

C1 EXAM BOOSTER

Cambridge Advanced



Why Does Advanced Language Matter So Much?

Using advanced expressions isn't just a "nice extra" in the C1 exam—it can be the difference between a Band 3 (passing the exam) and a Band 5 (getting a high mark). Here's why:



Band 3 - You're doing a solid job. You can talk and write about familiar and unfamiliar topics, and you use good vocabulary and grammar. But your language may sound safe, and you may repeat structures or phrases



Band 5 - You stand out. You handle abstract topics with ease, express ideas in a clear and flexible way, and use a wide range of precise, natural vocabulary. You sound like someone who uses English comfortably in the real world.

So every phrase you use well is a signal that you're not just fluent, but skilled.



Let's boost your Speaking and Writing with the language examiners love to hear!

Task A – Match the Expressions to Their Meaning

Match each advanced expression to its correct explanation:

Expression	Meaning
1. What cannot be overlooked is...	A. Don't assume something too quickly
2. It stands to reason	B. In general / overall
3. From where I stand	C. This is my personal viewpoint
4. Let's not jump to conclusions	D. Something is too important to ignore
5. By and large	E. It's logical and expected



Task B – Complete the Sentences

Fill in the gaps using one of the expressions from **Task A**:

1. I agree that technology has benefits, but _____ is the effect on our attention span.
2. _____, most students prefer working in pairs
3. We don't have all the facts yet, so _____.
4. _____, I think the proposal is worth considering
5. Given the increase in prices, _____ that many families are struggling

Exam Gold: Connectors



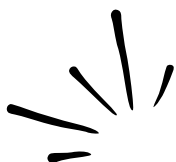
Why This Matters at C1

Using advanced connectors like “ <i>That being said</i> ” or “ <i>All things considered</i> ” is not just about sounding fancy —it’s about showing control of language and clarity of ideas , which directly affects your exam results.	
In Speaking , these phrases improve your Discourse Management mark.	
In Writing , they boost your Organisation score	
Using connectors like these is often what separates a Band 3 (adequate) from a Band 5 (impressive and controlled) on the assessment scale	

Part 1 – The Expressions

Here are some expressions you can use to connect your ideas:

To my mind,	It might well be the case that...	There's a strong possibility that...	I'm inclined to believe that...
All things considered,	It's worth pointing out that...	If you ask me...	It's highly likely that...
In spite of this, ...	One could argue that...	That being said,	It seems to me that...
Let's not underestimate the importance of...	Even though that may be true,	Nevertheless,	What really stands out is that...



Part 2 – The Categories

Now put the expressions into the correct category:

Expressing Contrast	Adding Emphasis
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Speculating	Giving Your Opinion
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Part 3 – Upgrade It!

Instructions: Rewrite each basic sentence using one of the expressions from the list.

Original Sentence	Upgrade Using a Gold Connector
I think it's a good idea to let students choose their own projects.	_____
People say that working from home is better, but that's not always true.	_____
Some people believe that exams are the best way to measure knowledge.	_____
It's possible that the event was cancelled because of low attendance.	_____
Technology is helpful, but it can also make us more distracted.	_____

Speaking Challenge – Pick and Use

Instructions: Choose 3 expressions from the list and use them in your answer to one of the following questions:

- Should university be free?
- Are we too dependent on technology?
- Is remote work better than office work?



Bonus: Try to include one phrase from each category:

- 1 contrast phrase
- 1 emphasis phrase
- 1 speculation or opinion phrase

Exam Gold: Advanced Expressions



Using advanced collocations and idiomatic expressions shows that you have a **strong, flexible command of English**. It can make the difference between sounding “okay” and sounding **confident and fluent**.

Part 1 - Match each expression to the correct meaning or context. Write the letter of the correct match.

