

## Activity 2: Organising a Kids' Party

**Level:**

CEFR C1

**Time:**

90 minutes

**Resources:**

- ▶ Handouts
- ▶ Smartboard

**Aims:**

- ▶ To be able to identify the various different purposes of texts
- ▶ To raise learners' awareness of the expectations in Task 3 of the Reading exam
- ▶ To feel confident in evaluating different sources

**Exam task focus:** Task 3

### Procedure

1. Tell learners they are going to practise Task 3 of the exam, and in particular they will be focusing on trying to find the truth among different source texts.
2. Set the context. Tell learners they'll be reading about some people who tried to organise a kids' party. Ask how many people in the room have organised kids' parties themselves.
3. Hopefully several people will have had this experience. Depending on the number of people who have, organise the class into groups where each group contains at least one person who has organised a kids' party. Get the other person (or people) in the group to 'interview' their partner on the experience. How did it go? Was it stressful? Was it fun? Did the children enjoy it? Did anything go wrong?
4. After a few minutes, ask for selected feedback on the best (or worst) anecdotes.
5. Give out Handout activity 1 (Text A). Once everyone has the advert, ask them to read it and decide:
  - ▶ whether they think this sounds like a suitable activity for a kids' party
  - ▶ whether they would choose it if they were organising a kids' party
  - ▶ what might go wrong if they did
6. Discuss their thoughts briefly as a group – you can try and relate the ideas to the anecdotes from the previous discussion.
7. Write the phrase 'Reading between the lines' on the board. Ask learners if they know the expression – get someone to explain to the rest of the class or explain it yourself if no one is aware of it. It means getting at the truth of what a text doesn't say explicitly – sometimes the actual words on the page only tell half the story, but if you read it carefully you can usually see the implied message below the surface.

8. Give out Handout activity 2a (Text E – we'll come back to the other texts later, but this would be Text E on the exam as they always appear in date order) and Handout activity 2b. Ask them to complete the 'Reading between the lines' activity in Handout activity 2b – remind them to read the initial review first, then pause and complete the first two questions before moving onto the response and answering the next three questions.
9. Once you are happy that most people have made some notes in each section, put them back in their pairs or groups and ask them to discuss their answers – who do they think is telling the truth? What do they think might have really happened?

*Note: This small 'Reading between the lines' activity can be repeated as many times as you like (as a filler in future lessons) with genuine reviews – just stay on the lookout for reviews with one or two star ratings that are relatively long, and have a relatively long 'owner response' to them – they nearly always tell two sides of the same story in this way. Print them out and use the same worksheet each time to practise evaluating both texts.*

10. Now give each learner a copy of Handout activity 3. This contains the remaining texts that might be found on a Reading exam, Texts B, C and D. Get them to scan very quickly through these texts to decide which ones might have more information to add to our 'story' of what really happened. Don't give them time to read it carefully – ask them almost immediately to feed back to you as a class.  
Answer: The Ts and Cs and the text messages provide more clues as to the truth of the matter.
11. Ask learners to read these two texts more carefully now, and then work with their partners (or groups) once again to review their answers to the question of what really happened on the day in light of this new information. Take some feedback as a group – do the whole class agree or are there differences of opinion? Of course, we can never really know, as we weren't there, but we can guess at a lot.
12. Explain that the Terms and Conditions are missing their headings – this is similar to one of the question types in Task 3 of the Reading exam. Give them a couple of minutes to look at these and 'pencil in' a likely heading for each section.
13. Now give them Handout activity 4 with the official titles and ask them to match the correct heading with each section. Check answers as a group – how many people got a very close match with their invented titles? Did they find it easier to match the headings after they'd spent a couple of minutes thinking up titles of their own?

Answers:

- A. 3 (ARRIVAL)
- B. 5 (PARTICIPANTS)
- C. 1 (DISCLAIMER)
- D. 2 (REFRESHMENTS)
- E. 4 (TRANSFER)

*Note: Again, this short activity can be repeated as a filler in future lessons with genuine Ts and Cs or FAQs on most websites, as they often have headings – simply copy and paste the main paragraph onto one sheet, get them to imagine what the heading might be, and then give them a separate sheet with the randomised real headings (or save paper by putting these up on the smartboard).*

14. Tell learners to return to Handout activity 3 (Texts B, C and D). Direct their attention to the text we haven't yet looked at – the email exchange. Once again, we're going to practise reading between the lines here. Ask them to make a few notes on the following points as they read the two emails:

- ▶ Think about the purpose of this text as a whole, then think about the purpose of each email individually. Is there more than one purpose to each email? What does the writer really want to achieve?
- ▶ How do both writers structure their arguments?
- ▶ Reading between the lines, what is the relationship like between these two friends?

