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ГОУ ВПО «Татарский государственный гуманитарно-педагогический
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WRITING GUIDE

**учебное пособие
по английской письменной речи**

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Цель пособия – научить грамотно и успешно выполнять различные письменные задания на английском языке. Издание включает описание и содержание структуры, целей и требований к каждому виду письменной речи, также содержит систему упражнений и заданий для развития навыков письма. Пособие содержит заметки по стилю и пунктуации, рекомендации по избежанию ошибок, которые довольно часто встречаются в письменных работах.

Учебное пособие предназначено для студентов I-IV курсов факультетов иностранных языков педагогических ВУЗов, а также может быть использовано на языковых курсах и лицами, самостоятельно изучающими английский язык.

Пособие написано на английском языке.

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PREFACE

THE WRITING GUIDE is a way to improve your writing skills. It is a source of useful materials that can be used in the classroom or for self-study. All the information and the activities have been designed so they can be used by people working on their own.

WRITING GUIDE is divided into 4 main parts. Each part has its own aim and database. The given information is supported by a wide number of examples taken from authentic sources.

PART 1 covers rules that help you to avoid stylistic and grammatical mistakes that are often made in written works.

PART 2 is devoted to the English punctuation which is not also the same as in the Russian one so it may be confusing for Russian students.

PART 3 focuses on different types of writing, from essays to reports. Each unit here is organized in the same way:

- the definition;
- the structure;
- style of writing;
- samples;
- useful expressions;
- comprehension questions;
- exercises (including analysis, practice and a final task).

PART 4 contains different types of letters based on specific features of formal and informal letters' structure. The same organization as in PART 3 is used.

The authors wish you all the best and do not forget:

**The best way to improve your writing is little and often.
The more you write, the easier it will become.**

PART 1. HOW TO WRITE CLEARLY

1.1. CLEARNESS AND FORCE

1.1.1. Words

1. Use words in their proper sense.

Write, not

“His apparent guilt justified his friends in disowning him”,

but

“his evident guilt”.

“Conscious” and “aware”, “unnatural” and “supernatural”, “transpire” and “occur”, “circumstance” and “event”, “reverse” and “converse”, “eliminate” and “elicit”, are often confused together.

2. Avoid exaggerations.

“The boundless plains in the heart of the empire furnished inexhaustible supplies of corn, that would have almost sufficed for twice the population.”

Here “inexhaustible” is inconsistent with what follows. The words “unprecedented”, “incalculable”, “very”, and “stupendous” are often used in the same loose way.

3. Avoid useless circumlocution and “fine writing”.

“Her Majesty here partook of lunch.”

Write “lunched”. “Partook of” implies sharing, and is incorrect as well as lengthy. So, do not use “apex” for “top”, “species” for “kind”, “individual” for “man”, “assist” for “help”, etc.

4. Be careful in the use of “not ... and,” “any,” “but,” “only,” “not ... or,” “that.”

5. Be careful in the use of ambiguous words, e.g. “certain.” “Certain” is often used for “some”, as in

*“Independently of his earnings, he has a **certain** property”,*

where the meaning might be “unfailing”. Under this head may be mentioned the double use of words, such as “left” in the same form and sound, but different in meaning. Even where there is no obscurity, the juxtaposition of the same word twice used in two senses is inelegant,

*“He turned to the **left** and **left** the room.”*

6. Be careful in the use of “he,” “it,” “they,” “these,” etc. The ambiguity arising from the use of *he* applying to different persons is well known.

*“He told his friend that if **he** did not feel better in half an hour he thought he had better return.”*

Much ambiguity is also caused by excessive use of such phrases as *in this way, of this sort*, etc.

*“God, foreseeing the disorders of human nature, has given us certain passions and affections which arise from, or whose objects are, these disorders. **Of this sort** are fear, resentment, compassion.”*

Repeat the noun,

“Among these passions and affections are fear, etc.”

Two distinct uses of *it* may be noted. *It*, when referring to something that precedes, may be called “retrospective”; but when to something that follows, “prospective”.

“Avoid indiscriminate charity: it is a crime,”
“it” is retrospective.

“It is a crime to give indiscriminately,”
“it” is prospective.

The prospective “it”, if productive of ambiguity, can often be omitted by using the infinitive as a subject:

“To give indiscriminately is a crime”.

7. Report a speech in the First Person, where necessary to avoid ambiguity; use the Third Person where the exact words of the speaker are not intended to be given; Omission of “that” in a speech in the Third Person.

8. When you use a Participle implying “when,” “while,” “though,” or “that,” show clearly by the context what is implied. When you use a Participle, as “walking”, implying “when”, “while”, “though”, “that”, make it clear by the context what is implied.

“Republics, in the first instance, are never desired for their own sakes. I do not think they will finally be desired at all, unaccompanied by courtly graces and good breeding.”

Here there is a little doubt whether the meaning is “since they are, or, if they are, unaccompanied.”

That or when

“Men walking (that walk, or when they walk) on ice sometimes fall.”

It is better to use “men walking” to mean “men when they walk”. If the relative is meant, use “men that walk”, instead of the participle. When the participle precedes the subject, it generally implies a cause:

“Seeing this, he retired.”

Otherwise it generally has its proper participial meaning,

“He retired, keeping his face towards us.”

If there is any ambiguity, write “on seeing”, “at the same time, or while, keeping.”

9. When using the Relative Pronoun, use “who” or “which,” if the meaning is “and he” or “and it,” “for he” or “for it.” In other cases use “that,” if euphony allows.

“I heard this from the inspector, who (and he) heard it from the guard that travelled with the train.”

“Fetch me (all) the books that lie on the table, and also the pamphlets, which (and these) you will find on the floor.”

An adherence to this rule would remove much ambiguity. Thus:

“There was a public-house next door, which was a great nuisance”,

means “and this (i.e. the fact of its being next door) was a great nuisance”; whereas *that* would have meant

“Next door was a public-house that (i.e. the public-house) was a great nuisance”.

“Who”, “which”, etc. introduce a new fact about the antecedent, whereas “that” introduces something without which the antecedent is incomplete or undefined. Thus, in the first example above, “inspector” is complete in itself, and “who” introduces a new fact about him; “guard” is incomplete, and requires “that travelled with the train” to complete the meaning.

Exceptions:

- When the antecedent is defined, e.g. by a possessive case, modern English uses *who* instead of *that*. It is rare, though it would be useful, to say

“His English friends that had not seen him”

for “the English friends, or those of his English friends, that had not seen him”.

- *That* sounds ill when separated from its verb and from its antecedents, and emphasized by isolation:

*“There are many persons **that**, though unscrupulous, are commonly good-tempered, and **that**, if not strongly incited by self-interest, are ready for the most part to think of the interest of their neighbours.”*

- If the antecedent is qualified by *that*, the relative must not be *that*. Besides other considerations, the repetition is disagreeable.

*“**That** remark **that** I made yesterday is not **that that** I said **that** I regretted **that** I had made.”*

- *That* cannot be preceded by a preposition, and hence throws the preposition to the end.

“This is the rule that I adhere to.”

This is perfectly good English, though sometimes unnecessarily avoided.

- After pronominal adjectives used for personal pronouns, modern English prefers *who*.

*“There are many, others, several, those, **who** can testify.”*

- After *that* used as a conjunction there is sometimes a dislike to use *that* as a relative.

10. Do not use “and which” for “which.”

11. Equivalents for the Relative: Participle or Adjective; Infinitive; “whereby”, “whereto,” etc; “If a man”; “And he”, “and this”, etc.;

“what”; omission of Relative. Repeat the Antecedent before the Relative, where the non-repetition causes any ambiguity.

- Participle

*“Men **thirsting** (for “men that thirst”) for revenge are not indifferent to plunder.”*

The objection to the participle is that here, as often, it creates a little ambiguity. The above sentence may mean, “men, when they thirst”, or “though they thirst”, as well as “men that thirst”. Often however there is no ambiguity:

*“I have documents **proving** this conclusively.”*

- Infinitive

Instead of

“He was the first that entered”,

you can write “to enter”.

- Whereby, wherein can sometimes be used for “by which”, “in which”, so as to avoid a harsh repetition of “which”.

“The means whereby this may be effected.”

But this use is somewhat antiquated.

- If

“The man that does not care for music is to be pitied”,

can be written (though not so forcibly),

“If a man does not care for music, he is to be pitied.”

It is in long sentences that this equivalent will be found most useful.

- And this

“He did his best, which was all that could be expected”,

can be written,

“and this was all that.”

- What

“Let me repeat that which you ought to know, that that which is worth doing is worth doing well.”

“Let me repeat, what you ought to know, that what is worth doing is worth doing well.”

- Omission of Relative

It is sometimes thought ungrammatical to omit the relative, as in

“The man (that) you speak of.”

On the contrary, *that* when an object (not when a subject) may be omitted, wherever the antecedent and the subject of the relative sentence are brought into juxtaposition by the omission.

12. Use particular for general terms. Avoid abstract Nouns. Avoid Verbal Nouns where Verbs can be used.

Using particular for general terms is a most important rule. Instead of

“I have neither the necessaries of life nor the means of procuring them”,

write (if you can with truth),

“I have not a crust of bread, nor a penny to buy one.”

There is a danger in this use. The meaning is vividly expressed but sometimes may be exaggerated or imperfect. *Crust of bread* may be an exaggeration; on the other hand, if the speaker is destitute not

only of bread, but also of shelter and clothing, then *crust of bread* is an imperfect expression of the meaning.

In philosophy and science, where the language ought very often to be inclusive and brief, general and not particular terms must be used.

