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**English B – Higher level – Paper 2 – Reading comprehension**  
**Anglais B – Niveau supérieur – Épreuve 2 – Compréhension écrite**  
**Inglés B – Nivel Superior – Prueba 2 – Comprensión de lectura**

8 May 2025 / 8 mai 2025 / 8 de mayo de 2025

<b>Zone A</b> afternoon	<b>Zone B</b> afternoon	<b>Zone C</b> afternoon
<b>Zone A</b> après-midi	<b>Zone B</b> après-midi	<b>Zone C</b> après-midi
<b>Zona A</b> tarde	<b>Zona B</b> tarde	<b>Zona C</b> tarde

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**Text booklet – Instructions to candidates**

- Do not open this booklet until instructed to do so.
- This booklet accompanies paper 2 reading comprehension.

**Livret de textes – Instructions destinées aux candidats**

- N'ouvrez pas ce livret avant d'y être autorisé(e).
- Ce livret accompagne la partie de l'épreuve 2 portant sur la compréhension écrite.

**Cuadernillo de textos – Instrucciones para los alumnos**

- No abra este cuadernillo hasta que se lo autoricen.
- Este cuadernillo acompaña a la parte de comprensión de lectura de la prueba 2.

**Text A**

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Text B

## Five things you must do to become a better musician

The music industry has always been competitive, and many new musicians wonder if they have what it takes to “make it”. Making music for fun isn’t so hard, but turning that passion into a career is a whole different ball game. If you’d like to become a pro someday, here are five things you can do *right now* to become a better musician.

5 **Have a patient, persistent attitude**

This might be the most important thing on the list, which is why we’re giving it the top spot. A career (of any kind!) doesn’t happen overnight, and you can’t expect the arts to be any different. Even famous musicians who seem to appear out of nowhere have been carefully planning and working towards that time for years, sometimes decades. Whether you play the violin or want to be a singer, make small steps to improve your craft each and every day.



10 [ – 20 – ]

This is a huge part of being a professional musician – some professionals spend more time improvising than playing music from a book! It’s also one of the scariest and most difficult tasks to learn. When it comes to improvisation, it’s important to remember that different musicians improvise in different ways. For this reason, it might be beneficial to seek improvisation advice from a variety of different musicians, your teacher included. After all, what works for one musician might not work for you, and vice versa.

20 [ – 21 – ]

Some of the best musicians make the mistake of thinking they’ve learned everything they can possibly learn. This is untrue, even of award-winning musicians who sell out the biggest arenas around the world. True artists never stop absorbing knowledge and ideas that enrich their minds. Read, listen, watch, ask questions, and immerse yourself in music whenever possible. Don’t discount unconventional sources of wisdom, either. Always take what you learn in your personal life and see how you can apply it to your life as a musician.

30 [ – 22 – ]

It can be super tempting to skip out on practicing in favor of spending time with your friends or getting some extra sleep, but always remember that without practice you simply won’t progress. If you’re finding it hard to stay motivated, ask your teacher for some pointers. Most teachers are accustomed to students who lose interest or have difficulty staying dedicated, making them a valuable resource.

35 [ – 23 – ]

To put it simply, there is no substitute for real-world experience. Look around for some local open-mic nights and try to perform once a week. Some of these specialize in promoting beginner musicians, so you won’t have to worry about being “good enough” to perform. The more you put yourself out there and perform in front of others the more comfortable you’ll become with interacting with a crowd. If you do make a mistake, it’s not the end of the world. Take a deep breath and keep going – the show must go on!

## Text C

**An extract from *Mr Rosenblum's List***

*It will be cloudy and dull this evening and tonight with periods of rain; the rain being moderate or heavy in many districts. Fog will be extensive on high ground with fog patches along the south coast. Tomorrow, more general and heavy rain will spread from the south-west with temperatures of approximately fifty-seven degrees. That concludes the weather summary;*  
5 *a further news bulletin may be heard at a quarter to...*

Jack Rosenblum switched off the wireless\* and nestled back into his leather armchair. A beatific smile spread across his face and he closed his eyes. "So there is to be more rain," he remarked to the empty room, stretching out his short legs and giving a yawn. He was unconcerned by the dismal prognosis; it was the act of listening to the bulletin that he savoured. Each evening  
10 during the weather forecast he could imagine he was an Englishman. When the forecast was stopped through the war he grieved on behalf of the British, aware what loss this absence would inflict, and when it started again he listened in religiously, happily considering all the Englishmen and women hearing "light drizzle on high ground" at the same instant as he. Through the daily weather reports he felt himself to be part of a nation; the prediction may be sleet in Scotland  
15 and sunshine in the West Midlands but the ritual of the weather forecast united them all. The national preoccupation had been rightfully restored and in his soul Jack rejoiced.

He stared out of the window, watching the rain trickle down the pane. Beyond, the tatty grass of the garden ran up to a dilapidated fence, and on the other side was the heath. No one had mended the fence. It had been falling down since 1940 but there was no new wood with which  
20 to mend it. He could have found some on the black market, but the simple truth was that he, like everyone else in London, had ceased to notice the shabbiness of his surroundings. Over the last ten years the city had slowly decayed, cracks appearing in even the smartest façade, but the people of London, like the spouse of a fading beauty, had grown far too familiar with the city to notice her decline. It was left for those who had returned from exile to observe with dismay  
25 the drab degeneration of the once great capital. London was blackened and smoke stained, with great gaping holes strewn with rubble.

Solomons, N. (2010). *Mr. Rosenblum's list : or, friendly guidance for the aspiring Englishman*. Hodder & Stoughton. Pp. 1–2. Copyright 2010. Source adapted. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.

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\* the wireless: the radio

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**References/Références/Referencias:**

**Text B** Music & Arts, n.d. Five things you must do to become a better musician. *Music & Arts*, [online] Available at: <https://thevault.musicarts.com/five-things-you-must-do-to-become-a-better-musician/> [Accessed 2 August 2024]. Source adapted.

NikonShutterman, 2017. *Playing the Piano*, [image online] Available at: <https://www.gettyimages.co.uk/detail/photo/playing-the-piano-royalty-free-image/863254314> [Accessed 25 September 2024]. Source adapted.

**Text C** Solomons, N. (2010). *Mr. Rosenblum's list : or, friendly guidance for the aspiring Englishman*. Hodder & Stoughton. Pp. 1–2. Copyright 2010. Source adapted. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSclear.