
Writing Guide
for the
Cambridge B2 First Exam

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Section 1. Writing Exam Structure

1.1. Two-part exam

Part 1	Essay
Part 2	Choose one:
Formal letter/email	e.g. writing a job application <i>or</i> letter of complaint
Informal letter/email	e.g. writing to a cousin.
Proposal	e.g. promoting or discussing an idea on a website.
Report	e.g. summarising information and making a recommendation to your boss.
Review	e.g. giving your opinion of a film/holiday etc. in a blog.

1.2. Writing: 4-step process

Writing well has four fundamental steps:



Step 1. Identify key words

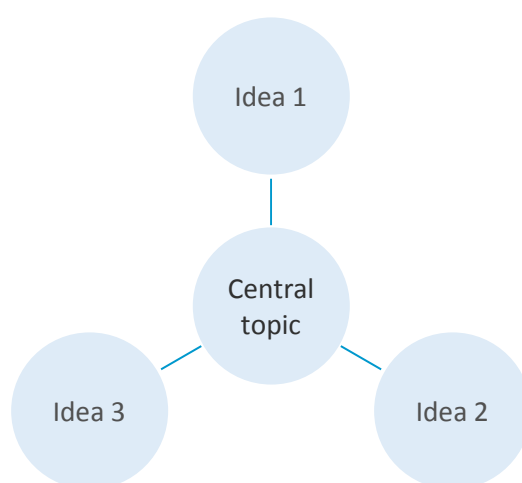
Identify...	Helps with...	Essential for high grade in...
... whom are you writing	Correct register	Communicative achievement
... what you are writing	Correct style	Communicative achievement
... what ideas you must include	Relevant Content	Content

Step 2. Organise

Organisation is 25% of the grade in the writing paper. **A plan** is essential to organise the content into paragraphs that transmit your ideas clearly.

Here are three methods:

1. Brainstorming related ideas for a report/article/review:



2. Organising ideas e.g. contrasting positive versus negative aspects of different ideas in an essay:

	Positive aspects	Negative aspects
Idea 1: (provided)		
Idea 2: (provided)		
Idea 3 (your own idea)		

3. Listing paragraphs:

- ▶ Introduction: Introduce topic
- ▶ Idea 1: positive/negative aspects
- ▶ Idea 2: positive/negative aspects
- ▶ Idea 3: positive/negative aspects
- ▶ Conclusion: Evaluate & summarize ideas

Step 3. Write

Write the recommended number of words (140-190): You will NOT be directly penalised for writing more, or less, than the recommended word limit. However, it may negatively affect your grade in other areas:

- ▶ **Writing that is too long:**
 - **Content.** You have included content that is irrelevant.
 - **Language.** You have run out of time and are unable to check your work and correct mistakes.
- ▶ **Writing that is too short:**
 - **Content.** You will lose points if you have not included all the points and developed your ideas sufficiently.

TIP

Before the exam, practise the recommended word limit in the time allowed.
DO NOT waste time counting words in the exam.

Step 4. Check



Stop writing and check your work: It is essential to check, check and check again to **maximise your grade in language.**

1.3. Time management

As can be seen below, writing takes up only 60 % of the time.

Writing Paper exam	80 minutes (2 tasks)
Two writing tasks to complete:	40 minutes per task
1. Reading question and identify content:	2 minutes
2. Organising ideas:	5 minutes
3. Writing:	25 minutes
4. Checking:	8 minutes

TIP

When practising, limit your time to that of the exam.

