APPLYING THE CEFR TO YOUR CURRICULUM

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Aims of the talk

What is the CEFR, and its recently launched Companion Volume?

How can the CEFR inform curriculum evaluation and development?

Progress

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Clear plan
Check progress

Curriculum

What does curriculum mean?

Knowledge and skills

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How do you plan a curriculum?

Diagnose learners' needs

Define learning objectives

Plan for assessment

Select and organise activities and materials

Learners may not have a purpose for learning English

Teachers may not have control over the curriculum

POLL

What about you?

Do you have to follow a prescribed curriculum?

Do your learners have a clear goal for learning English?

Write your answers in the chatbox on the left of your screen.

Learners may not have a purpose for learning English

Teachers may not have control over the curriculum

Teachers may not have time to plan a curriculum

The CEFR to the rescue!

Fundamentally, the CEFR is a tool to assist the planning of curricula, courses and examinations by working backwards from what the users/learners need to be able to *do* with the language *(Companion Volume,* page 26)

Poll

How much do you think you know about the CEFR already?

1) Nothing or almost nothing

2) A little, but I wouldn't be confident enough to tell someone else about the main points

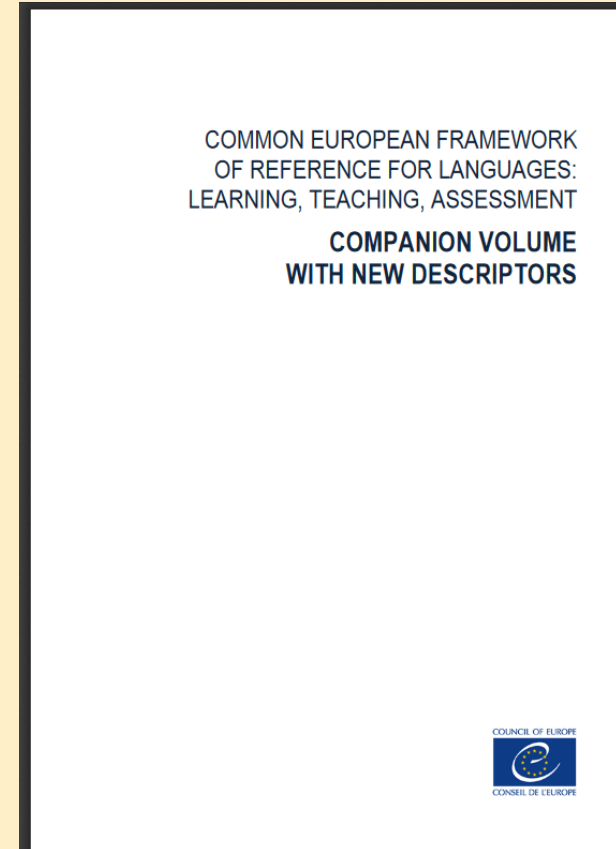3) Enough to be able to tell someone else about the main points

4) A lot

CEFR

Common European Framework of References for Languages

2001   2018

Common European Framework
of Reference for Languages:
Learning, teaching, assessment

CAMBRIDGE

COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK
OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES:
LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT

**COMPANION VOLUME
WITH NEW DESCRIPTORS**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

CEFR 2018

The Companion Volume with New Descriptors

COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK
OF REFERENCE FOR LANGUAGES:
LEARNING, TEACHING, ASSESSMENT

**COMPANION VOLUME
WITH NEW DESCRIPTORS**

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Underlines, expands and develops 2001 volume

does not replace it!

