

Functional Skills English

Exam Tips

Master tricky plurals

Some words don't follow the usual "add an -s" rule (like child → children or foot → feet). Make a list of irregular plurals and test yourself. You'll get extra marks for correct spelling!

Know your icons

In the reading test, you might see symbols from social media (like the Twitter bird or Instagram camera). Make sure you can recognise and describe common ones – especially if the question asks what they mean.

Give full answers in speaking tasks

If you're asked something like "What's your favourite food?", don't stop at "Pizza." Explain why:

"My favourite food is pizza because it's easy to share and you can add lots of different toppings."

Practise adding reasons or examples to every answer.

Build up your writing stamina

You'll need to write long answers – like letters, emails or articles – using proper structure. Before your exam, practise writing at least 150–200 words and focus on:

- Getting your point across clearly
- Using paragraphs
- Adding relevant detail

Use words in context

If you're asked to define a word, don't just write the dictionary definition. Think about how the word is used in the sentence. For example:

If the question says: "What does *reliable* mean in this sentence?", explain it in your own words as it relates to that sentence.