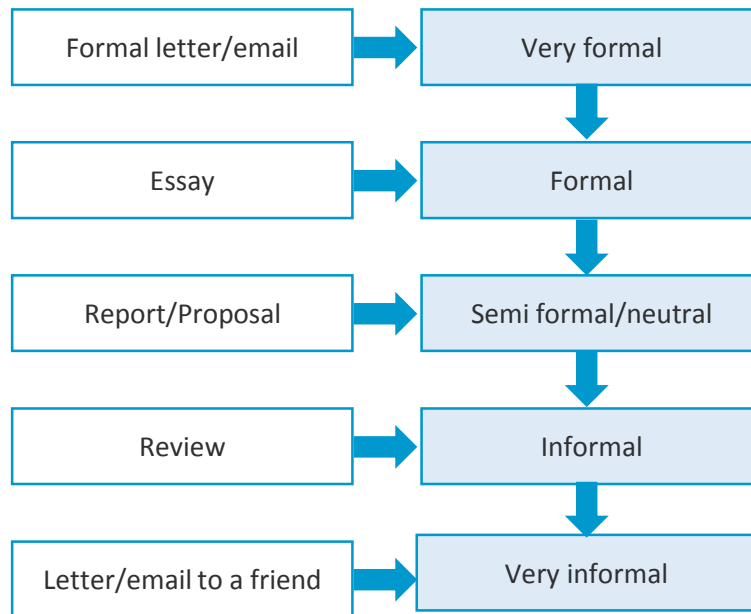
1.4. Register

Formal or informal?

Using the correct style (register) is critical to scoring high in Communicative Achievement.

To determine the style, you first need to decide:

- ▶ To whom you are writing.
- ▶ What your purpose is.



Formal or informal linking words and discourse markers?

Formal and informal discourse markers should NOT be mixed in the same piece of writing.

Semi-formal/neutral markers can sometimes be adapted to a more, or less, formal style, if appropriate to context.

Do not over-use, as this can seem artificial.

FORMAL REGISTER, e.g.:				
Listing	Adding more information	Contrasting information	Summarising	Referencing/ Changing subject order
First and foremost,	Moreover,	In contrast,	Therefore,	As far as I am concerned,
Initially	Furthermore,	However,	Accordingly,	With reference to...,
Further	Additionally,	Nonetheless,	Consequently,	With regard to...,
Lastly	In addition,	Nevertheless,	Thus,	In relation to...,

SEMI FORMAL/NEUTRAL REGISTER e.g.:				
Listing	Adding more information	Contrasting information	Summarising	Referencing/ Changing subject order
To begin with	Likewise,	Although,	Therefore,	Generally,
Initially	In addition,	Even though,	Accordingly,	In general,
Further	Additionally,	Whereas,	Overall,	In most/many cases,
Lastly,	Similarly,	Besides...,	As a result,	Relating to...,

INFORMAL REGISTER e.g.:				
Listing	Adding more information	Contrasting information	Summarising	Referencing/ Changing subject order
After...,	Also,	But...,	Anyway/Anyhow	Since...,
Then,	As well as...,	Or	Because...,	So,
Next,	Just as...,	Though,	At any rate,	Well...,

Avoid *firstly/secondly/thirdly; on the one hand/on the other hand.*

Common positioning and punctuation of discourse markers

Discourse marker at beginning of sentence. Follow with a comma:

- ▶ Formal: *Further to your letter, I would like to add...* (adverbial phrase).
- ▶ Informal: *Well, you know that pub I went to for my birthday...*

Discourse marker in middle of sentence. Precede and follow with comma:

- ▶ Formal: *I would like to add, however, that I strongly disagree.*
- ▶ Informal: *I really don't agree, and, at any rate, what does it matter?*

1.5. Grading

A maximum of five points are awarded for each area:

Language (25%. 0–5 points):	Organisation (25% 0-5 points):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use complex clauses and a varied range of structures. ▶ Accurate language. ▶ Be ambitious. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Paragraphing makes sense. ▶ Ideas in a clear and logical order. ▶ Good use of linking devices for continuity and contrast of ideas. ▶ Easy to read.
Communicative Achievement (25%. 0-5 points):	Content (25% 0-5 points):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Appropriate register and tone. ▶ Interesting writing. ▶ Complex ideas expressed clearly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ All the points are covered and developed. ▶ All content is relevant.

Cambridge English: Advanced (CAE) Writing Examiners use the following assessment scale, extracted from the one on the previous page:

CI	Content	Communicative Achievement	Organisation	Language
5	All content is relevant to the task. Target reader is fully informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task with sufficient flexibility to communicate complex ideas in an effective way, holding the target reader's attention with ease, fulfilling all communicative purposes.	Text is a well-organised, coherent whole, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns with flexibility.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, effectively and precisely. Uses a wide range of simple and complex grammatical forms with full control, flexibility and sophistication. Errors, if present, are related to less common words and structures, or occur as slips.
4	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 3 and 5.</i>			
3	Minor irrelevances and/or omissions may be present. Target reader is on the whole informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task effectively to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward and complex ideas, as appropriate.	Text is well organised and coherent, using a variety of cohesive devices and organisational patterns to generally good effect.	Uses a range of vocabulary, including less common lexis, appropriately. Uses a range of simple and complex grammatical forms with control and flexibility. Occasional errors may be present but do not impede communication.
2	<i>Performance shares features of Bands 1 and 3.</i>			
1	Irrelevances and misinterpretation of task may be present. Target reader is minimally informed.	Uses the conventions of the communicative task to hold the target reader's attention and communicate straightforward ideas.	Text is generally well organised and coherent, using a variety of linking words and cohesive devices.	Uses a range of everyday vocabulary appropriately, with occasional inappropriate use of less common lexis. Uses a range of simple and some complex grammatical forms with a good degree of control. Errors do not impede communication.
0	Content is totally irrelevant. Target reader is not informed.	<i>Performance below Band 1.</i>		