Avoid Verbal Nouns where Verbs can be used instead. The disadvantage of the use of Verbal Nouns is this, that, unless they are immediately preceded by prepositions, they are sometimes liable to be confounded with participles. The following is an instance of an excessive use of Verbal Nouns:

*“The pretended confession of the secretary was only collusion to lay the jealousies of the king's **favouring** popery, which still hung upon him, notwithstanding his writing on the Revelation, and **affecting** to enter on all occasions into controversy, **asserting** in particular that the Pope was Antichrist.”*

Write “notwithstanding that he wrote and affected, etc.”

13. Use particular persons instead of a class. Use metaphor instead of literal statement. Do not confuse metaphor. Do not mix metaphor with literal statement. Do not use poetic metaphor to illustrate a prosaic subject.

1.1.2. Order of words in a sentence

1. Emphatic words must stand in emphatic positions; i.e. *for the most part*, at the beginning or the end of the sentence. Unemphatic words must, as a rule, be kept from the end. An interrogation sometimes gives emphasis.

This rule occasionally supersedes the common rules about position. Thus, the place for an adverb, as a rule, should be between the subject and verb:

*“He **quickly** left the room”,*

but if *quickly* is to be emphatic, it must come at the beginning or end, as in

*“I told him to leave the room slowly, but he left **quickly**.”*

Adjectives, in clauses beginning with “if” and “though”, often come at the beginning for emphasis:

*“**Insoient** though he was, he was silenced at last.”*

Unemphatic words must, as a rule, be kept from the end of the sentence. It is a common fault to break this rule by placing a short and unemphatic predicate at the end of a long sentence.

“To know some Latin, even if it be nothing but a few Latin roots, is useful.”

Write, “It is useful, etc.”

So

*“the evidence proves how kind to his inferiors **he is.**”*

Often, where an adjective or auxiliary verb comes at the end, the addition of an emphatic adverb justifies the position, e.g. above, “is *very* useful”, “he has *invariably* been.”

Exceptions.

Prepositions and pronouns attached to emphatic words need not be moved from the end:

*“He does no harm that I hear **of.**”*

*“Bear witness how I loved **him.**”*

NOTE

In all styles, especially in letter-writing, a final emphasis must not be so frequent as to become obtrusive and monotonous.

An interrogation sometimes gives emphasis.

“No one can doubt that the prisoner, had he been really guilty, would have shown some signs of remorse,”

is not so emphatic as

“Who can doubt, Is it possible to doubt, etc.?”

Contrast “No one ever names Wentworth without thinking of etc.” with “But Wentworth, who ever names him without thinking of those harsh dark features, ennobled by their expression into more than the majesty of an antique Jupiter?”

2. The Subject, if unusually emphatic, should often be transferred from the beginning of the sentence. The beginning of the sentence is an emphatic position, though mostly not so emphatic as the end. Therefore the principal subject of a sentence, being emphatic, and being wanted early in the sentence to tell us what the sentence is about, comes as a rule, at or near the beginning:

“Thomas built this house.”

Hence, since the beginning is the *usual* place for the subject, if we want to emphasize “Thomas” *unusually*, we must remove “Thomas” from the beginning:

“This house was built by Thomas,”

or

“It was Thomas that built this house.”

Thus, the emphasis on “conqueror” is not quite so strong in:

*“A mere **conqueror** ought not to obtain from us the reverence that is due to the great benefactors of mankind,”*

as in

*“We ought not to bestow the reverence that is due to the great benefactors of mankind, **upon a mere conqueror.**”*

Considerable, but less emphasis and greater smoothness will be obtained by writing the sentence thus:

“We ought not to bestow upon a mere conqueror, etc.”

Where the same subject stands first in several consecutive sentences, it rises in emphasis, and need not be removed from the beginning, even though unusual emphasis be required:

*“The captain was the life and soul of the expedition. **He** first pointed out the possibility of advancing; **he** warned them of the approaching scarcity of provisions; **he** showed how they might replenish their exhausted stock.”*

3. The Object is sometimes placed before the Verb for emphasis. This is most common in antithesis.

*“**Jesus** I know, and **Paul** I know; but who are you?”*

Even where there is no antithesis the inversion is not uncommon:

*“Military **courage**, the boast of the sottish German, of the frivolous and prating Frenchman, of the romantic and arrogant Spaniard, he neither possesses nor values.”*

This inversion sometimes creates ambiguity in poetry,

“The son the father slew”

and must be sparingly used in prose.

Sometimes the position of a word may be considered appropriate by some, and inappropriate by others, according to different interpretations of the sentence.

“Early in the morning the nobles and gentlemen who attended on the king assembled in the great hall of the castle; and here they began to talk of what a dreadful storm it had been the night before. But Macbeth could scarcely understand what they said, for he was thinking of something worse.”

4. Where several words are emphatic, make it clear which is the most emphatic. Emphasis can sometimes be given by adding an epithet, or an intensifying word.

5. Words should be as near as possible to the words with which they are grammatically connected.

6. Adverbs should be placed next to the words they are intended to qualify.

7. “Only”; the strict rule is that “only” should be placed before the word it affects. “Only” requires careful use. The following is ambiguous:

*“The heavens are not open to the faithful **only** at intervals.”*

The best rule is to avoid placing “only” between two emphatic words, and to avoid using “only” where “alone” can be used instead. In strictness perhaps the three following sentences:

(1) *He **only** beat three.*

(2) *He beat **only** three.*

(3) *He beat three **only**.*

These sentences ought to be explained, severally, thus:

(1) *He did no more than beat, did not kill, three.*

(2) *He beat no more than three.*

(3) *He beat three, and that was all he did. (Here only modifies the whole of the sentence and depreciates the action.)*

Only at the beginning of a statement = *but*.

*“I don't like to importune you, **only** I know you'll forgive me.”*

Before an imperative it diminishes the favour asked:

*“**Only** listen to me.”*

This use of *only* is mostly confined to letters.

Very often, *only* at the beginning of a sentence is used for alone:

“Only ten came”

The ambiguity of *only* is illustrated by such a sentence as

“Don’t hesitate to bring a few friends of yours to shoot on my estate at any time. Only five (fifteen) came yesterday”,

which might mean

“I don’t mind a few; only don’t bring so many as fifteen”

or else

“Don’t hesitate to bring a few more; no more than five came yesterday.”

In conversation, ambiguity is prevented by emphasis; but in a letter, *only* thus used might cause unfortunate mistakes. Write:

“Yesterday only five came”,

if you mean

“no more than five.”

8. When “not only” precedes “but also”, see that each is followed by the same part of speech.

9. “At least”, “always” and other adverbial adjuncts, sometimes produce ambiguity. When “not only” precedes “but also”, see that each is followed by the same part of speech.

“He not only gave me advice but also help” is wrong.

Write

“He gave me, not only advice, but also help.”

On the other hand,

“He not only gave me a grammar, but also lent me a dictionary”
is right.

10. Nouns should be placed near the Nouns that they define.

11. Pronouns should follow the Nouns to which they refer, without the intervention of any other Noun.

12. Clauses that are grammatically connected should be kept as close together as possible. Avoid parentheses. The introduction of parentheses violating this rule often produced serious ambiguity. Thus, in the following:

“The result of these observations appears to be in opposition to the view now generally received in this country, that in muscular effort the substance of the muscle itself undergoes disintegration.”

Here it is difficult to tell whether the theory of “disintegration” is:

- (1) “the result,” or, as the absence of a comma after “be” would indicate,
- (2) “in opposition to the result of these observations.”

If (1) is intended, add “and to prove” after “country;” if (2), insert “which is” after “country.”

There is an excessive complication in the following:

“It cannot, at all events, if the consideration demanded by a subject of such importance from any one professing to be a philosopher, be given, be denied that.”

Where a speaker feels that his hearers have forgotten the connection of the beginning of the sentence, he should repeat what he has said; e.g. after the long parenthesis in the last sentence he should recommence, “it cannot, I say, be denied.” In writing, however, this license must be sparingly used. A short parenthesis, or modifying clause, will not interfere with clearness, especially if antithesis he

used, so as to show the connection between the different parts of the sentence”

“A modern newspaper statement, though probably true, would be laughed at if quoted in a book as testimony; but the letter of a court gossip is thought good historical evidence if written some centuries ago.”

Here, to place “though probably true” at the beginning of the sentence would not add clearness, and would impair the emphasis of the contrast between “a modern newspaper statement” and “the letter of a court gossip.”

13. In conditional sentences, the antecedent or “if-clauses” must be kept distinct from the consequent clauses. There is ambiguity in:

“The lesson intended to be taught by these manoeuvres will be lost, if the plan of operations is laid down too definitely beforehand, and the affair degenerates into a mere review.”

Begin, in any case, with the antecedent,

“If the plan ”

Next write, according to the meaning:

(1) “If the plan is laid down, and the affair degenerates, then the lesson will be lost;”

or

(2) “ ... then the lesson ... will be lost, and the affair degenerates into a mere review.”

14. Dependent clauses preceded by “that” should be kept distinct from those that are independent:

(1) “He replied that he wished to help them, and intended to make preparations accordingly.”

This ought not to be used (though it sometimes is, for shortness) to mean:

(2) *“He replied ..., and he intended.”*

In (1), "intended," having no subject, must be supposed to be connected with the nearest preceding verb, in the same mood and tense, that has a subject, i.e. "wished". It follows that (1) is a condensation of:

(3) *“He replied that he wished ..., and that he intended.”*

(2), though theoretically free from ambiguity, is practically ambiguous, owing to a loose habit of repeating the subject unnecessarily. It would be better to insert a conjunctive word or a full stop between the two statements. Thus:

(4) *“He replied that he wished to help them, and indeed he intended”*

or

“He replied, etc. He intended, etc.”

Where there is any danger of ambiguity, use (3) or (4) in preference to (1) or (2).

15. Where there are several infinitives, those that are dependent on the same word must be kept distinct from those that are not.