15. Take feedback on these as a group, and make sure to cover the following points:

The purpose of the text is simply to discuss whether to use a specific service for an upcoming kids' party.

However, the first email has the following three distinct purposes (or aims), and this matches the structure of their argument:

- i. To suggest a service for a kids' party
- ii. To persuade someone that using this service would be a good idea
- iii. To convince them to take on all the work of booking the party

The second email has the following purposes (or aims), which also match the structure of their argument:

- i. To tentatively express concerns over the idea suggested
- ii. To politely point out that they are too busy to take on all the work
- iii. To keep the friend happy

Reading between the lines, the first friend is rather domineering and the second friend is timid and accepting. We could call her a 'doormat'. Many people can relate to the true purpose of her message – she desperately wants to avoid being landed with all the work, expense and hassle of dealing with this, but not at the cost of the friendship. We could predict that this person would be landed with all the work anyway, and that this would cause problems as she didn't really have time.

16. If you have time, you could round up this session by conducting a role play based on Task 3 of the Speaking & Listening exam, where each person takes on the role of one of the friends from the scenario above and they discuss the issues in the email.

17. Finally, focus learners' attention on the exam box at the bottom of the last handout to explain how the lesson has helped to prepare them for Task 1 of the Trinity Level 1 Skills for Life Reading exam.

## Handout activity 1

Text A

# Planning a kids' party? Look no further than **LUKE'S LASER TAG!**

**Gets kids  
out in the  
fresh air**

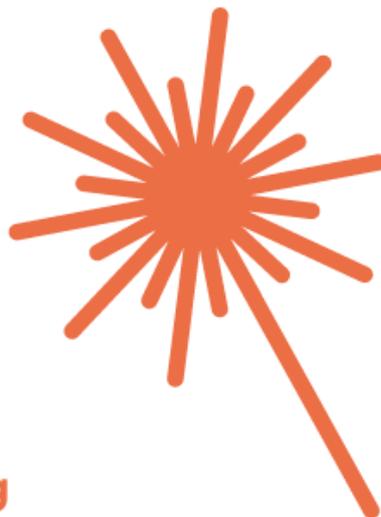
**Photos uploaded  
to social media**

**Suitable for  
a wide range  
of ages - no  
need to hold  
separate  
events for  
younger kids\*\***

**Themed  
events  
available**

**Burgers and  
fries on site!\***

**Protective clothing  
provided**



**Fully-  
inclusive  
packages**

**Like paintball,  
but safer - no  
contact involved**

**Sessions last  
two hours**

\*Additional charges apply to meals

\*\*Ages 6 upwards only

## Handout activity 2a

Text E



Livid\_Lady85



This whole experience was a nightmare from start to finish. I chose Luke's for my son's party because they promised to take care of everything, but no, in reality, you are left to sort it all out for yourself. Firstly, when we booked, they didn't tell us that we had to get agreement forms from every parent, so we had to organise this at the last minute on the day of the event! Extremely stressful. Then there was supposed to be a shuttle bus from the train station to the event location, but that wasn't running due to staff shortages, so we had to traipse across several dangerous roads with all the kids in tow. When we finally got there, they let another group who arrived after us go in first! Not only that, they wouldn't accept one of our kids because she was only 5, but the other group seemed to have a whole batch of toddlers. It was next to impossible to get the poor lass to stop crying because she couldn't join her brother. To top it all off, the supposedly 'included' burger and chips turned out to be £15 a head! For a child's portion! All in all, this was an extremely expensive event, and I can't recommend Luke's at all.



Luke (Luke's Laser Tag)

Hi Livid\_Lady85,

I'm disappointed to read this review, as we have spoken at great length now about your event and I had hoped we had resolved the matter. We have offered you a 50% refund on all of the kids' meals, even though we make it very clear in our advertising that the cost of food is supplementary. The terms and conditions are also clear about the need for agreement forms to be signed by all parents, and these were provided at the time your friend booked. We also explained that the shuttle bus was only subject to availability and could not be guaranteed. The roads from the station to our venue are quiet country lanes, so it is difficult to see how these could be dangerous. I realise that you explained you were late arriving for your appointment because you had expected the shuttle bus, but it does only take ten minutes to walk from the station to the venue, so this does not account for the fact that you arrived 40 minutes late. For this reason, we had to wait for another available slot to allow you to go ahead – you were lucky this was possible at all, but we pulled out all the stops to make sure the children in your group were not disappointed. The team on the ground reported to me that the birthday boys had a fantastic time on the day, so we are pleased that the children managed to enjoy themselves at least – including the little girl who was left out, as one of our staff members sat with her the whole time, and she seemed very happy with the colouring books we provided.

