

CELPIP Writing Pro: Target 9+ Study Pack

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Preparing for the CELPIP Writing Test

This package includes versions of many of the informational tables and sample responses discussed during the Writing Pro: Target 9 webinar.

Considering the **Performance Standards** when practicing your writing and assessing your sample responses will give you a sense of how CELPIP raters might assess your response, and should help you to become aware of your strengths and weaknesses.

The **Score Descriptors and Performance Profile** describe the abilities of a typical Level 9 test taker with respect to each Dimension of the Performance Standards. These are the skills you must demonstrate on the test in order to earn a score of Level 9 or higher.

The **Task 1 and Task 2 Key Skills and Strategies** offer concrete ways of demonstrating your skills in each task.

The **Sample Response with Improvements by Dimension** allows you to take a closer look at the Level 8 response discussed during the “mini-workshop.” Through this study you will gain insight into the differences between typical Level 8 and Level 9 responses, and you will get a sense of the ways that a test taker’s strengths and weaknesses in each Dimension contribute to his/her overall score.

Finally, the Study Pack includes the **Task 1 and Task 2 sample responses** discussed during the webinar, and analysis of their main strengths and weaknesses.

By incorporating the above information, strategies, and insights into your writing practice, you will have the best possible chance of achieving a Level 9 or higher on the Writing Test. Of course, doing well on the test also requires very high fluency in English. It is important to recognize that studying the material in this package and learning English are two different things, and building your English writing skills should be the main focus of your preparation for the test.

Good luck!

CELPiP Writing Test Performance Standards

Dimension	Important Factors	Guiding Questions
Content/ Coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of ideas • Quality of ideas • Organization of ideas • Examples and supporting details 	How well are your ideas organized and developed?
Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word choice • Suitable use of words and phrases • Range of words and phrases • Precision and accuracy 	What is the range of your vocabulary and can you use it naturally?
Readability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Format and paragraphing • Connectors and transitions • Grammar and sentence structure • Spelling and punctuation 	How easy is it to read and understand your response?
Task Fulfillment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevance • Completeness • Tone • Word count 	How well did you follow the instructions? Did you use an appropriate tone?

Level 9 Score Descriptors and Performance Profile

Level Descriptors are a new feature of CELPIP score reports. They include:

- **Score Descriptors.** For each Dimension (Content/Coherence, Vocabulary, Readability, and Task Fulfillment), there are 1-3 statements beginning with “I can,” indicating what a typical test taker at a particular CELPIP Level is able to do in that Dimension.
- **a Performance Profile.** This is a broad summary of the abilities of a typical test taker at a particular CELPIP Level, based on the Score Descriptors.
- **Things to work on.** This is a list of skills that a test taker at a particular CELPIP Level may benefit from focusing on when working to improve his/her writing.

Level 9 Score Descriptors

At this level, I can...				When:
Content/ Coherence	Vocabulary	Readability	Task Fulfillment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write short formal and informal texts of some complexity • support key ideas with relevant facts, descriptions, details, or quotations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • choose words and phrases to provide accurate details, descriptions, and comparisons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write well-organized paragraphs • write with control of a range of complex and diverse grammatical structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present information using a tone and style that follows some formal and most informal writing conventions • convey my intended meaning in writing 	I write for a defined audience and the situation is formal or informal

Level 9 Performance Profile

I can write short, organized texts in most social and more formal contexts. I have control of complex grammar, and am developing a repertoire of precise, formal, and specialist vocabulary. I can write longer, more demanding texts. I make occasional errors that do not impede my meaning.

Level 9 Things to work on

- Fully develop my ideas in writing
- Increase my ability to use context-specific vocabulary
- Reduce the number of grammar and vocabulary errors

Task 1 Key Skills & Strategies

Writing Skill	Strategies
Logical organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an outline first • Start with a purpose statement and end with a concluding statement • Complete the tasks in order
Solid support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm ideas before you start writing • Support each main idea with at least one specific detail • Mention real places, people, and situations to make details more concrete and vivid
Precise vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use descriptive, precise, and natural language • Avoid overusing words and phrases from the question
Accurate grammar & clear formatting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of sentence types and grammatical structures • Start a new paragraph for each main idea • Connect ideas with transitions • Use capitalization and punctuation appropriately
Thorough response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the whole question carefully • Don't change/ignore the information given in the question • Write at least one sentence for each task (most will need more!)
Suitable tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the purpose and audience of the email • Use a greeting and sign-off that fit the situation • Avoid rudeness, sarcasm, and casual slang
Careful proofreading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your work for 3-4 minutes after you write • Be aware of what kind of mistakes you make most often