16. The principle of Suspense. It is a violation of the principle of suspense to introduce unexpectedly at the end of a long sentence, some short and unemphatic clause beginning with “not”, “which”.

17. Suspense must not be excessive.

18. In a sentence with “if”, “when”, “though”, etc. put the “if-clause”, antecedent, or protasis, first.

19. Suspense is gained by placing a Participle or Adjective, that qualifies the Subject, before the Subject.

20. Suspensive Conjunctions, e.g. “either,” “not only,” “on the one hand”, etc., add clearness.

21. Repeat the Subject, where its omission would cause obscurity or ambiguity. The omission is particularly likely to cause obscurity after a Relative standing as Subject:

“He professes to be helping the nation, which in reality is suffering from his flattery, and (he? or it?) will not permit anyone else to give it advice.”

The Relative should be repeated when it is the Subject of several Verbs.

*“All the pleasing illusions **which** made power gentle and obedience liberal, **which** harmonized the different shades of life, and **which**, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments that beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this new conquering empire of light and reason.”*

22. Repeat a Preposition after an intervening Conjunction, especially if a Verb and an Object also intervene.

“He forgets the gratitude that he owes to those that helped all his companions when he was poor and uninfluential, and (to) John Smith in particular.”

Here, omit *to*, and the meaning may be “that helped all his companions, and John Smith in particular.” The intervention of the verb and object, “helped” and “companions”, causes this ambiguity.

22. Repeat Conjunctions, Auxiliary Verbs, and Pronominal Adjectives. Repeat Verbs after the Conjunctions “than”, “as”, etc.

23. Repeat the Subject, or some other emphatic word, or a summary of what has been said, if the sentence is so long that it is difficult to keep the thread of meaning unbroken.

24. Clearness is increased, when the beginning of the sentence prepares the way for the middle, and the middle for the end, the whole forming a kind of ascent. This ascent is called “climax”.

25. When the thought is expected to ascend, but descends, feebleness, and sometimes confusion, is the result. The descent is called “bathos”. A new construction should not be introduced unexpectedly. A sudden and apparently unnecessary change of construction causes awkwardness and roughness at least, and sometimes breaks the flow of the sentence so seriously as to cause perplexity. Thus, write “virtuous and accomplished”, or “of many virtues and accomplishments,” not “of many virtues and accomplished”; “riding or walking” or “on foot or horseback”, not “on foot or riding”. In the same way, do not put adjectives and participles, active and passive forms of verbs, in too close juxtaposition. Avoid such sentences as the following:

*“He had good reason **to believe** that the delay was not an accident (accidental) but **premeditated**, and **for supposing** (to suppose, or else, for believing, above) that the fort, though strong both **by art** and naturally (nature), would be forced by the **treachery of the** governor and the **indolent** (indolence of the) general to capitulate within a week.”*

26. Antithesis adds force and often clearness.

The meaning of *liberal* in the following sentence is ascertained by the antithesis:

“All the pleasing illusions which made power (a) gentle(b) and obedience (a') liberal (b') ... are now to be destroyed.”

There is a kind of proportion. As *gentleness* is to *power*, so *liberality* (in the sense here used) is to *obedience*. Now *gentleness* is the check on the excess of power; therefore *liberal* here applies to that which checks the excess of obedience, i.e. checks servility. Hence *liberal* here means “free”.

27. Epigram.

It has been seen that the neglect of climax results in lameness. Sometimes the suddenness of the descent produces amusement: and when the descent is intentional and very sudden, the effect is striking as well as amusing.

(1) *“You are not only not vicious, you are virtuous,”*

is a climax.

(2) *“You are not vicious, you are vice”*

is not climax, nor is it bathos: it is epigram.

Epigram may be defined as a “short sentence expressing truth under an amusing appearance of incongruity.” It is often antithetical. There is a sort of implied antithesis in:

“He is full of information (but flat also) like yesterday’s Times.”

“Verbosity is cured (not by a small, but) by a large vocabulary.”

The name of epigram may sometimes be given to a mere antithesis:

“An educated man should know something of everything, and everything of something.”

28. Let each sentence have one, and only one, principal subject of thought. Avoid heterogeneous sentences.

29. The connection between different sentences must be kept up by Adverbs used as Conjunctions, or by means of some other connecting words at the beginning of the sentence.

30. The connection between two long sentences or paragraphs sometimes requires a short intervening sentence showing the transition of thought.

1.2. BREVITY

1. Metaphor is briefer than literal statement.

“The cares and responsibilities of a sovereign often disturb his sleep”,

is not so brief as

“Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown”,

where the effect of care on the mind is assimilated to the effect of a heavy crown pressing on the head.

2. General terms are briefer, though less forcible, than particular terms. A phrase may sometimes be expressed by a word.

“These impressions can never be forgotten”,

i.e. are indelible.

“The style of this book is of such a nature that it cannot be understood”,

i.e. unintelligible

3. Participles may often be used as brief (though sometimes ambiguous) equivalents of phrases containing Conjunctions and Verbs.

“Hearing (when he heard) this, he advanced.”

4. Participles, Adjectives, Participial Adjectives, and Nouns may be used as equivalents for phrases containing the Relative.

5. A statement may sometimes be briefly implied instead of being expressed at length. Thus, instead of

“The spirit of Christianity was humanizing, and therefore,”

or

“Christianity, since it was (or being) of a humanizing spirit, discouraged, etc”,

we can write more briefly and effectively,

“Gladiatorial shows were first discouraged, and finally put down, by the humanizing spirit of Christianity.”

So instead of

“The nature of youth is thoughtless and sanguine, and therefore, etc.”

we can write,

*“The danger of the voyage was depreciated and the beauty of the island exaggerated by **the thoughtless nature of youth.**”*

Sometimes a mere name or epithet implies a statement.

*“It was in vain that he offered the Swiss terms: war was deliberately preferred by the **hardy mountaineers,**”*

i.e.

“by the Swiss, because they were mountaineers and hardy.”

NOTE

Different names must not be used for the same person unless each of them derives an appropriateness from its context. Thus, if we are writing about Charles II, it would be in very bad taste to avoid repeating “he” by using such periphrases as the following:

“The third of the Stewarts hated business”

“the Merry Monarch died in the fifty-fourth year of his age,” etc.

6. Conjunctions may be omitted. Adverbs, e.g. “very”, “so”. Exaggerated epithets, e.g. “incalculable”, “unprecedented”. The

imperative may be used for “if”, etc. The omission gives a certain forcible abruptness,

“You say this: I (on the other hand) deny it.”

Where a contrast is intended, the conjunction *but* usually prepares the way for the second of the two contrasted terms:

*“He is good **but** dull.”*

Where *and* is used instead of *but*, the incongruity savours of epigram:

“He always talks truthfully and prosily.”

“He is always amusing and false.”

The Imperative Mood may be used for “if.”

“Strip (for, if you strip) Virtue of the awful authority she derives from the general reverence of mankind, and you rob her of half her majesty.”

7. Apposition may be used, so as to convert two sentences into one.

“We called at the house of a person to whom we had letters of introduction, a musician, and, what is more, a good friend to all young students of music.”

This is as clear as, and briefer than,

“He was a musician, etc.”

8. Condensation may be effected by not repeating (1) the common Subject of several Verbs; (2) the common Object of several Verbs or Prepositions.

(1) *“He resided here for many years, and, after he had won the esteem of all the citizens, (he) died”,*

so

(2) *“He came to, and was induced to reside in, this city”,*

is shorter than

“He came to this city, and was induced to reside in it.”

Such condensation often causes obscurity, and, even where there is no obscurity, there is a certain harshness in pausing on light, unemphatic words, such as to, in, etc., as in the first example.

9. Tautology. Repeating what may be implied.

The fault of repeating the same word several times unnecessarily is called tautology:

*“This is a painful **circumstance**; it is a **circumstance** that I much **regret**, and he also will much **regret** the **circumstance**.”*

But the fault is not to be avoided by using different words to mean the same thing, as,

*“This is a painful **event**; it is a **circumstance** that I much **regret**, and he also will **greatly lament** the **occurrence**.”*

The true remedy is to arrange the words in such a manner that there may be no unnecessary repetition, thus:

*“This is a painful **circumstance**, a **circumstance** that causes me, and will cause him, deep **regret**.”*

The repetition of the same meaning in slightly different words is a worse fault than the repetition of the same word.

*“A burning **thirst** for conquests is a characteristic of this nation. It is an ardent **passion**.”*

10. Parenthesis may be used with advantage to brevity.

“We are all (and who would not be?) offended at the treatment we have received”

is shorter and more forcible than the sentence would have been if the parenthesis had been appended in a separate sentence:

“Who, indeed, would not be offended?”

Extreme care must, however, be taken that a parenthesis may not obscure the meaning of a long sentence.

11. Brevity often clashes with clearness. Let clearness be the first consideration. It is best, at all events for beginners, not to aim so much at being brief, or forcible, as at being perfectly clear.

“While I take pains to be brief, I fall into obscurity”,

and it may easily be seen that several of the rules for brevity interfere with the rules for clearness.

Forcible style springs from (1) vividness and (2) exactness of thought, and from a corresponding (1) vividness and (2) exactness in the use of words.

(1) When you are describing anything, endeavour to see it and describe it as you see it. If you are writing about a man who was killed, see the man before you, and ask, was he executed, cut down, run through the body, butchered, shot, or hanged? If you are writing about the capture of a city, was the city stormed, surprised, surrendered, starved out, or demolished before surrender? Was an army repelled, defeated, routed, crushed, or annihilated?

(2) Exactness in the use of words requires an exact knowledge of their meanings and differences.

1.3. NOTES ON STYLE OF WRITING

Depending on the degree of formality three general styles of writing can be singled out: *formal*, *informal* and *semi-formal*. Each written piece of work should be presented in its own style. Here are some important features of the mentioned styles which can help the writer to succeed in fulfilling the task.