https://rm.coe.int/cefr-companion-volume-with-new-descriptors-2018/1680787989
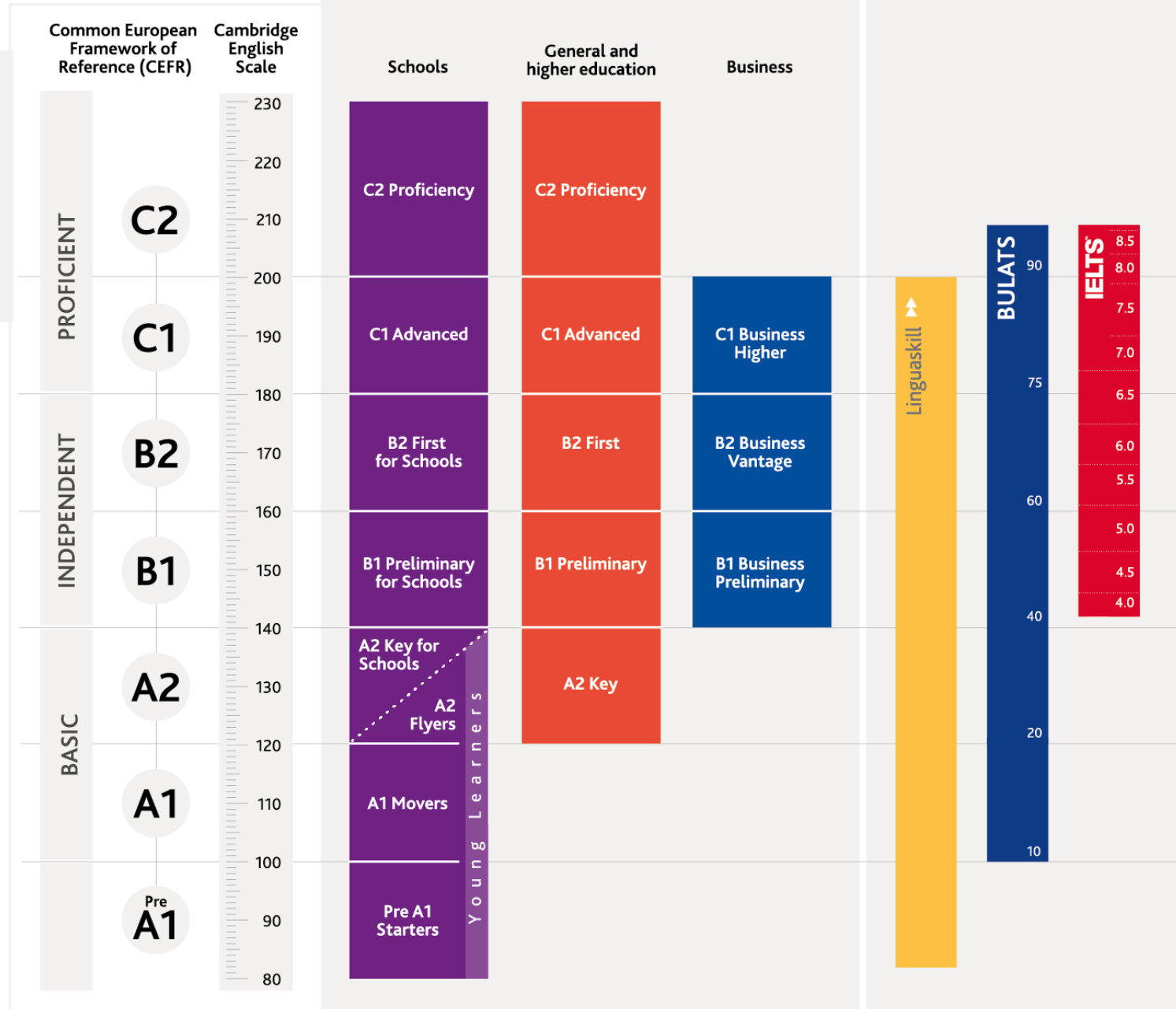
CEFR

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an international **standard for describing language ability**. It describes language ability on a six-point scale, from A1 for beginners, up to C2 for those who have mastered a language. This makes it **easy** for anyone involved in language teaching and testing, such as teachers or learners, **to see the level** of different qualifications. It also means that employers and educational institutions can easily **compare** our qualifications to other exams in their country.

Cambridge Assessment English

Cambridge English Qualifications

Multilevel tests

Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR)	Cambridge English Scale	Schools	General and higher education	Business			
PROFICIENT — C2	230–210	C2 Proficiency	C2 Proficiency				
PROFICIENT — C1	200–190	C1 Advanced	C1 Advanced	C1 Business Higher			
INDEPENDENT — B2	180–170	B2 First for Schools	B2 First	B2 Business Vantage			BULATS / IELTS
INDEPENDENT — B1	160–150	B1 Preliminary for Schools	B1 Preliminary	B1 Business Preliminary		Linguaskill	
BASIC — A2	140–130	A2 Key for Schools / A2 Flyers	A2 Key		Young Learners		
BASIC — A1	120–110	A1 Movers					
BASIC — Pre A1	100–80	Pre A1 Starters					

