planning, transfer

SUCCESS

Name one piece of evidence from your performance.

CONCENTRATION

Attention is a limited exam resource

Concentration is not a personality trait. It is a set of choices that reduce unnecessary mental work.

Before the task

Read instructions once with a purpose.

During the task

Mark only information that changes your decision.

After the task

Use a short check rather than rereading everything.

Micro-reset
Stop for one breath. Name the task. Identify the next action. Continue.

CONCENTRATION PRACTICE

Spot the word that changes the task

1. Discuss both views and give your own opinion. Which three duties are required?
2. Choose TWO letters. What error occurs if you choose three?
3. No more than one word. Which otherwise correct answers become invalid?
4. To what extent do you agree? What must your position make clear?

HOMEWORK

TASK
Collect five instruction lines from genuine-like tests. Underline the words that control your response.

TIME
10 minutes

USE
both, two, one word, extent

SUCCESS
Explain how each control word changes the answer.

FOCUS ROUTINE

The 20-second recovery plan

1. Pause

Stop reading the same line repeatedly.

2. Locate

Find your exact place and current question.

3. Restate

Say the task in simple words.

4. Act

Make one small decision and continue.

Recovery is faster than panic disguised as effort.

READING ANALYSIS

Read relationships, not isolated words

Meaning often sits between sentences: contrast, cause, example, concession or sequence.

Contrast

however, whereas, yet

Cause

because, therefore, as a result

Example

for instance, such as

Concession

although, despite, even if

1. Which connector would signal an unexpected result?
2. Which relationship helps you predict an example?
3. Why can understanding every noun still be insufficient?

READING WORKSHOP

Build a paragraph map

Sentence 1: introduces a claim.

Sentence 2: limits the claim.

Sentence 3: gives supporting evidence.

Sentence 4: explains the consequence.

1. Which sentence probably contains the writer’s main position?
2. Which sentence prevents an overgeneralisation?
3. Where would a matching-heading distractor come from?

HOMEWORK

TASK

Map one paragraph from a recent reading test using four functional labels.

TIME

12 minutes

USE

claim, limit, evidence, consequence

SUCCESS

Every sentence has a job, not only a translation.

READING DECISIONS

When not to understand everything

Complete comprehension is valuable, but exam reading also requires selective depth.

Scan lightly

When locating a name, year or technical term.

Read closely

When comparing claims or evaluating paraphrase.

Move on

When one item is consuming the time needed for several others.

Return strategically

When later questions reveal the paragraph structure.

Decision rule
Spend depth where the question demands interpretation, not where the vocabulary merely looks difficult.

VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

Words for intelligent exam decisions

prioritise
decide what deserves attention first

constraint
a limit such as time or word count

infer
reach a conclusion from evidence

eliminate
remove an impossible option

allocate
give time or resources to a purpose

justify
support a choice with reasons

Collocations
prioritise tasks · work within constraints · infer meaning · eliminate options · allocate time · justify an answer

VOCABULARY STORY

The question that looked impossible

Nadia first **allocated** two minutes to understand the task. The time **constraint** meant she had to **prioritise** the strongest evidence. She could not translate one phrase, but she **inferred** its function from the contrast. After she **eliminated** two options, she could **justify** the final choice from the text.

1. What was Nadia’s first time decision?
2. How did she handle the unknown phrase?
3. What made the final choice defensible?

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Use the decision vocabulary

1. Good candidates _____ time before they begin writing.
2. A word-count rule is a task _____.
3. Use nearby evidence to _____ an unfamiliar meaning.
4. _____ options that directly contradict the passage.
5. _____ the most valuable questions when time is short.
6. Can you _____ your choice with a line from the text?

HOMEWORK

TASK
Write a 120-word account of a difficult test decision using four target words.

TIME
12 minutes

USE
allocate, constraint, infer, eliminate, prioritise, justify

SUCCESS
Show the problem, choice, evidence and result.

GRAMMAR PEOPLE USE

Control multiple negatives

I do not think the plan is ineffective.

Meaning: I probably think the plan is effective.

Negatives interact. A sentence can be grammatically possible but mentally expensive.

One negative

I do not agree.

Negative meaning

I doubt the claim.

Double negative effect

It is not impossible.

Careful interpretation

The speaker leaves room for possibility.

FORM & MEANING

Untangle the negative chain

1. I do not think she is unprepared. Is the speaker mainly positive or negative?
2. It is not uncommon. Does this mean rare or fairly common?
3. He never said the result was not valid. What exactly remains uncertain?
4. Rewrite “I do not disagree” in clearer language.

Exam habit
Circle each negative marker, then rebuild the base meaning before judging the sentence.