Formal style includes:

1. Full, uncontracted verb forms.
2. Link clauses to make longer sentences.
3. Formal words and phrases rather than slang or colloquialisms.
4. Single-word verbs in preference to phrasal verbs.
5. Passive verbs to make writing sound more formal or less personal.

NOTE

Avoid the over-use of personal pronouns *I* and *we*, which make writing sound too personal.

Informal style includes:

1. Contracted verb forms.
2. Short sentences. This makes writing sound more like a speech.
3. Slang or colloquial words and phrases.
4. Phrasal verbs in preference to single-word verbs.
5. Active rather than passive verbs.
6. Conversational questions.
7. Dashes (–) and exclamation marks (!!).

NOTE

Some words, for example pronouns and auxiliary verbs, may be left out.

Personal tone is used.

Semi-formal style combines the features of formal and informal ones: the choice of words and phrases is mostly neutral; contracted forms are used; includes personal opinion of the writer.

PART 2. TIPS ON PUNCTUATION

PUNCTUATION exists in order to indicate the boundaries of grammatical units and to indicate grammatical information that is marked in spoken language by means of intonation, pitch, etc. Punctuation consists of both rules and conventions. Punctuation rules have to be followed; but punctuation conventions give writers greater freedom and allow choices. There are many ways in which written text can be punctuated. The major punctuation marks are full stops, question marks, commas, exclamation marks, colons, semi-colons, apostrophes and dashes. The most frequent forms are the full stop ('period' in American English) and the comma.

2.1. COMMON PUNCTUATION MARKS: symbols and typographic conventions

.	full stop, period (US English), dot, (decimal) point
,	comma
:	colon
;	semi-colon
?	question mark
!	exclamation mark
—	dash
'	apostrophe (as in Jim's, don't)
“...”	quotation marks, double quotes
‘...’	single quotes
-	hyphen (when used to separate words)
*	asterisk
&	and
@	at (in email addresses: jane34@opennet.com)
/	forward slash (as in website addresses)
\	backwards slash or backslash
%	per cent, percentage
(...)	(round) brackets
(open bracket
)	close bracket
[...]	square brackets
{...}	chain brackets

<...>	diamond brackets
<u>London</u>	underline
London	bold (on first letter)
<i>London</i>	italics
6.7	six point seven
3.4	three point four

2.2. CAPITALS AND FULL STOPS

A CAPITAL (sometimes called upper case) letter marks the beginning of a sentence.

A FULL STOP marks the end of a sentence:

I went to the shops. I was surprised they were open. But I'd forgotten about late opening times.

The ASEAN summit is to be held in Jakarta this year. Last year it was held in Singapore.

Capital letters

CAPITAL LETTERS are also used for proper nouns. Proper nouns include personal names (including titles before names), nationalities and languages, days of the week and months of the year, seasons, public holidays, geographical locations:

Jack Dawson'll meet them at King's Cross railway station.

Sir James and Lady Wilson are holidaying in Antigua and St Kitts.

I suggest we meet on Monday.

What you doing at New Year?

Capital letters are also used for titles of books, magazines, newspapers, etc. The capitals normally apply only to content words, not grammatical words:

'Pride and Prejudice' is easily my favourite novel by Jane Austen.

'The Times' has the best Sunday colour supplement, don't you think?

Full stops

In addition to closing sentences, full stops are also sometimes used to indicate sentences that are not grammatically independent. These sentences are sometimes called sentence fragments or simply orthographic sentences. They can involve ellipsis but single words are also common, especially in advertisements, in dialogue involving responses and in writing which seeks to create a dramatic effect:

*Out airplane now flies you to Majorca. Daily. And to Barcelona.
Five times a week.*

A: They've decided to ban him for three matches.

B: Really. That's awful.

What must she be feeling now? Deep anxiety. Loneliness. Despair.

Conventions change. Full stops used to be common after addresses or after dates in letters but are now much less commonly used. It is, however, a rule that they are not used after the name that ends a letter:

[typical address and date from a business letter]

*Duffield Engineering
Netherfield Court
Longstone Road
Ableton
SH5 5TW*

15 July 2002

Dear Supplier,

NOTE

A comma is normally placed after the name of the addressee.

Full stops are used in initials for personal names, though increasingly they are omitted:

J.D. Power
Richard A. Johnston, Managing Director
A I Briggs

Full stops are also used after abbreviations. This practice is, however, becoming less common:

The Microbiological Society
The annual lecture will be given by David James M.A. and will take place in Saint George's Hall at 7 p.m. on Tues. Dec. 13th.
R.S.V.P. to Prof. Lionel Jackson

NB.
(take note, from Latin 'nota bene'; *N.B.* is also possible)

Where abbreviations are curtailed words (words with the end cut off), they take a full stop. For example, Addr. (address), Arr. (arrival), Prof. (professor) and etc. (etcetera). Where abbreviations of words include the last letter of the word, they do not require a full stop:

St = Street (also 'Saint' as in St John)
Rd = Road
Ltd = Limited (company)
Dr = Doctor

A full stop is not used for common sets of initials or for acronyms (where the initials are pronounced as a word):

Millions of pounds have been invested in the NHS in recent years.
(NHS = National Health Service; not: N.H.S.)

AIDS affects people in over three quarters of the countries of the world.
(not: A.I.D.S.)

Full stops are not used in newspaper headlines, in headings and sub-headings in books, magazines and newspapers or in the titles of books and other works:

Family Lost In Fishing Boat Mystery

Economics and Business Management: Part one: Personnel management

2.3. QUESTION MARKS AND EXCLAMATION MARKS

Question marks

When QUESTION MARKS are used, full stops are not used at the end of the sentence:

How many times can we afford to change our family car?

Question marks are also used in order to make clear that a declarative sentence should be heard as a question. On the other hand, questions that are indirect request to do something do not normally take a question mark:

I wonder if you can help me?

Exclamation marks

EXCLAMATION MARKS are used for exclamatives and after interjections:

What a nice coat!

Wow! Really?

Exclamation marks are used more in informal writing. One exclamation mark is the norm but occasionally more than one may be used for emphasis:

Will you always please be quiet!

Oh no!!! I don't believe it!

Exclamation marks are not normally used with imperative clauses unless the writer wishes to emphasise that a directive was or may have been shouted:

Don't get yourself too involved with the day-to-day management.

Let's go going or we're gonna be late.

Stop! Push the door this way!

2.4. COMMAS

Separating main clauses

COMMAS are used to mark clause boundaries. Main clauses separated by *and* or *or* or *but* are not normally separated by commas, although commas may be used between clauses which do not have the same subject. American English uses commas before *and*, *but* and *or* more frequently than British English:

They were friendly and invited us back to their flat.

(same subject)

Students these days leave with large debts and have to repay loans.

(same subject)

It was a restaurant a good distance from the city centre, but we decided it was worth making such a long journey.

(different subjects)

Separating main and subordinate clauses

Normally commas are used if the subordinate clause comes before the main clause. Subordinate clauses can be separated by a comma from a preceding clause, especially when the relation between them might be obscured because clauses are long. But it is not obligatory, particularly in short sentences.

Compare:

If you get stuck, come back and see me.

Come back and see me if you get stuck.

As long as she takes the examination, we will overlook the problems with her attendance.

Subordinate or comment clauses that provide additional information or that elaborate information given in the main clause are punctuated with commas:

*It doesn't suit you, **to be honest**.*

*You do need to use a microphone to be heard, **if I may say so**.*

***To tell you the truth**, I thought she was wrong.*

With relative clauses

Commas are also used to mark non-defining relative and non-defining non-finite clauses. Such clauses normally add to, amplify or evaluate information concerning a noun or noun phrase:

*The tablets, **which began to take effect after about twenty minutes**, soon brought the fever under control.*

*Barcelona, **where the first conference was held**, has changed out of all recognition.*

Defining relative and defining non-finite clauses do not add to or amplify a statement. They postmodify a noun and specify or define properties associated with the noun. Such clauses are not punctuated by a comma:

*The people **who caused most trouble** have left the area.*

NOT: The people, who caused most trouble, have left the area.

*The town house **which they had bought** was let out to tenants within a matter of days.*

Embedded clauses, however long and complex, that function as the subject of the main clause, are not marked off by commas:

*The decisions **about congestion parking that have been pushed through by the City Council without proper consultation** are now beginning to cause even more problems for motorists.*

What we've always been short of is soup bowls.
NOT: What we've always been short of, is soup bowls.

Similarly, non-defining clauses in apposition are punctuated by commas, whereas defining clauses in apposition are not punctuated. The most common form of apposition involves nouns and noun phrases but non-restrictive apposition can also refer back to an earlier part of the clause:

*His brother, **the one who lives in Osaka**, has just set up his own book importing business.*
NOT: His brother the one who lives in Osaka has just set up his own book importing business.

With adjectives

Commas are used between adjectives in attributive and predicative positions. A comma is not normally used before an adjective followed by and:

*It was an **energetic, competitive and committed** performance and the team deserved its victory.*

*This is the **lightweight, portable and wireless** version.*

With lists

Commas are used to separate items in a list, except for a final item preceded by and. In American English, however, the norm is to have a comma before and in a list:

*They bought a rail pass and visited **Rome, Milan, Venice and Verona**.*

*She spent the whole week **watching videos, listening to CDs, reading novels and writing postcards to friends**.*

*They've got **apples, pears, bananas, and peaches**.*
(American English preferred form)

With adjuncts

Commas play an important part in punctuating adjuncts, most markedly when they provide a comment or linking function. In such cases the comma often coincides with a pause in speech:

*It was, **however**, the best decision taken at that point in the company.*

***Unfortunately**, the proposal was turned down without any explanation.*

*Have you had any contact with Karin, **by the way**?*

With tags and responses

Tags and yes-no responses are separated by commas:

*He is going to be there, **isn't he**?*

*I'm thirsty, **I am**.*

***Yes**, thank you. I'd be delighted to accept.*

With vocatives, discourse markers and interjections

Vocatives, discourse markers and interjections are also punctuated with commas:

*Open the door for them, **Jake**, can you. Thanks.*

*The trouble is, **doctor**, I've stopped taking the prescription.*

***Ros**, can you get me a paper while you're out.*

***Well**, what do you suppose they did about it?*

In reporting speech

Commas are used to indicate that direct speech is following or has just occurred. When the direct speech is first, the comma comes before the closing of the quotation marks:

He said, "Now it's time for big changes."