Cambridge English Scale values: 230, 220, 210, 200, 190, 180, 170, 160, 150, 140, 130, 120, 110, 100, 90, 80

BULATS: 90, 75, 60, 40, 20, 10

IELTS: 8.5, 8.0, 7.5, 7.0, 6.5, 6.0, 5.5, 5.0, 4.5, 4.0

CEFR
Six levels – A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2

CEFR

- Learner as a **social agent**

- An **action-oriented approach**

CEFR – Sets of Can Do Descriptors

WRITTEN PRODUCTION	
OVERALL WRITTEN PRODUCTION	
C2	Can write clear, smoothly flowing, complex texts in an appropriate and effective style and a logical structure which helps the reader to find significant points.
C1	Can write clear, well-structured texts of complex subjects, underlining the relevant salient issues, expanding and supporting points of view at some length with subsidiary points, reasons and relevant examples, and rounding off with an appropriate conclusion. Can employ the structure and conventions of a variety of written genres, varying the tone, style and register according to addressee, text type and theme.
B2	Can write clear, detailed texts on a variety of subjects related to his/her field of interest, synthesising and evaluating information and arguments from a number of sources.
B1	Can write straightforward connected texts on a range of familiar subjects within his/her field of interest, by linking a series of shorter discrete elements into a linear sequence.
A2	Can write a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like 'and,' 'but' and 'because'.
A1	Can give information in writing about matters of personal relevance (e.g. likes and dislikes, family, pets) using simple words and basic expressions. Can write simple isolated phrases and sentences.
Pre-A1	Can give basic personal information in writing (e.g. name, address, nationality), perhaps with the use of a dictionary.

CEFR – Sets of Can Do Descriptors

Four Skills?

Four Modes of Communication
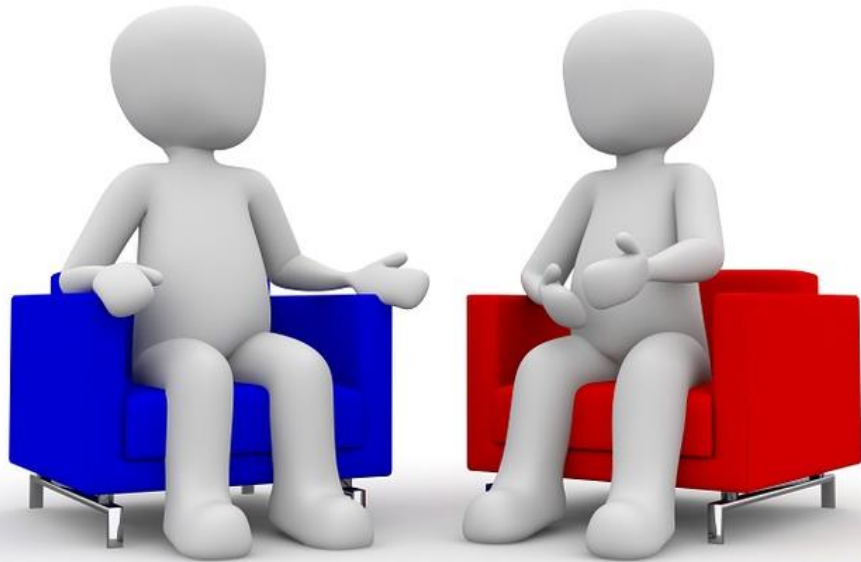
- Reception
- Production
- Interaction
- Mediation