Phrase	Meaning/Context
1. To take a toll on	a) To show you're willing to listen
2. To broach a topic	b) To cause harm over time
3. To bear in mind	c) To bring up a sensitive issue
4. To lend an ear	d) To get straight to the point
5. To cut to the chase	e) To remember something important
6. To speak volumes	f) To reveal a lot without saying much
7. To weigh the pros and cons	g) To think carefully about both sides

Mini Open Cloze – Phrase Challenge CHALLENGE	Instructions: Write ONE word in each gap. All the gaps are part of useful expressions or collocations at C1 level.
Although the manager hesitated to (1) _____ the topic directly, it was clear that recent stress had begun to (2) _____ a toll on the team. Their silence during the meeting seemed to (3) _____ volumes about their level of frustration. It's important to (4) _____ in mind that productivity isn't just about deadlines — it's also about morale	

Part 2 – Upgrade It!

Replace each basic sentence with a more advanced version using expressions from Part 1 (or other C1-level language you've learned).

Basic Sentence	Upgrade Using Gold Language
"A lot of people think that..."	"It is widely believed that..."
"She started talking about the problem."	_____
"I want to say something before we continue."	_____
"It's important to remember this."	_____
"It was bad for her health."	_____
"We need to think about the good and bad sides."	_____
"His face showed how he felt."	_____

Bonus Task – Use It in Context

Choose two expressions from above and write a short paragraph (3–5 sentences) using both. Your paragraph can:

- **Present an opinion:** Do you think all students should spend time studying abroad before finishing university?
- **Reflect on an issue:** Social media has changed how we communicate — but has it done more harm than good?
- **Respond to a Part 4-style speaking prompt:** How important is it to take risks in life?

Aim to use the phrases naturally and clearly, just like you would in the exam!

C1 Exam Booster – Answer Key

Task A – Match the Expressions to Their Meaning

1. **What cannot be overlooked is...** – D. Something is too important to ignore
2. **It stands to reason** – E. It's logical and expected
3. **From where I stand** – C. This is my personal viewpoint
4. **Let's not jump to conclusions** – A. Don't assume something too quickly
5. **By and large** – B. In general / overall

Task B – Complete the Sentences with Expressions

1. I agree that technology has benefits, but **what cannot be overlooked is** the effect on our attention span.
2. **By and large**, most students prefer working in pairs.
3. We don't have all the facts yet, so **let's not jump to conclusions**.
4. **From where I stand**, I think the proposal is worth considering.
5. Given the increase in prices, **it stands to reason** that many families are struggling.

Connector Sorting Activity (Suggested Categories)

Expressing Contrast

- That being said.
- Even though that may be true
- In spite of this
- Nevertheless

Adding Emphasis

- It's worth pointing out that
- What really stands out is that
- Let's not underestimate the importance of
- All things considered,

Speculating

- It might well be the case that
- There's a strong possibility that
- It's highly likely that
- One could argue that

Giving Your Opinion

- To my mind
- It seems to me that
- I'm inclined to believe that...
- If you ask me...

Upgrade It – Sentence Rewrites

1. *To my mind, allowing students to choose their own projects enhances motivation and independence.*
2. *That being said, remote work isn't ideal for every profession or personality type.*
3. *One could argue that exams provide structure, though they may not assess practical skills.*
4. *It might well be the case that the event was cancelled due to limited public interest.*
5. *In spite of its benefits, technology can reduce our attention span.*

Phrase Puzzle – Match the Expression to Its Meaning

1. **To take a toll on** – b) To cause harm over time
2. **To broach a topic** – c) To bring up a sensitive issue
3. **To bear in mind** – e) To remember something important
4. **To lend an ear** – a) To show you're willing to listen
5. **To cut to the chase** – d) To get straight to the point
6. **To speak volumes** – f) To reveal a lot without saying much
7. **To weigh the pros and cons** – g) To think carefully about both sides

Mini Open Cloze – Phrase Challenge

1. broach
2. take
3. speak
4. bear

Phrase Puzzle – Rewrite It Better

1. *It is widely believed that...*
2. *She broached the topic of the issue.*
3. *Before we go any further, let me cut to the chase.*
4. *We must bear this in mind.*
5. *It really took a toll on her well-being.*
6. *We should weigh the pros and cons.*
7. *His expression spoke volumes.*