"I'm too old for that kind of thing," she said with a broad grin.

Commas are not used in reporting structures after that, what and where even though stress and a consequent pause may fall on the verb immediately preceding that:

Everyone knew that she wouldn't pass the exam.

NOT: *Everyone knew, that she wouldn't pass the exam*

Certain fixed expressions with say do not have a comma or quotation mark:

Say hi to Jim for me.

*I'm really sorry but I'm afraid I have to **say no** to your kind offer.*

In letters

In letters, forms of address and signing off are marked by commas:

Dear David, (addressing the recipient of the letter)
Thank you for your letter of Feb. 14th.

...

Yours sincerely, (signing off at the end of the letter)
Jill Paton

2.5. COLONS AND SEMI-COLONS

COLONS are used to introduce lists, to indicate a sub-title or to indicate a subdivision of a topic:

*There are three main arguments for the withdrawal of the troops:
military, economic and, above all, ethical.*

The History of Britain: A Personal View

Colons may also be used to mark a clause in which reasons or explanations are given:

We decided against buying the DVD player: it wasn't lightweight enough to take on holiday with us.

SEMI-COLONS are sometimes used to separate items included in a sequence or list:

The facility has a number of features: a cinema; two meeting rooms; a fast-food café; a small gymnasium.

Semi-colons may also be used instead of full stops to separate two main clauses. In such cases the clauses remain grammatically separate but are linked in meaning. Semi-colons are not frequently used in contemporary English. Full stops and commas are much more common:

Some cats sleep during the night; most cats are active during the dark.

Bangkok is the capital city; Chiang Mai is the main tourist destination.

2.6. DIRECT SPEECH

In DIRECT SPEECH, a reconstruction of the actual words somebody has spoken or written are indicated. Direct speech is normally enclosed within a pair of single or double quotation marks, though single quotation marks are becoming more widespread. Direct speech begins with a capital letter:

She said, "Who do you think you are?"

The reporting clause can appear in three different positions. Note the position of commas and full stops:

The course tutor said to us, 'Don't waste your time in your first term here.'

(quotation mark after comma introducing speech and after full stop)

'Don't waste your time in your first term here,' the course tutor said to us.'

(comma before closing quotation mark)

'Don't waste your time', the course tutor said to us, 'in your first term here.'

(commas separating intervening reporting clause)

For direct speech inside direct speech, either single quotation marks inside double or double quotation marks inside single may be used. Note that quotation marks in English are superscript, not subscript plus superscript, as in some languages. That is, they are marked '...' or "...":

David said, 'He was getting really cross and kept shouting "Get out!"'

"It was getting really tense," she said, "and everybody was yelling 'Why don't you go home?'"

Occasionally, colons may be used to introduce direct speech. This is common in dramatic transcripts or when a particularly long section of direct speech is marked. Note also that in film and play scripts, quotation marks are not used:

Polonius: What do you read my Lord?

Hamlet: Words, words, words.

The company secretary then turned to me and said: 'The results of this company are better than in any time in the past five years and we object most strongly to the negative reporting we have received in some parts of the media'.

2.7. CITATION

It is sometimes necessary to highlight individual words. This CITATION or special mention may be punctuated in a number of ways. Citation may be underlined or in italics or placed within

quotation marks. Definitions or translations are usually in single quotation marks:

Boot has several different meanings in English. And when it refers to storage space in the rear of a motor car, it is 'trunk' in American English.

The *marguerite* or 'common daisy' is cultivated in a variety of different colours.

Single quotation marks are sometimes used to draw attention to a word, or to indicate an unusual use of a word, or to suggest that the writer wants to be distanced from the word in some way. In such cases the writer intends that the word or phrase should be taken in a non-literal or non-obvious sense:

The bus broke down twice and, as far as I am concerned, I won't be using the 'transport' system again.

Titles of books, newspapers, magazines, videos or CDs also qualify as a special form of citation. Such mentions are usually punctuated by italics or underlining.

There's a report all about it in *The Times* today.

Hello! has some really good pictures of the wedding.
(*Hello!* is a magazine)

A character in a novel or play which has the same name is not highlighted but the title of the work is:

Othello was manipulated as much by what Iago didn't say as by what he did say.

Othello is one of Shakespeare's most complex psychological tragedies.

2.8. APOSTROPHES

APOSTROPHES are used for three main purposes: to mark letters that have been omitted in contracted forms; to mark possessive forms

of nouns and pronouns; and to mark special plurals. Common contractions include:

<i>it's</i>	=	<i>it is</i>
<i>I'd</i>	=	<i>I would/had</i>
<i>can't</i>	=	<i>cannot</i>
<i>who's</i>	=	<i>who is, who has</i>
<i>what's</i>	=	<i>what is, what has</i>
<i>how's</i>	=	<i>how is, how has</i>

Apostrophes with nouns are used before and after the possessive -s ending. The main rules are:

1. For a singular noun, use 's:

the cat: The cat's milk is in the fridge.

the student: The student's views are most important.

Laura: Laura's brothers are all younger than her.

year: This year's fashion show is in Turin.

2. For a plural noun which does not end in -s, use 's:

his men: His men's obsession with football is out of hand.

the police: The police's actions cannot be supported.

3. For a plural noun which ends in -s, use s':

your colleagues: Your colleagues' decisions must be respected.

his dogs: His dogs' kennels need cleaning out.

two hours: Two hours' walk is too far at our age.

4. The apostrophe's is also added to names ending in -s. However, many writers prefer simply to add an apostrophe mark after the final -s, especially to names which have more than one syllable:

Dickens's novels or *Dickens' novels* (more common)

Socrates's writings or *Socrates' writings* (more common)

Keats's poetry or Keats' poetry (more common)

5. An apostrophe is added to first names ending in -s:

Angus's offer had to be turned down.

In my opinion, Iris's car is too dangerous to go on the road.

The service is at St Augustus's church at midday.

6. The apostrophe 's is also added to whole phrases. In compound nouns the 's is added after the final noun:

The people next door's dog is a nuisance.

You might have guessed. Richard and Pat's new car is French.

My brother-in-law's fault.

NOT: (brother's-in-law)

7. In fixed expressions such as *for goodness' sake* or *for appearance' sake*, a single apostrophe is added, though it is becoming optional.
8. Possessives can also be used without a following noun. If the reference is clear, the noun is not normally needed. When referring to people's names or when people's houses are meant, the apostrophe is retained:

Don't forget I'm going to the doctor's after work.

I'm staying over at lack's this evening. Okay?

Apostrophe can be used when referring to firms, shops and businesses. But the rule is in flux and many shops drop the apostrophe in their names. The use of the apostrophe in reference to decades is also in flux:

I'm going over to Blue's for coffee.

(name of a supermarket chain)
He bought his TV at Sainsbury's.

(name of a chain selling pharmaceutical products)
Are you getting the prescription at Boots?

The apostrophe 's also occurs with particular indefinite pronouns: for example, one and compounds ending in *-one* or *-body*. When combined with *else*, the apostrophe 's is added to *else*:

One's responsibility is to one's family.

It's nobody's fault.

This must be someone else's room.

The indefinite pronoun *other* has the same forms as nouns. The singular adds 's to 'other', while the plural adds an apostrophe after the plural -s ending:

You two are always sharing each other's secrets.

This is your room. The others' rooms are across the hall there.

Possessive pronouns ending in -s do not have an apostrophe:

That was theirs.

Which keys are yours?

Whose book is this?

The apostrophe is not used with the impersonal possessive pronoun *its*. *It's* means 'it is':

The cart had lost one of its wheels.

NOT: *The cart had lost one of it's wheels.*

Possessive noun phrases with *of* normally retain the apostrophe form which would occur if they preceded a noun:

That's another cat of Nell's, isn't it? She had over twenty at the last count.

(Nell's cat)

I'd like you to meet Bill. Bill is a partner of my father's.

(my father's partner)

2.9. DASHES AND OTHER PUNCTUATION MARKS

DASHES are more common in informal writing. They can be used in similar ways to commas. Both single and multiple dashes may be used:

Our Head of Finance – who often loses his temper about travel expenses – was the calmest in the room. I couldn't believe it!

Just to let you know we've just got back from Mallorca – we really loved it.

Brackets have a similar function to dashes. They can also function as a punctuation of what are presented as afterthoughts:

We were up late most nights (not working, of course!) and so never really got up till after midday.

Hyphens are a form of dash and can be used within modifiers:

a twelve-year-old girl

(compare: she's twelve years old)

Forward slashes are common in internet addresses and to act as an 'and/or' marker in academic references:

You can find more information on www.bbc.co.uk/sport.

Jenkins 1991/1997 has given three reasons for this state of affairs.

PART 3. TYPES OF WRITING

3.1. ESSAY

ESSAY (*French *essai** – a try; an outline) a short piece of writing on a particular subject, expressing personal ideas, experience and common knowledge. The features of a good essay are the following:

- the essay answers the topic question;
- the point of view or position is clear;
- the essay is direct and well-organized;
- the sentences are logically connected to each other;
- details and examples support the main idea;
- the writer expresses complete thoughts;
- the meaning is easy for the reader to understand.