GRAMMAR CHECK

Make complex meaning easier

1. Rewrite clearly: It is not unlikely that prices will not fall.
2. Simplify: I cannot say that the method is not useful.
3. What does “not without difficulty” suggest?
4. Which is clearer in a timed essay: “not insignificant” or “important”?

HOMEWORK

TASK
Find three sentences with more than one negative marker. Explain and then simplify them.

TIME
12 minutes

USE
not, never, un-, doubt

SUCCESS
The simplified version keeps the original meaning.

LISTENING DECISIONS

Hear, hold, select

Listening questions test temporary memory as well as sound recognition.

Hear

Recognise the sound stream.

Hold

Keep the key detail briefly in memory.

Select

Match it to the question demand.

Record

Write within the word limit and grammar frame.

Do not store the whole sentence. Store the detail the question needs.

LISTENING LITE

One sentence, three decisions

Transcript: The workshop was originally planned for Thursday, but the final booking was moved to Friday afternoon.

1. Which day is the answer: Thursday or Friday?
2. Which word tells you the first date is no longer valid?
3. If the form says “Day: ____”, should you write “Friday afternoon” or “Friday”?

HOMEWORK

TASK
Ask a partner or text-to-speech tool to read the sentence twice. Write only the final day.

TIME
7 minutes

USE
originally, but, final

SUCCESS
Choose the corrected detail, not the first detail heard.

LISTENING DIAGNOSIS

Classify the failure

Sound failure

You did not identify the word.

Memory failure

You heard it but lost it before writing.

Decision failure

You wrote an earlier detail after a correction.

Form failure

The idea was right but spelling or word limit failed.

HOMEWORK

TASK

Review five listening errors and assign one category to each.

TIME

10 minutes

USE

sound, memory, decision, form

SUCCESS

Each error receives a different repair action.

PHRASAL VERB STORY

A plan that came together

The team **mapped out** the week, **cut down on** distractions and **set aside** forty minutes for reading. When a mock test **brought up** a timing problem, they **went over** the evidence and **carried out** a shorter practice drill.

- map out = plan in detail
- cut down on = reduce
- set aside = reserve
- bring up = reveal or mention
- go over = review
- carry out = perform

MEANING & USE

Six verbs for purposeful practice

1. Which verb means reserve time?
2. Which verb means reduce something?
3. We need to _____ the evidence before deciding.
4. The test _____ a weakness in note completion.
5. They _____ a two-week study plan.
6. The tutor _____ a short diagnostic task.

Grammar note

Set aside and map out are separable. Go over a document is not normally separated.

STORY RETELL

Make the planning verbs yours

HOMEWORK

TASK

Retell the story using four phrasal verbs. Change the distraction and practice drill.

TIME

12 minutes

USE

map out, cut down on, set aside, bring up, go over, carry out

SUCCESS

A logical sequence and four accurate phrasal verbs.

A plan improves when evidence changes the next action.

COMMON MISTAKES CLINIC

Three errors that blur meaning

~~According to me, the task was unfair.~~

In my opinion, the task was unfair.

Use according to for another source, not normally yourself.

~~I could not focus in the question.~~

I could not focus on the question.

Focus on is the fixed combination.

~~She explained me the strategy.~~

She explained the strategy to me.

Explain something to someone.

COMMON MISTAKES CLINIC

Three more repairs

~~The exam contains less questions.~~

The exam contains fewer questions.

Use fewer with countable plural nouns.

~~I have difficulty to concentrate.~~

I have difficulty concentrating.

Difficulty is followed by an -ing form here.

~~Despite I was tired, I continued.~~

Although I was tired, I continued.

Despite needs a noun phrase; although introduces a clause.

REPAIR SESSION

Correct, explain, produce

1. According to me, timing is the main problem.
2. I need to focus in the final paragraph.
3. The tutor explained me the answer.
4. This section has less examples.
5. I have difficulty to remember names.
6. Despite I knew the words, I missed the meaning.

HOMEWORK

TASK
Correct all six sentences and write one original example for each pattern.

TIME
15 minutes

USE
in my opinion, focus on, explain to, fewer, difficulty -ing, although

SUCCESS
Twelve accurate sentences in total.

BRITISH ENGLISH

Six phrases for plans and decisions

have a think
consider something

work something out
solve or understand it

keep an eye on
watch or monitor

at a push
if absolutely necessary

on track
progressing as planned

call it a day
stop working for now

Register
These are common in informal British conversation. Use neutral alternatives in formal essays.

BRITISH ENGLISH IN CONTEXT

Planning a final practice session

LEAH Are we still on track for Friday?

OMAR Yes, although I need to work out the timing for Part 3.

LEAH Have a think tonight. I can keep an eye on the clock tomorrow.