Section 2. Writing Exam Part 1

2.1. Essay

Part 1: Compulsory question

There will only be one question with a short text.
You must write an essay.

Reasons for writing

- ▶ Write an essay based on points included in the text.
- ▶ Give reasons for your opinion.
- ▶ **NOTE:** It is essential to show your ability to select, defend and evaluate ideas.

Style

- ▶ Write in third person throughout, using an objective style.
- ▶ **Exception:** thesis statement (e.g. *Here, I will argue that...*) and conclusion (e.g. *I would argue that...*) may briefly use the first person.
- ▶ Use the passive voice where appropriate: *it is argued that....* **Not:** **I believe...*

Structure

- ▶ An essay is made up of defined parts that provide cohesion to the writing.
- ▶ Each part plays a role in providing structure to the argument. See table below.

Paragraph 1 Introduction	Background: Introduce topic.
	Thesis statement: <i>This essay will discuss...</i> [Idea 1, 2 & 3].
Paragraph 2	Paragraph leader: Express idea 1 in one sentence.
	Paragraph body: Develop idea 1.
Paragraph 3	Paragraph leader: Express idea 2 in one sentence.
	Paragraph body: Develop idea 2.
Paragraph 4 Conclusion	Summary: Evaluate ideas 1 and 2.
	Future suggestion, comment. Closing comment or question (optional)

Remember:



Step 1. Identify key words

Some people say that football is too dominant in the media.

Do you agree?

Notes

Write about:

1. whether some sports are not represented
2. footballers' salaries
3. (your own idea)

Mental/physical health

Step 2. Organise

Paragraph	Function	What to say
Paragraph 1 Introduction	Background	<i>Football is a major sport in TV and newspapers.</i>
	<i>This essay will discuss /Here I will argue....</i> Mention idea 1, 2 & 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Not all sports shown in media.</i> 2. <i>Salaries.</i> 3. <i>Importance of all sports.</i>
Paragraph 1 2leader	Idea 1	<i>Some sports excluded i.e. women's football</i>
Paragraph 1 body	Give opinion about idea 1	<i>Some sports only televised with Olympics</i>
Paragraph 2 leader	Idea 2	<i>Salaries are too high</i>
Paragraph 2 body	Give opinion about idea 2	<i>Clubs make so much money from players</i>
Paragraph 3 leader	Idea 3	<i>Need to encourage young people to play sport</i>
Paragraph 3 body	Give opinion about idea 3	<i>Important for physical and mental health</i>
Paragraph 4 Conclusion	Summary: Evaluate ideas 1, 2 & 3	<i>Shouldn't be so dominant, but it is a consequence of supply and demand</i>
	Future suggestion	<i>Include other sports</i>

Step 3. Write

Start with background knowledge to introduce the topic.

Complex clause with subordinator

Paragraph leaders clearly state the main idea of the paragraph.

Discourse markers, followed by comma, provide additional structure to the text.

Football is a major sport on TV and in newspapers. A recent study concluded that 80% of all the time dedicated to sport on TV was on football. Here, I will argue that while sports are essential to our physical and mental wellbeing, the money generated by football is detrimental to other sports and athletes.

Many sports are almost excluded from the TV and newspapers. This is particularly the case regarding women's sports. Women's football shares only a fraction of the time and money dedicated to male players. Other sports are only televised during the Olympics. Moreover, footballers' salaries are very high. Clubs are offering very large amounts of money to attract the best players. This should be regulated by UEFA.

All sports are essential for physical and mental wellbeing. Schools, and the media, need to encourage young people to play as much sport as possible.