THE STRUCTURE of an essay consists of the following parts:

- ✓ introduction: the first paragraph of an essay introduces the subject and should involve the reader in some way to make him want to continue reading; it's good to use quotation in this part, but avoid all kinds of sayings and cliché; the first paragraph should announce clearly the theme of the essay or define the writer's version of the title and make it clear;
- ✓ main body: the whole information is given in this part; all ideas should be logically connected to the main one and give the full explanation of the subject. The main body may contain several paragraphs which are the basic structuring elements in the essay. Basically, every paragraph should represent and flesh out a new idea. The paragraph is the building block of the essay, therefore:

1) it should be at least a third to half a page in length, but not too long or the reader will get lost; no one-sentence paragraphs;

2) it should have what's known as a topic sentence, near the beginning, that announces the theme of the paragraph. The paragraph should not deviate from this theme or introduce any new themes;

3) the first sentence should somehow be linked to, or contrast with, the last sentence of the previous paragraph;

- ✓ conclusion: the last paragraph is very important, because it fulfills the aims of the first paragraph and shows that the essay is a completed one.

STYLE OF WRITING: semi-formal and formal.

SAMPLE ESSAYS

You are planning to study in the United States. What do you think you will like and dislike about this experience? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your answer.

NOTE

It is often suggested to make an outline in order to see the structure of your essay beforehand. This can save the time and make the writer's work more logical. The plan constructed should be in the form of an indented outline (a series of headings and subheadings). Behind every essay there must be a plan of that sort. A decent level of concentration is hard to maintain. The writer can get lost, and lose the thread. An outline makes an obvious plan of the whole written work.

Here are two sample outlines on the given situation:

Outline 1

Like

- improve language;
- participate in culture;
- college courses.

Dislike

- miss family;
- rely on fast food;
- compete with Americans.

Outline 2

Study in US

Like

Dislike

improve language proficiency

miss family

participate in culture

rely on fast food

college courses

compete with Americans

The second outline is defined as a map showing all the point being raised in the essay (sometimes may include an idea for *Conclusion*).

Read the sample essay based on the outlines above:

Living abroad provides many opportunities and challenges. When I study in the United States, I look forward to making friends with Americans. By getting to know people, I will be able to improve my English language proficiency. There are idioms and words that are best learned within the context of real conversations with native speakers. I also look forward to being a participant in a new culture. At the end of my stay in the United States, I hope that I will understand American culture in a different and deeper way than is possible when the information is derived from only movies and books. In addition, I am excited about studying on an American campus. I expect the college courses to be challenging, and I am eager to learn about the latest technological advances in my field of study.

I am realistic about the disadvantages of foreign study, however. I know that I will miss my family very much. It will be too expensive to return to my country to spend holidays with them, and I will be very lonely during the times when I know that they are gathered for special celebrations.

Another aspect of the experience that I do not look forward to is the reliance on fast food that is so typical of American college students. Pizza, hamburgers, and other junk foods are easier to find and prepare than the meals that I enjoy in my country, but they aren't as good, and they probably aren't as healthy. Finally, I imagine that my life will be very stressful because I will be competing with students who know the language of the classroom and are accustomed to the expectations that American professors have for their students. I am a competitive person by nature, and I am apprehensive about my ability to compete with my classmates.

Once I am in the United States, I will no doubt find many other opportunities to take advantage of and many challenges that I must confront. Nevertheless, I expect my experience to be overwhelmingly positive, and I intend to see the lessons in both adventures and adversity.

The college years are the best time in a person's life. Do you agree or disagree with the statement? Give your reasons to support your opinion.

Outline 1

College years not best

- stress
 - decisions – career, job, marriage
 - competition
- dependence
 - family
 - debts

The best is yet to be

Outline 2

College years not best

Stress

Dependence

Decisions

Competition

Family

Debts

-career

-job

-marriage

The best is yet to be

Read the sample essay based on the outlines above:

I disagree that the college years are the best time in a person's life. Admittedly, college often corresponds with a time when people are young, healthy, and physically strong, and those attributes are highly regarded in Western cultures; however, the college years must also be viewed as a period of high stress and a certain uncomfortable dependence.

Stress converges on college students from many directions. First, there is the pressure to choose a major field of study and, ultimately, to select a career, choices that will affect the rest of their lives. These choices often coincide with another life choice - the selection of a marriage partner. In combination, the stress associated with such important decisions can be very high. Second, there is the daily stress from competition in the classroom, exacerbated by staying up too late studying for tests, preparing papers, and reading assignments. It is well documented that college students tend to gain weight and suffer from many stress-related illnesses.

In addition to the stressful environment, most college students are not financially independent. Many rely on their families for funding, a circumstance that is often uncomfortable for young adults. Asking for money usually requires an explanation of why it is needed. In other words, financial dependence for college results in dependence in

other areas of life at a time when young people are beginning to think for themselves and are old enough to be independent. Besides the embarrassment involved in negotiating for necessities, there is often a strict budget. For some students, there is also a debt to repay.

As a college student myself, I view this time of life as an opportunity to prepare for the next, and more important, stage of life, when I am independent and productive. I am eager to begin working and earning my own way. I look forward to the years after college with the hope that the best is yet to be.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

The following linking words are used in essays to connect ideas:

to give additional information

and

moreover

as well as

in addition to

additionally

furthermore

what is more

to show contrasting ideas

but

however

on the other hand

in contrast

by contrast

yet

on the contrary

to show limiting ideas

despite

in spite of

notwithstanding

to give reasons in conclusion

so

therefore

as a result

as a consequence

consequently

this result in

this leads to

this has the effect of

to state the reason

because

result from

due to

is caused by

to connect ideas

then

next

after

afterwards

finally

lastly

firstly/secondly/thirdly, etc.

NOTE

The following words don't start the sentence: *and, but, so*.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the main parts of an essay?
2. Name 3 features of a paragraph?
3. What is the aim of making an outline?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Make up an outline to a given question:

Leaders like John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King have made important contributions to humanity. Name another world leader you think is important. Give specific reasons for your choice.

TASK 2

Using the following outline think about the question given to write an essay and formulate the task. Then write the introduction and conclusion to this essay.

Outline

Viewpoint

Comfortable living

My experience

Large amounts of
money

-Healthy lifestyle

-Busy father

-Better standard
of living

-Time family

-Prefer time

-Charities

TASK 3

Using the question given, the outline of an essay and the introduction and conclusion, write the main body of the essay.

Some students like to take distance-learning courses by computer. Others prefer to study in traditional classroom settings with a teacher. Consider the advantages of both options, and make an argument for the way that students should organize their schedules.

Outline

Advantages distance-learning courses

- *Attend class at your convenience*
- *Complete assignments at own pace*
- *Repeat lectures*

Advantages traditional courses

- *Structured environment*
- *More persona; relationship*
- *Immediate response to questions*
- *Study groups and friendships*

Introduction

Both distance-learning classes and traditional classes provide important but different experiences for college students.

Conclusion

Given all the advantages of both types of courses, I think that students would be wise to register for distance-learning courses and traditional classroom courses during their college experiences. By participating in distance learning courses, they can work independently in classes that may be more difficult for them, repeating the lectures on computer at convenient times. By attending traditional classes, they can get to know the teachers personally and will have good references when they need them. They will also make friends in the class. By sharing information with other students, they can organize their schedules for the following semester, choosing the best classes and including both distance-learning and traditional courses.

TASK 4

Make up your own outline and write an essay on the given topic (250-300 words):

Advances in transportation and communication like the airplane and the telephone have changed the way that nations interact with each other in a global society. Choose another technological innovation that you think is important. Give specific reasons for your choice.

3.2. DISCURSIVE COMPOSITION

DISCURSIVE COMPOSITION is a formal piece of writing which gives an opportunity to express the writer's opinion on the subject that may be controversial. Different ideas should be expressed in a clear and logical way. A good discursive composition includes clearly-stated opinions supported by well-known examples and convincing reasons.

THE STRUCTURE of a discursive composition consists of the following parts:

- ✓ introduction: the first paragraph of a composition should introduce the subject and outline the main arguments related to it;
- ✓ arguments 'for': the second paragraph should provide more detail in support of one side of the argument;
- ✓ arguments 'against': the third paragraph should present the other side of the argument;
- ✓ conclusion: the concluding paragraph should clearly express the writer's own opinion.

STYLE OF WRITING: semi-formal or formal; impersonal (although the conclusion may express a more personal view).

SAMPLE DISCURSIVE COMPOSITIONS

Should animals be used in scientific experiments to try out new drugs, medicine or beauty products?

(Introduction)

In many countries, experiments are carried out on animals to test drugs, medicines and beauty products like shampoo or shower gel. Scientists say they need to use animals, but many ordinary people believe these experiments are cruel. I wish discuss both points of view and express my own opinion.

(Arguments 'for')

Scientists argue that cures for human diseases would not be found if animal experiments were banned. They claim that it is safer to test new medicines on animals before giving them to humans. They say that the animals they use do not suffer.

(Arguments ‘against’)

On the other side of the argument, many people believe that animals feel pain as much as humans, and the mistreatment of innocent creatures, like monkeys or mice, for scientific research is cruel and immoral. They think human volunteers should be used instead.

(Conclusion)

In my opinion, there is no justification for using animals to test beauty products. However, I believe that it may be necessary to use animals for testing drugs which may save human lives.

NOTE

In the first paragraph the writer often states what he intends to do in the composition (see the underlined sentence in *Introduction* above).

The Internet is a new way to communicate.

(Introduction)

The Internet is an extremely useful tool that has become an important part of our lives in the last few years. It makes searching for information much easier and quicker than before when people had to rely on books as a research tool. But, there are those who points out that the Internet can make life more difficult too.