Four Modes of Communication

MEDIATION

The user/learner acts as a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another.
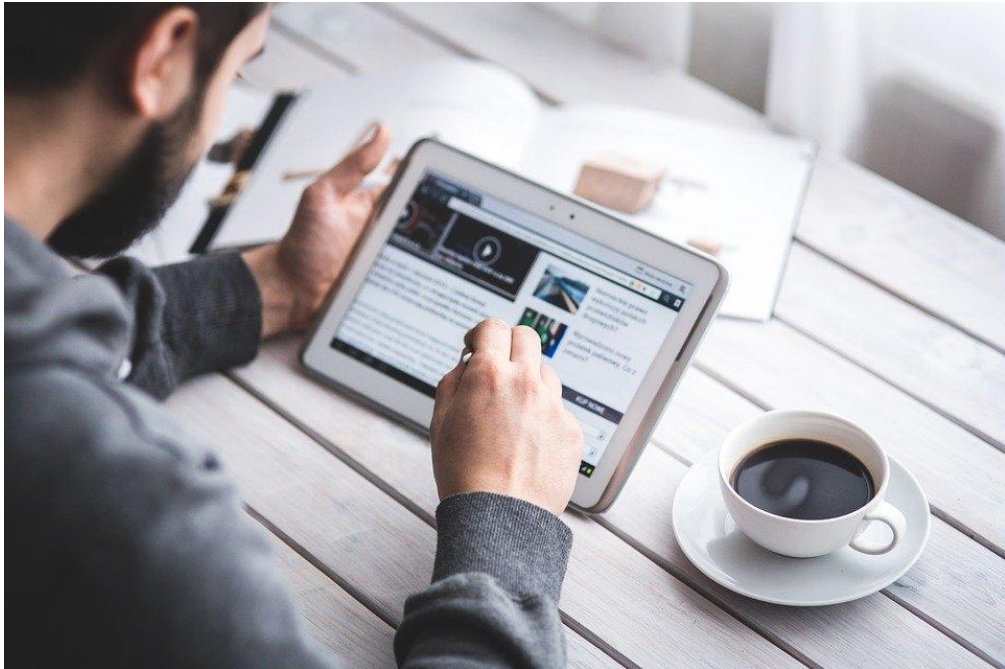
Four Modes of Communication

MEDIATION

Mediation may be needed to help …

- between languages (or varieties of language)
- between input and output
- to facilitate communication

New sets of descriptors for use of language online

Two new sets of descriptors:

Online conversation and discussion

Goal-oriented online transactions and collaboration

Pre-A1 Level

Pre-A1 is approximately half-way towards A1

Learners rely on a limited number of words and formulaic expressions

This level provides:
- a starting point on the CEFR 'learning ladder'
- a means of measuring progress, especially for young learners

C1 and C2 Levels

Not to imply native-speaker competence, but to describe the degree of precision, appropriateness and ease of language

Relevant for higher education and academic purposes

Where is the CEFR taking learning, teaching and assessment?

focus on the structure of language – grammar, etc → **focus on communicative use of the language**

CEFR mainly used only for assessment → **CEFR used for learning, teaching and assessment**

language as a code → **language for action and collaboration**

language is a school subject → **language is to be learnt throughout life**

Cambridge Assessment English

How can the CEFR help?
Focus on language for communication

… language as a vehicle for communication rather than as a subject to study *(Companion Volume*, page 27)

How can the CEFR help?

Making learning more communicative and authentic

Speaking: Conversation A2

Can make and respond to invitations, suggestions + apologies

Mediation: Processing Text in Speech A2

Can report the main points made in simple TV or radio news items, reporting events, sports, accidents etc. …

Online conversation and discussion

B1+ Can post online accounts of social events, experiences and activities …

B1 Can make personal online postings about experiences, feelings and events …

A2+ Can make short descriptive online postings about everyday matters, social activities and feelings …

A1 Can write very simple messages and personal online postings as a series of very short sentences about hobbies, likes/dislikes …

Wide range of coverage

strategies

4 modes

pragmatic

linguistic

plurilingual

CEFR descriptor research project

Intuitive Phase: Detailed analysis of existing descriptor scales and authoring of new descriptors

Qualitative Phase: 32 face-to-face workshops with groups of 4–12 teachers

(a) sorting descriptors into the categories they purported to describe

(b) evaluating the clarity, accuracy and relevance of the descriptors

(c) sorting descriptors into bands of proficiency.

Quantitative Phase: Rasch scaling analysis of the way 250 teachers interpreted the difficulty of the descriptors when each teacher assessed 10 learners … (*Companion Volume*, page 40)

Carefully worded
Fully validated
Ready to use!