OMAR Could we finish by five?

LEAH At a push. Then we should call it a day.

1. Which phrase means progressing as planned?
2. What will Leah monitor?
3. Which phrase suggests limited possibility?
4. When will they stop?

PRONUNCIATION LAB

Use thought groups to guide meaning

Although I knew the words / I missed the writer’s point.

A short pause helps the listener process the contrast.

Group by meaning

Keep related words together.

Pause at boundaries

Do not pause after every word.

Stress the focus

Highlight the new or contrasting idea.

Keep function words light

Articles and auxiliaries are usually less prominent.

PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

One sentence, clear structure

HOMEWORK

TASK

Record: “If I manage my time carefully, I can check the final paragraph before the test ends.” Mark two thought-group boundaries first.

TIME

12 minutes

USE

pause, stress, rhythm

SUCCESS

The listener can hear the condition, result and time limit.

Challenge

Record it again at a slightly faster speed without losing the thought groups.

WRITING UPGRADE

Answer the exact question

RELATED BUT INCOMPLETE

Technology has changed education in many ways.

↓TASK-FOCUSED

Schools should use technology when it improves access to feedback, but they should not replace teacher judgement in complex learning decisions.

- Name the decision in the question.
- State a clear position.
- Limit the claim.
- Keep examples relevant to that position.

WRITING WORKSHOP

From topic to task

Topic: online courses. Task: Do their advantages outweigh their disadvantages?

Weak plan

List every advantage and disadvantage you know.

Strong plan

Choose the side that outweighs the other and compare significance.

Weak example

People can learn online.

Strong example

Working adults can access recorded lessons outside fixed class hours.

1. What comparison does “outweigh” require?

2. Which example supports access rather than quality?

TIMED WRITING

Plan in four minutes

Minute 1: identify the exact duty.

Minute 2: choose your position.

Minute 3: select two strongest reasons.

Minute 4: attach one specific example to each.

HOMEWORK

TASK

Plan an essay on whether public money should support arts or essential services.

TIME

10 minutes

USE

position, reason, example, limitation

SUCCESS

A reader can predict the entire argument from the plan.

IELTS SPEAKING

Think, frame, develop

Question

Do people make better decisions when they have more information?

POSITION
Give a qualified answer.

CONDITION
Explain when it is true.

EXAMPLE
Use a realistic decision.

LIMIT
Show how too much information may confuse.

Useful opening
More information can improve a decision when it is relevant and organised; however, too much detail may delay action.

IELTS SPEAKING

Pause to think without sounding lost

A short organised pause is better than immediate unfocused speech.

Frame

That depends largely on...

Clarify

By that, I mean...

Develop

A good example would be...

Balance

Having said that...

HOMEWORK

TASK

Record a 90-second answer to the question on page 35. Use all four stages.

TIME

15 minutes

USE

depends, mean, example, having said that

SUCCESS

Clear position, development and limitation.

7-DAY EXAM-THINKING SPRINT

Days 1-4: attention and decisions

DAY 1

Instructions

Collect five task-control words.

DAY 2

Relationships

Map contrast, cause and example in a paragraph.

DAY 3

Timing

Allocate time before a short task.

DAY 4

Negatives

Untangle three complex negative sentences.

7-DAY EXAM-THINKING SPRINT

Days 5-7: transfer and pressure

DAY 5

Listening

Track one corrected detail.

DAY 6

Speaking

Frame and develop an answer in 60 seconds.

DAY 7

Proof

Complete a timed mixed-skills task and review decisions.

Success is visible in the decision.

Record what you noticed, chose and changed.

ANSWER KEY

Check the reasoning, not only the answer

Page 8: both views + own opinion; choose exactly two; extra words invalidate the answer; the degree of agreement must be clear.

Page 15: allocate; constraint; infer; eliminate; prioritise; justify.

Page 17: mainly positive; fairly common; whether the result was valid is not directly stated; “I partly agree” or “I agree”.

Page 20: Friday; but/final; Friday.

Page 23: set aside; cut down on; go over; brought up; mapped out; carried out.

Page 27: In my opinion; focus on; explained the answer to me; fewer examples; difficulty remembering; Although I knew...

Page 29: on track; the clock; at a push; after finishing by five.

Open tasks
For writing and speaking, use the success criteria. Different answers can succeed when their reasoning is clear.

FINAL PAGE

Know. Notice. Decide. Perform.

THE ISSUE 03 MESSAGE

English knowledge gives you tools. Exam thinking helps you choose the right tool at the right moment.

Use Azmoon to practise authentic decisions, timing, feedback and transfer.

Writing Studio | Grammar Lab | Dictation Lab

Next issue

Building flexible answers without memorising unnatural scripts.

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