Task 2 Key Skills & Strategies

Writing Skill	Strategies
Logical organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an outline before you start writing • Start with an opinion statement • End with a concluding statement • Create flow using meaningful transitions
Convincing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brainstorm ideas before you start writing • Support each main idea with at least one concrete detail/example • Mention real places, people, and situations to make details more concrete and vivid • Compare your choice to the other choice
Precise vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use descriptive vocabulary: avoid being too general or abstract • Avoid overusing words and phrases from the question
Accurate grammar & clear formatting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of sentence types and grammatical structures • Avoid list/point form • Use appropriate paragraphing • Use capitalization and punctuation appropriately
Thorough response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the whole question carefully • State your choice at the beginning of the response • Focus on reasons (not suggestions or descriptions)
Suitable tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the audience: who will read the survey response? • Don't write an academic essay • Avoid rudeness, sarcasm, and casual slang
Careful proofreading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your work for 3-4 minutes after you write • Be aware of what kind of mistakes you make most often

Using Your Time

You have **27 minutes** to complete Task 1 and **26 minutes** to complete Task 2. This allows you enough time to plan and check each response.

It is strongly recommended that you **spend around 4-5 minutes planning each response before you start to write**, following these steps:

1. Brainstorm for 2-3 minutes. Write notes. Use point form and don't worry about spelling/grammar.
2. Choose your main ideas.
3. Put the ideas in order.
4. Think of supporting details.
5. Write a strong, clear purpose statement.

It is also recommended that you **spend around 3 minutes checking your response after you write**. Reread your response several times to make sure you can't see any mistakes, the ideas are organized, and you answered the whole question.

Sample Response with Improvements by Dimension

Question

Writing Task 2: Responding to Survey Questions

Time remaining: 26 minutes 0 seconds

NEXT

i Read the following information.

Vacation Time or Job Training?

You work in a small office. The boss wants to reduce vacation time by two days, but send everyone in the office to a nice beachside hotel for 4 days of job training. Some of the staff are very happy with this idea. Others are upset. The boss asked you to respond to an opinion survey.

i Choose the option that you prefer. Why do you prefer your choice? Explain the reasons for your choice. Write about 150-200 words.

- Option A: I think we should keep our vacation time instead of going to the training.
- Option B: I think we should do the training and cut back our vacation time.

Test taker's response (Level 8)

Vacation time is meant for relaxing. The last thing that I want to think about when I am on vacation is work stuffs or what I should do to improve myself in my job. It is true that it would be nice to stay at a beachside hotel for 4 days, but my concern is, how much of this hotel or time will we get to enjoy? The training could take us the entire day and by the time we get back to our hotel we will be too tired to do anything else to enjoy ourselves. This will mean that we basically won't be having any real "Vacation Time". I would trade this 4 days at the beachside hotel with my 2 days vacation time to fully enjoy and relax myself and also spend some quality time with my family and friends. I agree that job training is important, but not at the cost of my personal "healing" time. What I mean by that is, during my vacation time, I take some time off to do some meditation and relief myself of all the stress of work and life. I believe that this helps me to restore my physical and mental health.

1. Content/Coherence: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Solutions

Strengths	Weaknesses	Solutions
✓ Many different ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clear purpose statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State your purpose clearly at the beginning of the response
✓ Quality of ideas is quite good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meaning of some details is unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State ideas precisely Use transitions to show connections between ideas
✓ Most main ideas are supported with details/examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some disorganized content 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structure the response logically to create smooth flow Use paragraphing
✓ Not much repetition of ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No concluding statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> End the response with a statement that ties it together and signals completeness

Response revised for Content/Coherence

Although the Cancun Oceanside Inn is a gorgeous location, I don't feel that holding our conflict resolution training course there would make up for the loss of two vacation days. My rationale is that vacation time is meant for relaxing. The last thing that I want to think about when I am on vacation is work stuffs or what I should do to improve myself in my job. It is true that it would be nice to stay at a beachside hotel for 4 days, but my concern is **that we would not get to enjoy the experience.** The training could take us the entire day and by the time we get back to our hotel we will be too tired to **make the most of the luxurious accommodations or the scenic setting.**

I agree that job training is important, but not at the cost of my personal "healing" time. **For me, time off means time out** to do some meditation and relief myself of all the stress of work and life. I believe that this helps me to restore my physical and mental health. **By retaining my vacation days, I will be able** to fully enjoy and relax myself and also spend some quality time with my family and friends.