Arguably, football is too dominant in the media. However, this dominance of football is a consequence of supply and demand. Therefore, I believe that while football is very popular, the media should make an effort to include other sports for greater diversity.

Step 4. Check



Practice! Read the following questions and write an essay in 40 minutes.

You **must** answer this question. Write your answer in 140-190 words in an appropriate style.

<p>Some people say that technology is too dominant in our lives. Do you agree?</p>
<p>Notes Write about:</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. the effect of technology on our lives2. the price of technology3. (your own idea)

Section 3. Writing Exam Part 2

3.1. Types of texts

Choose **one** from a selection of three. The possible models are:

- ▶ **Formal or informal letter/email** (e.g. writing a job application or writing to a cousin).
- ▶ **Proposal** (e.g. suggesting a solution to a problem).
- ▶ **Report** (e.g. summarising information and making a recommendation to your boss). **Review** (e.g. give your opinion of a book or film in a blog).

3.2. Formal letter/email

Reason for writing

To reassure someone, justify a course of action, or correct a misunderstanding. For example:

- ▶ Letter or email of application (for a job).
- ▶ Letter or email of complaint.

Style

A letter of application (for a job etc.) is one of the most formal of all writing styles, with very strict conventions in its opening and closing sentences.

An email of application will still follow a formal style but may use less strict conventions.

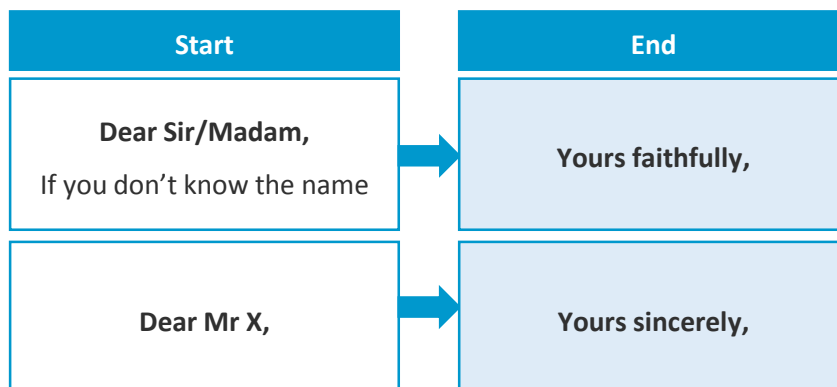
Write in the first person where appropriate.

Structure

Use paragraphs to structure your writing and give coherence to your ideas:

Opening	<i>Dear...</i>
Paragraph 1	Introduce the topic/ state reason for writing.
Paragraph 2	Develop the topic. Give description and details. Further discussion if needed.
Paragraph 3	Discuss desired result of letter. Suggestions, recommendations, closing comments.
Sign off	<i>Yours sincerely, faithfully</i> (depending on title used).

Starting and ending the letter



Useful language

Opening sentences (letter of application)

*I am writing **to apply for** the post / position of ... as advertised in (newspaper/ date)...*

*I am writing **in reference to** your advertisement, from the (newspaper/ date)...*

Opening sentences (letter of complaint)

*I am writing **with regard to** the article entitled (name/date) to express **my concern about /disapproval of** (reason for writing)...*

*I am writing **in reference to** the article entitled (name/date) to express my **disappointment with/dissatisfaction with** (reason for writing)...*

Body (letter of application)

I am sure that I would be successful in this post as I...

I am particularly interested in completing (the course) as...

Body (letter of complaint)

Firstly, / To begin with, / I would like to state that/ I would like to point out that...

In fact, / furthermore, / moreover, / in addition, / finally,

According to (your article),

Your (article) states that ... However,

Closing sentences of a letter of application

I very much hope you will (desired result)

I would appreciate it/be grateful if you would (desired result)

I look forward to receiving/seeing (desired result)

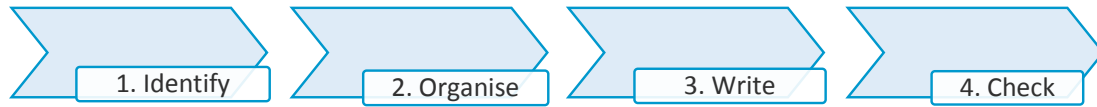
Desired result a letter of complaint

I trust you will (desired result)

It seems only fair that you should (desired action)

Considering the above, (I feel I am entitled to a full refund and a formal apology)

Remember:



Step 1. Identify key words

You see this advert on a newspaper website:

Hotel Kids Club assistant required

We are looking for students to work from May to October in our hotel in York. No previous experience is needed but you should like working with children. Languages are required. Please write to the hotel manager indicating why you are suitable.

