

etnicznego, narodowości, statusu społecznego, umysłowych i fizycznych możliwości lub ich ograniczenia, poznania własnej kultury w szerszym kontekście globalnym, w taki sposób, aby zrozumieć i szanować innych ludzi, różniących się tymi czy innymi cechami, a także współpracować z nimi, w celu budowania lepszej, zróżnicowanej kulturowo i sprawiedliwej społeczności międzynarodowej.

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#### **A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF COMPACT FIRST**

*The paper examines the effectiveness of Compact First as a coursebook for preparing learners for the Cambridge B2 First (FCE) examination. The study outlines the main advantages of the textbook, including its alignment with the exam format, structured content, and focus on relevant grammar and vocabulary at the upper-intermediate level. At the same time, certain limitations are identified, particularly the insufficient explanation of grammatical material and the assumption of prior knowledge.*

**Keywords:** *English language learning, FCE exam, B2 level, coursebook evaluation, exam preparation, Compact First, Cambridge University Press, language teaching materials.*

For many people who are studying English, it is necessary to receive certification to demonstrate your level of English. Whether it be to study at a foreign university, for a new job or promotion that works with foreign clients, emigration to an English speaking country or just for personal gratification. Demonstrating upper-intermediate level (B2) becomes a goal for many English learners, as this level is the key to unlock many of the previously mentioned life-goals. As a result many of you who are reading this may wish to take the FCE English exam accredited by Cambridge University. This is a logical choice as the qualification is internationally recognized by employers and prestigious educational institutions and once obtained, will remain with you forever; unlike IELTS which expires after two years. *Compact First* is one of many books used to prepare students for this exam. In this article I'll look over the advantages and disadvantages of using this book for exam preparation.

One of the obvious advantages to this course is that it is published by Cambridge University Press, who also write the FCE exam. Therefore, if your desire is to pass the exam this book will carefully and clearly outline all topics and knowledge that will feature in the examination. You will not need to concern yourself with memorizing vocabulary or grammar constructions that will not feature in the FCE exam itself, making it particularly useful for students who wish to streamline their learning for this particular exam. Each unit examines one of the themes that can come up in the exam, such as the environment, technology, free time activities etc. Additionally each unit will go over some grammar rules and constructions as well as lexical items all in accordance to upper intermediate level. Additionally students who study using this book will get the opportunity to practice exam tasks such as reading and listening tasks in the style of those found in the actual exam. This is very useful for those training for this exam; however, those who wish to study English for fun may find such a structure tedious and unfulfilling. The content is geared merely to fit the needs of the exam and not to delve deeply into the complexities of English language.

One of the drawbacks of this course is the lack of explanation of certain grammatical structures. The course presupposes that the student who is taking this course already possesses a large body knowledge, and it's not clear from the outset what level a student should have before they embark on this course. Other course books for this and other examinations do more to cover for any gaps in the students' knowledge by providing thorough explanations of even simple grammar rules. Of course with a competent teacher any gaps in knowledge can be covered through additional exercises and professional guidance, although if a student was studying alone, the information gap may seem overwhelming without assistance.

So in conclusion this course book is a very useful tool for those who wish to attain the FCE certificate as it lays out the necessities of the exam in a simple format and gives real practice for what a student can expect when taking the FCE examination. It's not designed to be a general language course, and as a result can be less interesting for those who wish to study just for fun. Likewise it can be a little daunting if your level is not already at an intermediate level. So those of you who wish to take the FCE exam but are starting from a lower level might be suggested to seek the assistance of a tutor to make up for any gap in knowledge.

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