2. Vocabulary: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Solutions

Strengths	Weaknesses	Solutions
✓ Most language is suitable for the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too much repetition of some words and phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid overusing words and phrases from the question • Think of ways to paraphrase ideas
✓ Good range of words and phrases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word choice occasionally lacks precision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After writing, reread the whole response, focusing on word choice
✓ Most words and phrases are natural and accurate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some word choice could be more concise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use transitions effectively • Watch the word counter and use words wisely

Response revised for Vocabulary

Vacation time is meant for relaxing. The last thing that I want to think about when I am on vacation is **my job duties** or what I should do to improve myself **professionally**. **Certainly**, it would be **pleasant** to stay at a beachside hotel for 4 days, but my concern is, how much will we get to **appreciate** the **location or the trip**? The training could take us the entire day and by the time we get back to our hotel we will be too tired to do anything else to enjoy ourselves. This will mean that we basically won't be **making the most of the experience**. **I would be much less excited about a four-day "working holiday" than two days of personal time** to fully **sit back** and **relax**, and also spend some quality time with my family and friends. I agree that job training is important, but not at the cost of my personal "healing" time. During my **time off**, I take some time **out** to do some meditation and relief myself of all the stress of work and life. I believe that this helps me to restore my physical and mental health.

3. Readability: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Solutions

Strengths	Weaknesses	Solutions
✓ Very few errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No paragraphing to signal new main ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create an outline before beginning to write Start a new paragraph for each main idea Introduce each paragraph with a clear topic sentence
✓ Very few grammar errors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough transitions to show connections between ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signal each new main idea with a transition word Use transitions thoughtfully to connect ideas
✓ Fairly wide range of sentence structures		

Response revised for Readability

The main reason for my choice is that vacation time is meant for relaxing. The last thing that I want to think about when I am on vacation is work **stuff** or what I should do to improve myself in my job. It is true that it would be nice to stay at a beachside hotel for 4 days, but my concern is, how much of this hotel or time will we get to enjoy? The training could take us the entire day and by the time we get back to our hotel we will be too tired to do anything else to enjoy ourselves. **As a result,** we basically won't be having any real "Vacation Time".

Furthermore, keeping those two days of vacation time would allow me to fully enjoy and relax myself and also spend some quality time with my family and friends. I agree that job training is important, but not at the cost of my personal "healing" time. During my vacation time, I take some time off to do some meditation and **relieve** myself of all the stress of work and life. I believe that this helps me to restore my physical and mental health.

4. Task Fulfillment: Strengths, Weaknesses, and Solutions

Strengths	Weaknesses	Solutions
✓ Tone is usually appropriate for the situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The writer doesn't choose an option 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State a clear choice at the beginning of the response
✓ Second main idea is relevant and on topic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tone is too harsh in a few places 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reread the completed response, considering the situation and audience
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> First main idea is a bit off topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the question carefully before starting to write

Response revised for Task Fulfillment

Although the Cancun Oceanside Inn is a gorgeous location, I don't feel that holding our conflict resolution training course there would make up for the loss of two vacation days. My main argument is that **professional development is not a holiday, regardless of where it takes place.** While it would be nice to stay at a beachside hotel for 4 days, my concern is **that we might not get to enjoy the experience.** The training could take us the entire day and by the time we get back to our hotel we will be too tired to do anything else to enjoy ourselves. **Besides, if we did go out to explore Cancun or unwind together at the hotel's poolside pub, we might not be well-rested for the next day's training session!**

Furthermore, I agree that job training is important, but not at the cost of my personal "healing" time. During my vacation time, I take some time off to do some meditation and relief myself of all the stress of work and life. I believe that this helps me to restore my physical and mental health, **which in turn makes me a more engaged employee. Meanwhile, hosting the training course in our own comfortable conference room would ensure attentive participation.**

Response Analysis

Task 1

Question

Writing Task 1: Writing an Email

Time remaining: 27 minutes 0 seconds [NEXT](#)

i Read the following information.

You are an elementary school teacher. There is a famous writer who lives near your school.

i In about 150-200 words, write to this writer and invite her to speak to the children in your class. Your message must include the following points.

- An introduction to the school and your class.
- Why the children like this writer's books.
- An invitation to visit the classroom.
- What the writer can do with the children.