Write your **letter**.

Step 2. Organise

Who to?	<i>Hotel manager.</i>
Register?	<i>Very Formal. No name. Dear Sir/Madam.</i>
Paragraph 1	<i>Apply for job. Daily Herald.</i>
Paragraph 2	<i>About me (age, where I live, what I do, languages).</i>
Paragraph 3	<i>Reasons for applying – looking for summer work. Good communication skills. Love children.</i>
Paragraph 4	<i>Available for interview via Skype. CV enclosed.</i>
Paragraph 4	<i>I look forward to hearing from you.</i>
Sign off	<i>Yours faithfully.</i>

Step 3. Write

Correctly follows formal letter writing conventions when opening the letter

Dear Sir/Madam,
I would like to apply for the post of Kids Club Assistant at your hotel in York which I saw advertised on the Daily Herald newspaper website on the 15th March.

Answers question: "Why are you suitable?"

I am 23 years old and I am studying to be a Primary teacher at university in Madrid. I speak fluent Spanish and advanced English. I am looking to work in England for the summer to further improve my English. I feel I would be suitable for this job as I have good communication skills and I enjoy working with children. I have helped at English language summer camps over the last two summers, which I enjoyed very much.

Correctly follows formal letter writing conventions to sign off

Please find my CV enclosed. I am available for an interview via Skype until April.

If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully.

Step 4. Check



TIP

Starting the paragraph in a formal letter can be the trickiest part. Learn 1 or 2 opening sentences to help you.



Practice! Write a formal email/letter in 40 minutes.

You see this advert on a newspaper website:

Hotel waiters and waitresses required

We are looking for students to work from May to October in our hotel in Cambridge. No previous experience is needed but you should like working with people. Languages are required. Please write to the hotel manager indicating why you are suitable.

Write your **letter**.

3.3. Informal letter/email writing

Reason for writing

- ▶ Email/letter to family member or friend.
- ▶ Ask for a favour/ a request for help.

Style

- ▶ A relaxed style with a very light tone.
- ▶ Mimic your style of speaking.
- ▶ Use exclamation marks and informal punctuation.
- ▶ Keep it fun/light-hearted if appropriate.
- ▶ Write in the first person.

Structure

Use paragraphs to structure your writing and give coherence to your ideas:

Paragraph 1	Greeting. Setting up response for paragraph 2.
Paragraph 2	Idea 1 of required content + justification.
Paragraph 3	Idea 2 of required content + justification.
Paragraph 4	Closing sentences. Signing off.

Useful language

Start	End
Dear... Hi there!	Regards (email-neutral) From (letter-neutral) Love (family & best friends)

Opening paragraph:

Great to hear from you!

Hey! How are you?

Body (informal)

I really love the...

What I most like is the...

And what about the...?

You must visit...

You mustn't forget to visit the...

Closing paragraph

Write back as soon as you can!

Can't wait to hear what happens!

Write soon!

Remember:



Step 1. Identify key words

You have received this email from your English friend Rachel:

From: Rachel
Subject: holiday

Some friends of mine from work are visiting your area soon for a two-week holiday. They would like to visit places of interest in the area and learn about local culture.
Can you tell me about some of the places they could visit? What's the best way to travel around-
bus, bike or on foot?

Thanks,
Rachel

Write your email.

Step 2. Organise

Topic	<i>Friends holiday in my area (London)</i>	
Who to?	<i>Close friend Rachel.</i>	
Register?	<i>Very informal.</i>	
Places to visit?	<i>Westminster, London Eye.</i>	<i>Museums.</i>
See local culture	<i>History, views</i>	<i>Loads to see</i>
Bus, bike or foot?	<i>See area on foot</i>	<i>Underground or bus</i>

Step 3. Write

The diagram illustrates an informal letter with several callout boxes pointing to specific parts of the text:

- Informal opening of a letter:** Points to "Hi Rachel!"
- Rhetorical questions maintain informal style:** Points to "Where else? Well, you know that pub I went for my birthday?"
- Where:** Points to "London Eye, which is a really good ride as you can see so much of London, is just over the side of the river, but it is quite expensive. If they want to see some culture, then the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben and Westminster Abbey are all close together."
- Use contractions in informal texts:** Points to "I'd definitely phone up and book though, if you go in the evening."
- Why:** Points to "I think they might be turning on the Christmas lights that week, so if you are lucky you'll get to see the display over the harbour —that can be amazing at night. But you know how cold it gets over here in December —make sure you wrap up! You'll freeze, if not!"
- Consistently chatty informal style throughout:** Points to the overall tone of the letter.
- When:** Points to the closing "Lots of love,"

The letter text is as follows:

Hi Rachel!