## Handout activity 2b

### Reading Between the Lines

**First read the review and then answer these two questions:**

- Pause before reading the business owner’s response. Would you use this business after reading this review?
- What are the main complaints of the reviewer? Write a sentence or some notes summarising each area of concern.

**Now read the response and answer the following questions:**

- How did the business owner respond to each point? Did they ignore any points? Write a sentence or notes summarising each of the points they made in response. Make a note of anything they did not respond to.
- Did the business owner raise any new points that the original reviewer didn’t mention? How does this change the picture?
- Did you change your mind about the business after reading the response? What do you think really happened that day?

## Handout activity 3

Text B

**From:** Livia Montel  
**To:** Shanthi Williams  
**Subject:** Laser Tag party

Hey Shanthi,

You know we were thinking of joining forces for our two lads' birthdays since they're only a day apart? Well, I've had a great idea! I've seen this advert (attached) for Laser Tag. We should definitely do it – it looks ideal. They take all the stress out of the day. We won't have to organise anything ourselves. And also, there won't be any nasty surprises about the final cost.

Maybe you could get in touch with them to book it this week? I think you'll have to really, as we don't have much time left now. I can't this week, Jerry's away on business.

Cheers!

Liv

**From:** Shanthi Williams  
**To:** Livia Montel  
**Subject:** re: Laser Tag party

Hi Livi,

Good to hear from you. Yes, I remember you suggesting we have a combined party. This one looks a bit expensive for me, though – it's not so easy, what with being a single parent of four boys! Do they really take care of everything? I find there's always more to it than you'd imagine. We'd have to get the kids there, for example. It looks as though it's in the middle of nowhere.

I am quite busy myself this week, as three of the boys are sick, and one of my jobs has asked me to do some overtime because a colleague is on holiday. Perhaps we could try to share the responsibilities, this time? Of course, I don't want to stress you out – I know how frazzled you get when Jerry goes away and you have to manage all the housework alone. And I understand how you feel about giving Sami a good party with lots of friends, as he's an only child. I guess I could contact the company quickly right now, just to ask about the prices and so on, and then we can discuss it together after that?

Take care,

Shanthi

Text C

LUKE'S LASER TAG TERMS AND CONDITIONS

**A**

It is the responsibility of the group to be at the venue at least 15 minutes prior to their game start time. Anyone who does not attend the safety briefing will not be allowed to participate.

**B**

Our games are suitable for a wide range of ages and abilities, but please be aware that children must be 6 years of age and older to take part in a standard game of laser tag. We do run some exclusive events for children under this age – contact us for more details.

**C**

All children aged 16 years and under will need to have an Entry Waiver Form signed in advance of the event by a parent or guardian over the age of 18. Children who do not have this form on the day of the event will not be permitted to compete.

**D**

Our suppliers are Smokin' Hot. Any participants with allergies must declare this in advance. Luke's Laser Tag accepts no responsibility for adverse reactions on the day. Please contact Smokin' Hot for more information. All food and beverages are provided at a supplementary cost.

**E**

We offer a complimentary shuttle service to and from the nearest railway station at peak times. However, please be aware that this service is not guaranteed. Always remember to allow plenty of time to arrive at the venue in time for your game.

Text D

 MESSAGES 10m ago

**Livia**  
Hey love, I'm running a bit late, can you round up the troops and get them all to the station? I'll meet you there.

 MESSAGES 8m ago

**Shanthi**  
I don't have much time after work, but I'll do my best! Did you manage to get all the disclaimer forms signed?

 MESSAGES 6m ago

**Livia**  
Sorry? I don't remember any forms?

 MESSAGES 5m ago

**Shanthi**  
There were a load of forms that all the parents had to sign. I'm sure you said you could deal with that, when we spoke?

 MESSAGES 3m ago

**Livia**  
OMG, this is ridiculous! We've had to organise so much stuff for this party already! Can you do it? I'm totally stressed out here. I have to get me and Sami ready.

 MESSAGES 1m ago

**Shanthi**  
OK, I guess I can try and print them all off at the library when I finish work, then ask the parents to sign it when I collect each child.

 MESSAGES now

**Livia**  
You're a star! ★

## Handout activity 4

### Missing headings

**Choose the heading from the list below and match it to the most appropriate paragraph in Text C.**

1. DISCLAIMER
2. REFRESHMENTS
3. ARRIVAL
4. TRANSFER
5. PARTICIPANTS

### Exam hint

In Task 3 of the Level 1 Skills for Life Reading exam, you have to evaluate different source texts.

You need to know:

- ▶ How to read between the lines
- ▶ What the different purposes of each text might be, and how people structure arguments to try and achieve these purposes
- ▶ How to scan several texts quickly to locate the information which relates to the question