Response 1: Level 7

Dear Mr. Smith,

My name is Lucas, and I am a literature teacher at the elementary school in the West End. During our last literature class we were going through one of your recent works. All children loved you new novel. They found the novel simple to understand and thoughtful an the same time. We have a long discussion during and after classes.

Because of that, I would like to invite you as a guest speaker to one of our classes to tell us more about you novel and process of writing. Maybe you can tell us about who or what inspired to write this novel and tell us more about every character.

I think this meeting will be useful for those who is interesting for everyone. We have literature classes every Monday and Friday between 9 - 11 am.

Please let me know if you be able to accept our invitation.

Faithfully yours,

Lucas McTeacher

(156 words)

Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The purpose is clear, though it is not mentioned until the second paragraph.• Main ideas are supported with details• Some precise/clear word choice (e.g., "literature teacher," "simple to understand," "process of writing," "inspired").• Paragraphing and formatting make the response easier to read.• The writer addresses all 4 tasks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some details are not precise (e.g., what grade the students are in, what book they've been reading, why exactly they enjoyed the book).• More detail is needed for all 3 tasks, especially the first (introducing the school and class) and second (why the children like this writer's books).• Some grammar errors interfere with meaning (e.g., "those who is interesting for everyone").

Response 2: Level 12

Dear Ms. Smith,

I recently learned that you are a local neighbour of our school, St. Mary's Elementary School on Main Street, where I am the third grade teacher. Perhaps you have noticed our bright pink mural in the neighbourhood? It gets quite the attention from people passing by.

My third-graders are huge fans of your work. Your books are so clever and funny. In fact, we just completed reading "Edward in the Garden" as a class. The children were delirious with laughter when Edward fought the rabbit off his carrots. Many of them were chuckling on the floor!

In the coming weeks the children will learn to write their own short stories, and as inspiration to them my principal and I would like to invite you as a guest speaker to our class. Would you be interested in such an opportunity? It would require a 20 minute talk with our class of twenty-five children, followed by some questions at the end.

Your presence would motivate and guide them greatly. The children would be so thrilled to hear from an author they know and love, and it would be an honour to host you.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Applebee

(197 words)

Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organized response, clear purpose.Extremely specific and realistic details (e.g., "bright pink mural," "third-graders," "when Edward fought the rabbit off his carrots")Lots of vivid, precise language: e.g., "delirious with laughter," "chuckling on the floor."Formatting, punctuation, and grammar make the response easy to read and understand.Tone is ideal: friendly and polite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">"Followed by some questions" and "fought the rabbit off his carrots": a bit awkward, though the meaning is clear."Motive" is the wrong word form: should be "motivate."The explanation of what the writer can do is a bit vague: a 20-minute talk about what? The invitation is also not precise: "in the coming weeks" is a long stretch of time.

Response 3: Level 9

Dear Christine Miller,

My name is Jennifer Clark and I'm an English teacher from Killarney Elementary. We are a small elementary school situated near the recreational centre close to Rupert Street and 45th Avenue. My students are a huge fan of your books and they would absolutely love it if you could spare the time to visit.

Everyday, I read a chapter from your book to my students and they hang on to every word. The creativity used to create the fantasy world of Unicorn Land and the adventures that Misty undertakes creates a sense of wonder and amazement in my students. They particularly love the shy and lonely dragon, Harold. At the end of every chapter, they always ask, "What's going to happen next?".

In the next two weeks, I plan to hold story writing sessions. It would simply be amazing if you can come and inspire them on how to create a fantasy word of their own. Please tell them how you came to create Unicorn Land, what contributed to your creation and how you put together the many adventures.

Let me know your thoughts.

Thank you for your time,

Kind Regards,
Jennifer Clark

(196 words)

Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organized response, clear purpose. All main ideas are supported with realistic details.Fairly good range of language related to the situation (e.g., "situated," "huge fan," "a sense of wonder and amazement")Very few grammar and punctuation errors; none interfere with understanding.Every task is addressed.The tone is ideal for the task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Some word choice is a bit awkward ("inspire them on," "put together the many adventures") or repetitive ("create" x6).Final sentence of the third paragraph is very repetitive.Not many transition words.The writer doesn't quite introduce her class. The information given for the fourth task is a bit vague, and the invitation is a bit imprecise.

Task 2

Question

Writing Task 2: Responding to Survey Questions

Time remaining: 26 minutes 0 seconds [NEXT](#)

i Read the following information.

Vacation Time or Job Training?

You work in a small office. The boss wants to reduce vacation time by two days, but send everyone in the office to a nice beachside hotel for 4 days of job training. Some of the staff are very happy with this idea. Others are upset. The boss asked you to respond to an opinion survey.

i Choose the option that you prefer. Why do you prefer your choice? Explain the reasons for your choice. Write about 150-200 words.

- Option A: I think we should keep our vacation time instead of going to the training.
- Option B: I think we should do the training and cut back our vacation time.

Response 1: Level 10

Hi John,

I second your suggestion to reduce the number vacations days and send us for a training instead.

After talking to my friends outside work, I have realized that our company currently gives more vacation days than any other company in our city. Being a team lead, I have noticed that this has resulted in long periods of time when employees have been absent from work leading to an overall decrease in productivity of my group. Surprisingly, I have also observed that about half the employees do not take all their vacation days anyway and instead choose to come to work.

I believe that sending everyone together for paid training at a beachside hotel is a great idea. I have overheard employees lamenting about how we do not have enough company events and this could very well be the perfect solution. The training will not only be beneficial for improving our skills but it will also provide an excellent opportunity for employees to get to know each other better.

(170 words)

Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writer chooses an option in his own words.• Lots of precise vocabulary (e.g., "friends outside work," "team lead," "overall decrease," "overheard").• Very few grammar errors; none interfere with understanding.• Formatting and paragraphing make the response easy to read.• The writer completes all of the tasks.• The tone is formal but friendly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first main idea goes a bit off topic. It is more focused on the general idea of how much vacation employees get than the specific question of giving up two vacation days for the training.• More specific detail about the training and the location would strengthen the second main idea. "Improving our skills" is not specific.

Response 2: Level 9

Dear Mr. Smith,

While I really appreciate your offer on the job training, I would like to keep the vacation policy for the following three reasons:

Firstly, I believe this training will not only benefit me but also the company as I will be better-equipped for my job. Thus it is an extension of work and should not be counted as a vacation, which is personal time.

Secondly, as a senior employee with a family, the vacation time is when I spend the days building relationships with my wife and children. Converting them into training would be hard on my family as they will not like to see me less.

And finally, while being at a beachside hotel is very inviting, I prefer learning in a more conducive environment, away from distractions like crowds and heat. I believe a training course at a local university will be a better fit for me.

I have all the confidence that you will make the right decision. Please let me know if you need my help talking to the other employees about this issue.

Kind regards,
Larry

(184 words)

Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The writer's purpose is very clear and the supporting ideas are well organized.• Lots of precise/clear vocabulary: e.g., "an extension of work," "better-equipped," "counted as," "more conducive environment."• Transitions and paragraphing make the ideas easy to follow.• The writer addresses all of the tasks.• The tone is formal and very polite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some vague ideas (e.g. "your offer on the job training," "which is personal time," "the vacation time is when I spend the days building relationships").• Occasional vague/awkward/repeated vocabulary: "vacation" repeated many times, "see me less," "senior."• Unclear wording in the first idea makes it seem as though the writer is in favour of doing the training.

Additional CELPIP Webinars

Webinar	Focus	Length
CELPIP-General Overview	An overview of the features and format of the CELPIP Test, with Speaking and Writing response analysis	2 hours
Listening Pro	Format, strategies, and sample questions for Listening Parts 1 – 6	2 hours
Reading Pro	Format, strategies, and sample questions for Reading Parts 1 – 4	2 hours
Writing Pro: Target 5	Achieving Level 5 or higher on the Writing Test	2 hours
Speaking Pro: Target 5	Achieving Level 5 or higher on the Speaking Test	2 hours
Speaking Pro: Target 9+	Achieving Level 9 or higher on the Speaking Test	2 lessons, 2 hours each

- **Everyone at all language levels is welcome at all CELPIP webinars!** The information we provide about test format, question types, and useful strategies applies to everyone, no matter what CELPIP Level you're trying for.
- You can participate and ask questions to the instructor in all sessions.
- Speaking Pro and Writing Pro **Target 5** sessions include sample responses in the CELPIP **Level 4-5** range. **Target 9** sessions include sample responses in the **Level 8-12** range.
- Everyone who attends a Pro session receive a **free Study Pack** containing the most important content from the webinar, including sample responses, analysis, checklists, and strategies.
- You can attend the same session more than once, but please be aware that **the content will be the same**. We repeat these webinars monthly to help new test takers learn about the test!
- A recording of each webinar is posted on our **YouTube channel**.

Connect with Us!

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