How are you? I hope everything is well.

If your friends are visiting my area, I think they ought to visit the centre of London. The best way to travel there is probably by train, and once in London, by bus or underground. You can hire a bike, but the roads can be dangerous as there's a lot of traffic.

The best places to visit are in the area around Westminster. The London Eye, which is a really good ride as you can see so much of London, is just over the side of the river, but it is quite expensive. If they want to see some culture, then the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben and Westminster Abbey are all close together.

Where else? Well, you know that pub I went for my birthday? I sent you a selfie of me outside. It was built in the 1600s so it's a really attractive place. They've got fabulous food, and it's pretty good value —not pricey at all. I'd definitely phone up and book though, if you go in the evening. It's impossible to get a table otherwise. Not quite so busy at lunchtime, so maybe better then.

I think they might be turning on the Christmas lights that week, so if you are lucky you'll get to see the display over the harbour —that can be amazing at night. But you know how cold it gets over here in December —make sure you wrap up! You'll freeze, if not!

Can't wait to see you!

Lots of love,

xx

Step 4. Check



TIP

Do NOT use formal language and discourse markers to show off your knowledge. Keep a chatty informal style throughout.



Practice! Read the following question and write an informal email/letter in 40 minutes.

You have received an email from an English friend:

You have received this email from your English friend John:

From: John

Subject: weekend away

A couple of friends of mine are visiting your area soon for a weekend birthday celebration. They would like to visit places of interest in the area and learn about local culture.

Can you tell me about some of the places they could visit? Where would a good place be to have dinner?

Thanks,
John

Write your **email**.

3.4. Article

Reason for writing

- ▶ Promoting and discussing an idea on a website, blog, or local newspaper or magazine.
- ▶ Written for a blog, website, or local newspaper or magazine.

Style

- ▶ Use catchy title to attract the reader's interest.
- ▶ Use Informal language.
- ▶ Address readers directly.
- ▶ Use colloquial expressions.
- ▶ Include humorous comments and/or rhetorical questions to create interest where appropriate.
- ▶ Use exclamation marks.

Structure

Use paragraphs to structure your writing and give coherence to your ideas:

Title	Get reader's attention
Paragraph 1	Introduce idea
Paragraph 2	First aspect you love about the idea
Paragraph 3	Second aspect you love about the idea
Paragraph 4	Summarize opinion. Reconnect with title

Useful language

Opening

- ▶ Use a catchy title.

Giving opinions (informal)

One thing I love is the...

What I most like is the...

What attracts me the most is the...

And what about the...?

Can't stop thinking about the...

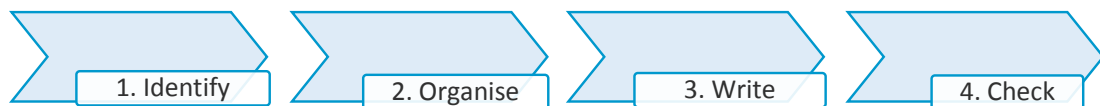
The coolest thing about... is the...

Closing

All in all,

You won't regret the...

Remember:



Step 1. Identify key words

You see this announcement on an English-language website:

Articles wanted

The most useful piece of clothing in my wardrobe

What's the most useful item of clothing you have? Why is it so useful? Why do you like it so much?

Write us an article answering these questions.

We will publish the best articles on our website.

Write your **article**.

Step 2. Organise

Who to?	<i>Website</i>
Register?	<i>Informal.</i>
Paragraph 1	<i>Black jeans. Wear everywhere.</i>
Paragraph 2	<i>Smart – wear to work. Dress up for evening. Casual with hoodie.</i>
Paragraph 3	<i>Wear with all types of shoes.</i>
Paragraph 4	<i>Most basic item is most useful</i>

Step 3. Write

Catches attention → *The essential addition to every wardrobe for men and women*

Is there any item of clothing more basic than a pair of jeans? You can buy them in practically any colour imaginable. But in black, you can't go wrong!

Rhetorical question to keep readers interested → *Black jeans can be worn with smart boots, and a white shirt and a jacket to work. Want to go out for the evening after work? Just change your shirt for a dressier top and, abracadabra, you're ready! For the next day, all you have to do is put on a large hoodie over your top from the night before, and it looks like a completely different outfit.*

Short closing comment connects with purpose of writing → *The magic of jeans is that you can wear them with so many shoes - from heels, or boots to trainers. This means they can be adapted to almost any occasion.*

Look no further than the most basic item of clothing to find the most useful addition to any wardrobe!

Step 4. Check



Practice! Read the following question and write a proposal in 45 minutes.

You see this announcement on an English-language website:

Articles wanted

Your favourite food

What's your favourite food? How do you prepare it? Where can you buy it?

Write us an article answering these questions.

We will publish the best articles on our website.

Write your **article**.

TIP

Use contractions and informal punctuation.

3.5. Report

Reason for writing

- ▶ Summarize information.
- ▶ Discuss and evaluate points 1 & 2.
- ▶ Written for your boss, a professional group, or a school administrator.

Style

- ▶ Semi- formal or neutral language.
- ▶ Concise and well organised.
- ▶ Use headings/bullet points to aid organisation for easy reference.

Structure

Use paragraphs to structure your writing and give coherence to your ideas:

Paragraph 1	Introduce topic
Paragraph 2	Discuss point 1 & give opinion
Paragraph 3	Discuss point 2 & give opinion
Paragraph 4	Conclusion. Evaluate points 1 & 2

Useful language

Presenting and contrasting arguments:

The first thing I would like to consider/ to be considered is...

To illustrate this point, I would like to present some examples of ...

The main argument in favour/ against is...

First, I should like to consider...

Apart from that...

Even though .../ In spite of...

On the other hand,...

What is more...

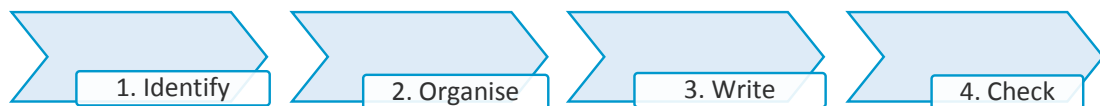
What matters most in this case is...

There is no doubt that...

Reasoning:

As a result of / On account of /Owing to /Due to

Remember:



Step 1. Identify key words

A group of British researchers is going to visit your college for two days. The aim of their trip is to learn about how homework is used by teachers in education.

You have been asked to write a report for the group leader. Your report should:

- include information about how much homework is used by teachers in different subjects
- recommend which lessons the researchers should watch to evaluate the homework given.

Write your **report**.

Step 2. Organise

Who to?	<i>Group leader</i>
Register?	<i>Semi-formal.</i>
Paragraph 1	<i>Homework. Differing opinions between pupils, parents and teachers.</i>
Paragraph 2	<i>Point 1: Amount of homework- parents think too much. Teachers think it necessary to practice.</i>
Paragraph 3	<i>Point 2: Observe Maths and Natural Science lessons. Different styles.</i>
Paragraph 4	<i>Conclusion.</i>

Step 3. Write

The diagram illustrates the structure of a formal email. It consists of a main text box on the right and three callout boxes on the left. The main text box contains the following content:

To: Company Manager
From: Almudena Martín
Subject: Research on homework
The aim of report is to evaluate the amount of homework given by different teachers at college

Quantity of homework
Teacher, parents and pupils have different opinions regarding the amount of homework. Teachers state that an average of 1 hour of homework is given per day for children between the ages of 10-14. Parents and pupils complain that many more hours are often needed to be able to complete the tasks.

Different teaching styles
I recommend that the researchers observe lessons in Maths and Natural Science as each teacher has a different style. The Maths teacher frequently gives a lot of homework, while the Science teacher gives very little.

Conclusion and recommendation
Teachers often state that homework can be an effective tool in education as it provides an opportunity to practice the concepts learnt in class. However, it appears clear that some teachers believe in giving more homework, and others less. I recommend that schools have a common policy that all teachers should follow.

The callout boxes on the left provide the following explanations:

- Format allows easy reference.** (Points to the header information)
- Headings allow easy reading** (Points to the section headings)
- Short conclusion provides summary and final evaluation.** (Points to the conclusion paragraph)

Step 4. Check



TIP

Providing a subject at the beginning of the report helps you to clarify arguments.



Practice! Read the following question and write a report in 40 minutes.

A group of British researchers is going to visit your workplace for two days. The aim of their trip is to learn about how technology is used by companies to save time.

You have been asked to write a report for the group leader. Your report should:

- include information about how technology is used in the different departments.
- recommend which departments the researchers should visit to evaluate how technology saves time.

Write your **report**.

3.6. Review

Reason for writing

- ▶ Review a book, article, film, holiday etc.
- ▶ Describe and give your opinion.
- ▶ Written for a magazine, newspaper, or blog.

Style

- ▶ Use semi- informal language.
- ▶ Use first person where appropriate (*I think, I believe...*).
- ▶ Use an interesting title.
- ▶ Make it enjoyable and interesting to read.
- ▶ Include lots of adjectives and adverbs to describe (*gripping/thrilling/amazingly...*)
- ▶ Use rhetorical questions and exciting language to capture the reader's interest.

Structure

Use paragraphs to structure your writing and give coherence to your ideas:

1st paragraph	Overview of book/film/holiday/restaurant etc.
2nd paragraph	Greater detail on a book/film/holiday/restaurant etc.
3rd paragraph	Evaluate and make recommendation.

Useful language

Expressing opinions

In my opinion

Personally, I believe that...

I agree/disagree with...

I am in favour of...

I identify with the main character because...

In my view...

If you ask me...

I believe that...

It seems to me that...

I am against the idea of...

Rhetorical questions

Have you ever...?

Are you one of those people who think that...?

What would life be like if...?

What do you think about...?

Are you one of those people who...?

Remember:



Step 1. Identify key words

Restaurant reviews wanted!

Have you eaten in a restaurant recently? Please tell us about it! It could be any type of restaurant. What was the food like? Was the décor attractive? Would you recommend the restaurant to other people?

We will publish the best reviews on our website

Write your **review**.

Step 2. Organise

Who to?	<i>website</i>	
Register?	<i>Semi-formal.</i>	
Paragraph 1	<i>Which restaurant? Décor?</i>	<i>Pasta and Pizza. Plastic chairs- doesn't feel like good restaurant</i>
Paragraph 2	<i>What's the food like?</i>	<i>Wide variety. Burrito is favourite-spicy. Pizza/pasta are not good.</i>
Paragraph 3	<i>Problems?</i>	<i>Can take ages to be seated</i>
Paragraph 4	<i>Recommendation?</i>	<i>Good food. Friendly. Get there before 9.30pm</i>

Step 3. Write

Clear title sets tone → *Cheap and cheerful*

Décor → *Pasta and Pizza at first sight doesn't look like a good restaurant because it has these plastic chairs and bar-like tables that make it look more like an ice cream shop than a restaurant.*

Food → *They have a wide variety of dishes with food from Mexico, the USA and Italy. My favourite is the burrito, as it has a wonderful combination of flavours and is just a little spicy. Personally, I thought that neither the pasta nor the pizza were that good. You would think that if the name of the restaurant is Pasta and Pizza, those dishes would be the best, wouldn't you? If you ask me, I think they have too much food to choose from on the menu, and they should take some off.*

Describe using adjectives → *As there are so many dishes, people also take ages to order as they have to read this really long menu. As a result, there are loads of people waiting to be seated.*

Short summary and recommendation → *I would recommend this restaurant because you get tasty food and massive servings for not that much money, so it's a pretty good deal. The staff are friendly too. The only advise I would give is to get there before half past nine, as otherwise you won't get a table.*

Step 4. Check



TIP

Think of and write about a real town/book/film that appeals to you. It will be easier to write about and more interesting to read.



Practice! Read the following question and write an informal email/letter in 40 minutes.

Hotel reviews wanted!

Have you stayed in a hotel recently? Please tell us about it! It could be any type of hotel. What were the rooms like? Were the staff friendly? Would you recommend the hotel to other people?

The best reviews will be published on our website

Write your **review**.

References

Cambridge English (2016). *Assessing Writing Performance*. [web file]. Retrieved from: <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/advanced/>