(Arguments ‘for’)

It is true that the Internet has given us the possibility of reading vast quantities of information on an unlimited number of topics. What is more, it allows us to communicate that information to anyone who has a computer, via email. For many people, it is their only source of written information.

(Arguments against)

However, the Internet has its drawbacks. The main one is that the information that it provides is not always accurate or up-to-date. Secondly, the amount of information is so great that it can make looking for something too complicated. In addition, it can be quite costly to log onto and use.

(Conclusion)

All in all, the Internet is a useful addition to our lives when it is used wisely, but it is important not to think of it as the only source of information and to use books as well. It is unique in the way it has united the world through communication of ideas and this has never happened before.

NOTE

In the first paragraph the topic of a composition is introduced. The following techniques are used to make the beginning more interesting to the reader:

- a reference to an imaginary scene or situation;
- addressing the reader directly;
- a rhetorical question;
- a quotation.

In the final paragraph the writer gives his own opinion and/or a balanced summary of the topic. To make the ending of the composition more effective, the following techniques are used:

- state a personal opinion;
- give the reader something to consider;
- use a quotation or rhetorical question.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

In a discursive composition ideas should be linked with appropriate linking words and phrases, according to the idea expressed by the writer:

stating aim

I will discuss both points of view and express my own opinion.

I will consider different points of view.

to introduce or list advantages

The first/main/most important advantage of ...

One/Another/An additional advantage of...

One point of view in favour of ...

It is often suggested/believed/argued that ...

Some/Many people suggest/feel/argue that ...

What is more, ...

Apart from that ...

As well as (that)

Besides (this)

Furthermore

to introduce or list disadvantages

The main/most important disadvantage/drawback of ...

One/Another/An additional disadvantage/negative effect of ...

One point/argument against

By contrast

Nevertheless

On the contrary

to summarise or conclude an argument

In conclusion

To conclude/summarise/sum up

All in all

Finally

All things considered

Taking everything into account/consideration

On the whole

In short

On balance

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the aim of writing a discursive composition?
2. How should a discursive composition start and finish?
3. What is the best way of answering this kind of question – by agreeing, by disagreeing or by both sides of the argument?

4. What is an appropriate style for this composition?
5. What is the purpose of each of the four paragraphs?
6. Where are the writer's opinions expressed?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

a) Complete the composition using appropriate words and phrases from the list.

such as	to begin with	on the other hand
in addition	on the one hand	all things considered
another negative effect	as a result	finally

Can you imagine life without computers? Whether in the office, school or at home, computers have become an indispensable part of our everyday existence. Yet, have the changes they brought about really been for the better?

1....., the benefits of computers cannot be denied. 2....., they save valuable time and space. Time-consuming tasks, 3..... checking bank accounts, can now be done in a matter of minutes and large amounts of information are economically stored on tiny disks. 4....., with immediate access to the Internet, they allow us to explore the world from the comfort of our homes. 5....., we can keep up-to-date with global and current issues. 6....., computers provide entertainment, for instance in the form of amusing games.

7....., there are also disadvantages with the computer age. Computer technology may progress rapidly, but machines still make mistakes. It is not uncommon for computers to suddenly crash, deleting whole files of essential information. 8..... of computers is that people easily become dependent on them. How often do the youngsters spend all their free time in front of the computer, isolating themselves from other people their age?

9....., it seems to me that computers are admirable tools that improve the quality of life, but only when used

sensibly. No matter how advanced a machine is, it can never replace a human being.

b) What technique is used to start and end a discursive composition? What aim is achieved by it?

TASK 2

Read this discursive composition. Then, follow the instructions below to improve it:

- the composition is not divided into paragraphs, single out four parts in it, according to the purpose expressed;
- underline linking words used in composition, suggest other appropriate ones and complete the table:

Linking word	Analogue	Linking word	Analogue

- some words and phrases are given in bold, think on what they refer to in the composition and write answers in spaces below, explain their usage:

(line 2) their _____
(line 3) they _____
(line 4) these different points of view _____
(line 9) they _____
(line 14) their _____
(line 15) they _____
(line 20) this _____

Famous people often complain that newspapers print too much about **their** private lives, whereas newspapers say that **they** are simply responding to public curiosity. I will consider **these different points of view**. On the one hand, it seems that famous people want as much media attention as possible at the beginning of their career. Once they are famous, however, they tend to get upset if

newspapers reveal personal information that **they** would prefer to keep secret. In fact, they feel they have a right to a private life, like everyone else. On the other hand, newspapers say that the public has a right to know about how celebrities spend **their** money and who they are in love with. **They** claim that it is particularly important for the public to know when their heroes do something wrong. On balance, I believe that the public should be told how stars live their lives, although stars should have some privacy, especially to protect members of their families. **This** means that we need clear rules about what the media should be allowed to publish.

TASK 3

You are going to write a composition on the following topic:

There should be a complete ban on the advertising of dangerous products like cigarettes and alcohol.

Before you write:

- think about the topic and answer the questions:
 1. Do you agree that cigarettes and alcohol are ‘dangerous products’?
 2. Where can we see such advertisement?
 3. Who is influenced by it?
 4. Why do some people want a ‘complete ban’?
 5. Would it be effective?
 6. Would this ban discourage people from smoking or drinking?

- make a list of several points on each side of the argument:

Supporting a ban

Against a ban

- make a plan of each paragraph, note connecting words and expressions you would like to use to link ideas between sentences and paragraphs:

Plan

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

List of linking words

When you write, don't forget to check that you have answered the question in full. Make sure the style is appropriate.

TASK 4

Write a discursive composition on the given topic:

Car owners should take public transport instead their vehicles to reduce fuel consumption.

3.3. NARRATIVE COMPOSITION

NARRATIVE COMPOSITION a piece of writing giving a description of thing or events that happened to the writer or to people he/she knows. The main purpose of a narrative composition is to provide explanations or background information.

THE STRUCTURE of a narrative composition contains the following parts:

- ✓ beginning: in the opening paragraph the writer tries to capture reader's interest and set the scene what follows. Here the writer describes the background to the main event. This will probably include saying something about where and when the event takes place and will probably involve a combination of the Past simple, Past continuous and Past perfect. Also here the main 'characters' of the story may be introduced. The writer may mention their personality, appearance and behaviour;
- ✓ middle: gives the sequence of events which make the story itself. Each paragraph in this part should end in such a way to leave the reader wanting to know the rest of the story;
- ✓ ending: the last paragraph gives the main conclusion to the narrative.

NOTE

- think carefully about the beginning, middle and ending of a narrative composition and the links between them;
- create an appropriate mood or atmosphere describing sounds, smells, the time of the day, the surroundings;
- use a variety of adjectives and adverbs to make the narrative 'come alive' for the reader;
- use appropriate narrative tenses.

STYLE OF WRITING: informal, semi-formal.

SAMPLE NARRATIVE COMPOSITION

Write a story ending with the words *We never saw him again.*

When we arrived in London, we were two hours late because our train had been held up by the bad weather. Outside the station it was snowing hard and there was a long queue of people waiting for taxis. As we were about to join it, a young man pulled up in his car and asked us where we wanted to go. Although it was not an official taxi, the car was new and shiny and the young man looked clean and respectable; so we decided to accept his offer. When we told him that we did not have a hotel, he said he could take us to one which was clean and cheap.

He put our luggage in the boot and we drove off to the hotel. On the way, we chatted and he pointed out any interesting sights. We could hardly believe our luck and thought of all the people we had left queuing in the freezing cold. When we got to the hotel, he told us that he would wait while we checked in. After we had found out that the hotel was full, we went down the steps only to find that our driver had disappeared with our luggage.

Needless to say we never saw him again.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

sequence words

after a while

afterwards

meanwhile

next time

previously

at long last

the following (morning)...

at once/immediately

just then

first

later

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the aim of a narrative composition?
2. What parts make up a narrative composition?
3. What ideas may be included into the beginning?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Complete the passage by changing the verb in brackets into an appropriate past tense narrative form.

I shall never forget the time my wife and I (1).....(take) the night ferry back from France. We (2).....(decide) on a night crossing some months earlier so we (3).....(have) an extra day. On the last day we (4).....(get) up early and (5).....(set off) on our long drive. Although it (6).....(rain) slightly we (7).....(not care) because we (8)..... (have) beautiful weather for the past three weeks. However, we (9).....(drive) through Poitiers when we (10)(have) a puncture. We (11).....(have to) take all our luggage out to get the spare tyre from the bottom of the boot.

After we (12)..... (drive) the rest of the day we finally (13).....(arrive) at the port just before the ship's departure. We (14).....(look forward to) a good night's sleep but they (15)..... (already give) our cabin to someone else because they (16)..... (think) we (17)(not going to come). There (18) (be) nothing to do except try to sleep in the lounge. Unfortunately, earlier that day the English rugby team (19)..... (win) a rare victory over the French. While we (20).....(try) to sleep, the English supporters (21).....(celebrate) noisily for the entire voyage. When we (22).....(land) in England five hours later we (23).....(not sleep) a wink.

TASK 2

Write a narrative composition on this subject:

You were walking through the countryside one day with a friend when you came across a ruined mansion. Describe what happened.

3.4. ARTICLE

ARTICLE is a piece of writing on a particular subject in a newspaper or magazine. Magazine articles, especially for young adult readers, are often written in light-hearted style. The title and opening paragraph should try to capture the readers' attention. The purpose of such an article is to inform readers about a particular topic in an entertaining way.

THE STRUCTURE of an article includes the following parts:

- ✓ title (headline): should be written in an interesting way to make people want to read the article. This aim is achieved by using elliptical construction or the elements of appraisal of the subjective opinion of the reporter about the facts, there is also special graphic design;
- ✓ introduction: the article needs an interesting beginning, that is why the reader may be asked a question or the writer can make a strong statement in order to involve the reader in some way. The end of the first paragraph should be ended in a way which makes the reader want to continue reading;
- ✓ the main part: should be built on the interest the writer raised in the first paragraph. This means answering the question or telling the next part of the story. Paragraphs are used to mark the next stage of the article;
- ✓ conclusion: ends up the main idea of the article and may be done in humorous or thought-provoking way.