Photo by sydney Rae on Unsplash

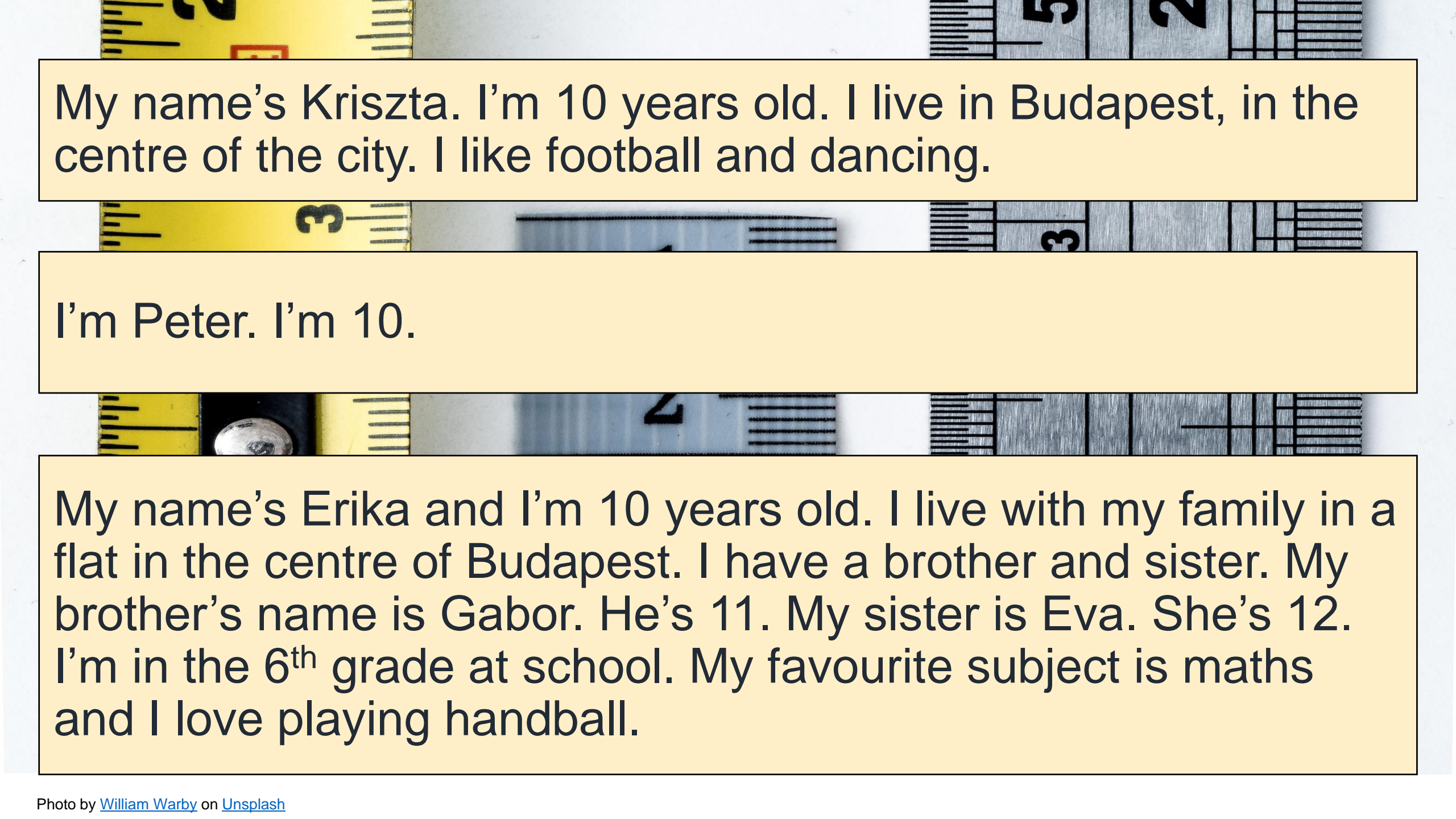A2 Can describe his/her family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job

A1 Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives

Pre-A1 Can describe him/herself (e.g. name, age, family), using simple words …

My name's Kriszta. I'm 10 years old. I live in Budapest, in the centre of the city. I like football and dancing.

I'm Peter. I'm 10.

My name's Erika and I'm 10 years old. I live with my family in a flat in the centre of Budapest. I have a brother and sister. My brother's name is Gabor. He's 11. My sister is Eva. She's 12. I'm in the 6th grade at school. My favourite subject is maths and I love playing handball.

A2 Can describe his/her family, living conditions, educational background, present or most recent job Erika

A1 Can describe him/herself, what he/she does and where he/she lives Kriszta

Pre-A1 Can describe him/herself (e.g. name, age, family), using simple words … Peter

Photo by [bruce mars](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Questions and comments