

CEFR LEVEL OVERVIEW

Teacher reference | A1-C2 | Expanded classroom guidance

Use this guide to interpret what learners can do, not to count grammatical structures or award a certificate. Each level page separates reading, listening, speaking and writing so uneven skill profiles remain visible.

Level	Broad communicative focus
A1	Basic personal communication
A2	Routine everyday exchanges
B1	Connected familiar communication
B2	Detailed discussion and argument
C1	Flexible, well-structured communication
C2	Nuanced, precise synthesis

How to use the descriptions

Gather evidence from more than one task. Consider how independently the student communicates, how well meaning is sustained and what happens when the question or audience changes. The same language feature can appear at several levels; successful use in context matters.

Record observed skills on the separate Student Level Check form. Use a range if evidence is mixed, and mark untested skills as not assessed. The written and speaking screens suggest follow-up tasks; they do not provide calibrated level boundaries.

The classroom examples illustrate possible tasks, not compulsory academic requirements. Everyday, creative and professional tasks can also reveal advanced language use.

Source and status

Original classroom summaries informed by Council of Europe (2020), CEFR Companion Volume. They are not official descriptor quotations and are not endorsed by the Council of Europe.

[Council of Europe: CEFR Companion Volume \(2020\) - official download](#)

Relevant scales: overall oral comprehension; overall reading comprehension; oral and written production; oral interaction; grammatical accuracy; qualitative spoken-language features.

A1 - BASIC PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Teacher reference | Read alongside the neighbouring levels

READING

Recognises familiar personal details, basic signs and short everyday instructions. Usually reads slowly and may work word by word; familiar context and clear layout help.

LISTENING

Understands basic personal questions and very familiar words when delivery is slow and clear. Repetition, pauses and supportive gestures may be needed.

SPEAKING AND INTERACTION

Production: Gives brief phrases about self, home and familiar preferences. **Interaction:** Asks and answers basic personal questions when the partner helps maintain the exchange.

WRITING

Writes personal details and short separate sentences about familiar matters. Limited forms and vocabulary may produce frequent errors, but basic intended meaning can be recognised.

CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Uses a small stock of learned expressions. Support is expected; assess whether a basic message is conveyed rather than requiring long, fluent answers.

DISTINGUISHING THE NEXT STEP

Look for a move from isolated replies to short practical exchanges: making arrangements, simple descriptions and linking ideas with and, but or because.

Example classroom check: After rehearsal, introduce yourself and ask a partner two personal questions.

A2 - ROUTINE EVERYDAY EXCHANGES

Teacher reference | Read alongside the neighbouring levels

READING

Finds straightforward information in short messages, notices, schedules and familiar descriptions. Can follow predictable material, but unfamiliar wording or dense text may still slow understanding.

LISTENING

Follows short, clear messages and common everyday exchanges when the subject is familiar. Longer speech or unexpected changes may require repetition or clarification.

SPEAKING AND INTERACTION

Production: Describes familiar people, routines or past activities in a short series of phrases.

Interaction: Handles routine requests and arrangements; longer conversation may need help.

WRITING

Writes short notes, messages and simple connected descriptions. Uses common linking words; errors remain noticeable, especially when attempting less familiar meanings.

CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Has enough everyday language for predictable situations. Communication becomes less reliable outside familiar patterns; do not mistake a well-rehearsed introduction for wider independence.

DISTINGUISHING THE NEXT STEP

Look for connected accounts, explanations of reasons and the ability to manage a familiar problem without relying on a rehearsed script.

Example classroom check: Arrange a meeting, ask for a change of time and give a brief reason.

B1 - CONNECTED FAMILIAR COMMUNICATION

Teacher reference | Read alongside the neighbouring levels

READING

Understands the main points and relevant detail in straightforward texts on familiar interests or everyday matters. Can follow a clearly presented account, explanation or opinion.

LISTENING

Understands the main message of clear speech about familiar matters. Rapid, idiomatic or densely argued speech may still be difficult, even when individual words are known.

SPEAKING AND INTERACTION

Production: Gives a connected account of experiences with understandable reasons. **Interaction:** Manages common unexpected situations, clarifies meaning and keeps a familiar discussion going.

WRITING

Produces connected text about familiar subjects, with a sequence the reader can follow. Can describe experiences, explain a problem and give basic reasons for a recommendation.

CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Has enough language to express the main message independently in familiar contexts. Pauses and errors occur, particularly with complex ideas, but usually do not prevent understanding.

DISTINGUISHING THE NEXT STEP

Look for fuller development, comparison of alternatives and spontaneous responses to objections, rather than simply a longer version of the same familiar account.

Example classroom check: Explain a problem with a class activity and suggest a practical solution.

B2 - DETAILED DISCUSSION AND ARGUMENT

Teacher reference | Read alongside the neighbouring levels

READING

Follows substantial texts and arguments, identifies viewpoints and locates supporting detail. Reading is reasonably independent, though unfamiliar specialised material may require rereading.

LISTENING

Follows extended speech and developed arguments when the topic and organisation are accessible. Can identify the speaker's position, though very compressed or culturally dense language may cause difficulty.

SPEAKING AND INTERACTION

Production: Gives clear, detailed explanations and supports a position. **Interaction:** Compares alternatives and responds spontaneously to follow-up questions without constant partner support.

WRITING

Writes clear, detailed texts with organised arguments, relevant support and a suitable conclusion. Can discuss advantages and drawbacks and adjust tone to a reasonably familiar purpose.

CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Uses a useful range of structures and vocabulary with generally effective control. Some searching or imperfect phrasing remains; this should not be confused with inability to discuss complex content.

DISTINGUISHING THE NEXT STEP

Look for flexible handling of implied meaning, deliberate register choices and carefully qualified claims, including when the situation or viewpoint changes.

Example classroom check: Compare two course arrangements, defend a choice and answer an objection.

C1 - FLEXIBLE, WELL-STRUCTURED COMMUNICATION

Teacher reference | Read alongside the neighbouring levels

READING

Interprets demanding extended texts, including implied positions and connections that are not fully signposted. Can bring together information while distinguishing a source's claim from its supporting evidence.

LISTENING

Follows complex extended speech and recognises implied attitudes or shifts in register. Can usually maintain understanding without every connection being explicitly explained.

SPEAKING AND INTERACTION

Production: Structures complex contributions, qualifies claims and adapts expression to purpose.

Interaction: Responds flexibly to challenges and manages disagreement tactfully with little obvious strain.

WRITING

Produces clear, well-organised complex texts with developed reasoning and controlled tone. Can synthesise sources while keeping differences, reservations and the reader's needs visible.

CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Shows broad range and consistently high grammatical accuracy; errors are rare and generally corrected when they occur. Occasional searching does not disrupt fluent communication. Judge sustained performance, not a few advanced expressions.

DISTINGUISHING THE NEXT STEP

Look for consistently precise distinctions, economical reformulation and sensitive handling of style and ambiguity across several demanding tasks. Seek further evidence before claiming C2.

Example classroom check: Turn several competing views into a tactful recommendation for a course coordinator.

C2 - NUANCED, PRECISE SYNTHESIS

Teacher reference | Read alongside the neighbouring levels

READING

Handles very demanding material, including subtle stance, idiom and intricate argument. Can reconcile multiple sources without flattening significant differences or turning uncertainty into certainty.

LISTENING

Understands virtually any spoken language, including fast natural delivery and subtle attitudes or emphasis. Some time to become familiar with an unfamiliar accent may be needed. Specialist subject knowledge is a separate consideration.

SPEAKING AND INTERACTION

Production: Conveys fine shades of meaning precisely and reformulates smoothly for different audiences. **Interaction:** Handles demanding exchanges coherently, responding to subtle changes in another speaker's position.

WRITING

Creates precise, coherent texts with effective structure and deliberate stylistic choices. Can synthesise difficult source material, preserve qualifications and shape the result for a specific reader and purpose.

CONTROL AND SUPPORT

Maintains grammatical control of complex language even while attention is on demanding content. Flexibility and precision are sustained; isolated slips can occur. A native-like accent or specialist knowledge is not required.

DISTINGUISHING THE NEXT STEP

Use repeated samples and established benchmarks to confirm this estimate. One sophisticated answer or a high grammar score cannot distinguish C2 reliably from strong C1 performance.

Example classroom check: Reconcile conflicting evaluations, retain uncertainty and adapt the conclusion for two audiences.