NOTE

Newspaper articles usually have secondary headlines between the paragraphs to make it easier to skim the content of the whole written information and single out the most significant one to the reader.

The main idea of each paragraph is expressed in the first sentence to catch the reader's attention at once.

STYLE OF WRITING: informal, semi-formal, formal (depends on a newspaper or magazine it is published in).

SAMPLE ARTICLES

STYLE: informal (personal).

BOW WOW >>*dating drama*

There's nothing worse than meeting a guy who turns out to be a total player. It's totally hard to trust new people. Girls aren't the only ones who go through this drama. Guys find it hard to trust girls, too!

Bow Wow knows all about it. Sometimes it's difficult for him to meet girls who like him for who he is. 'It's hard, man, because I'm on the road and that's like the life,' he tells us. 'You know, it's really hard for you to trust some females. You don't know if they want money. You don't know what could be going through their head. So it's really tough. But for me, I never really try to use the whole Bow Wow thing. I try to always bypass that, and hopefully she can bypass that because once I feel like a girl is hooked on the whole status thing, I never want to see her again.'

What advice does Bow have for potential girlfriends? 'If you really want to talk to me, you gotta leave the whole Bow Wow thing and know ma as a person,' he says.

Sounds like something our *Bop* girls could do!

from *Bop* magazine

STYLE: semi-formal (personal).

GLADIATOR

Which films would you include in your 'Top 100 films ever?' My guess is that *Gladiator* would be on that list. If it not, then let me try to convince you why it should be.

Set in Rome in the third century AD, *Gladiator* tells the story of the Roman general Maximus, played by Russell Crowe, who goes from being the most favoured general in the Roman army to becoming a slave. The film takes us back to the cruelty and violence of Ancient Rome as we follow the events which eventually lead to Maximus' triumph.

What is most remarkable about the film is not the acting, which is excellent, nor the story, which is absorbing. It is the special effects, which recreate Rome and its amphitheatres so vividly. Computer graphics were used to amazing effect in the film - 98% of the spectators in the amphitheatre were computer generated -and you really feel you were there.

So *Gladiator* gets my vote. In my opinion, and hopefully in yours too, it is a landmark in the story of cinema.

STYLE: formal (impersonal).

AGE and the LAW

There seems to be nothing harder than deciding at what age somebody should be allowed to do something - drive a car, drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes, play the Lottery.

Apparently, the British government is proposing to raise the age when you are allowed to buy cigarettes from 16 to 18. Should they therefore also consider raising the age at which people can gamble? At present this is 16 for the National Lottery and 18 for other kinds of gambling like betting on horse races. Of course, gambling is different from smoking, but that fact is of no help in reaching a decision about which of them a person should be allowed to do when.

There appears to be no logic to the law. Why should a person be allowed to play the Lottery two years before they are allowed to vote (at 18), and three more years before they are allowed to become a Member of Parliament (at 21)? Some people might argue that there is no point trying to stop anyone doing anything at any age. Certainly, some things are illegal no matter how old you are, yet people still do them.

The whole situation is very confusing and the questions are impossible to answer. I have one more of my own to add. Why is it that in Britain women can retire five years before men when women, as everybody knows, live longer than men? Needless to say, no one seems able to explain that anomaly. Thankfully, it is about to change.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

addressing the reader directly

Have you ever ...?

What do you think about ...?

making a strong statement

There's nothing worse than ...

You may not agree with me, but I think ...

describing a personal experience

It happened to me when ...

This is what happened when ...

The occasion I have in mind ...

I'll never forget the time

conversational expressions

You can imagine ...

If you ask me ...

Another thing is that ...

NOTE

Some adverbs and adverbial phrases are generally in semi-formal and formal (impersonal) articles:

apparently

needless to say

thankfully

evidently

clearly

as far as I'm concerned

fortunately/unfortunately

surprisingly/not surprisingly

as far as I know

in my opinion

in my view

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the aim of the title and opening paragraph of an article?
2. What helps to attract attention of the reader to the article?
3. What style of writing is widely used in articles for young adults?
4. What expressions used to show impersonal way of expressing the author's opinion?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

1) Which of these are essential features of an article title?

A it should attract your attention

B it should make you want to read the article

C it should tell you exactly what the text is about

D it should give you an idea of what the text is about

E it should be short.

2) Read the following titles. Which of them would make you read an article about sky-diving? Give reasons.

a **Sky-diving for beginners.**

b So you'd like to try sky-diving.

c No, I'm not completely mad.

d **A complete history of sky-diving.**

3) Decide which of these opening sentences would make you want to continue reading? Give reasons.

a Sky-diving is a relatively recent sport.

b Have you ever wondered what it would be like to fall out of an aeroplane?

c Sky-diving isn't for everyone.

d The best thing about sky-diving is that anyone can do it.

TASK 2

Read the article and think what headlines and sub-headings you could use to break the story up into interesting paragraphs.

A row has erupted after smoking was banned at a London language school. A room which used to be for smokers was turned into a non-smoking area. It was new school director Janine Murray who took the decision. What Janine insists is that the ban was introduced to protect staff and students from the effects of passive smoking. Murray maintained: 'What smokers should realize is that if they want to commit suicide it's one thing; killing other people with their selfish habit is another. Most of our students are in their teens and early twenties – we shouldn't be encouraging them to wreck their lungs.' Colombian Mariana Gomes, a First Certificate student who is leading the fight to have the ban lifted, disagrees. She is planning a demonstration. Dark-haired Mariana vowed to fight the ban. 'It's Mrs Murray who has caused all the trouble. The old director was much more easygoing. Studying for an exam is stressful work. Cigarettes can calm our nerves. All we want is one tiny room.' Teacher Bernie Green supports Mariana: 'Even non-smokers on the staff are furious. What makes me angry is that people are kept here most of the day studying, so it's unreasonable to tell them they can't smoke. They are not kids.'

TASK 3

Work out a paragraph plan to the article for an international student's magazine:

Give your reasons explaining how life has changed in your country since your grandparents' generation.

TASK 4

Write a short article for a travel magazine about a holiday or trip you have been on recently. Say

- why you chose the holiday, and where it was;
- what your travel arrangements were;
- what your first impressions were;
- how the holiday was organized;
- what the general atmosphere was like;
- which the good things and the less positive things were;
- what your final thoughts and recommendations are.

3.5. REPORT

REPORT is a piece of writing giving the information, evaluating something, or making suggestions and recommendations. Reports need to be clear and avoid unnecessary detail, only essential information and recommendations.

THE STRUCTURE of a report includes:

- ✓ introduction: this part includes clear headings to help the reader see how the report is organized;
- ✓ recommendations: description and explanations are given here, the writer can use a number of points in answer to the question;
- ✓ conclusion: the last paragraph is used to summarise briefly, express personal recommendation if this is asked for in the question, making points clearly and directly.

STYLE OF WRITING: impersonal, avoiding overuse of the pronoun 'I'.

SAMPLE REPORT

A group of students from Australia is coming to stay in your town as part of an exchange programme. The director has asked you to write a brief report suggesting places the group should visit and activities they could take part in during their stay.

This report will consider what a group of exchange students from Australia could do while they are staying in our town. Several visits and other activities will be suggested.

Since our town is well-known as a cultural center, many foreign visitors find the following particularly interesting places to visit:

- the cathedral;
- the palace;

- our market, which is famous as a place where local craftsmen sell traditional products.

In the past students from abroad have said they would like to meet and do things with students here. For this reason, joint activities between our visitors and our college students should be considered. The following could be organized:

- a sports competition;
- an arts or music event.

As our Australian visitors will be staying for some time, I suggest a variety of visits and activities are planned.

During their first week, they could visit historical sites and go to the market. Later, a tennis competition involving local students could be held.

Finally, during their last week, our visitors could be invited to take part in a musical evening at our college.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

stating aims

The aim of this report is to ...

This report will consider / examine / compare ...

This report is intended to ...

giving reasons

Since / As (our town is known), ...

For this reason / these reasons ...

making suggestions or recommendations

In view of this, I (would) recommend / suggest (that)

They / We could ...

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is crucial in writing a report?
2. How is report structured?
3. What style is used in reports?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Put the jumbled pieces into correct order to get a sporting report. Then fill in the gaps using the words below:

down had afterwards all felt more back
against the last about too up lots would so

Also, we were exhausted to feel very much else.

There was a great atmosphere with picnics and barbecues. Teams of two girls from up and the coast joint in.

In Brazil we take beach volleyball seriously. I am going to tell you a tournament that took place last summer. It was a beautiful sunny day and of families and friends turned

Their captain was Tense she lost control of a smash and the ball was just out. She got really angry with the umpire! We fought to get level and everyone was shouting encouragement.

At first, groups of teams played a set each other to see who go through to the last sixteen. This first part of the competition was just fun but the knock-out part was serious.

The others just gave up and we got the points we needed. We sorry, but not too sorry, for the other girls, after, there's only one winner!

By the time we got to the semifinals we realized we A chance of winning. We won first set easily but lost the second. In the final one the others got a big lead and needed one more point.

TASK 2

Write a report for a local newspaper about a sporting event you recently attended.

3.6. REVIEW

REVIEW is a piece of writing (a report) in a newspaper, magazine, or programme that gives an opinion about a new book, film, etc. A good review may persuade to buy a new CD, go to see a particular film or change the opinion. Although people who are not professional critics are more used to talking about films, books and CDs, the ability to express opinions in writing is a skill which may be used in many types of writing, from personal letters to home-produced newsletters and magazines, or on Internet websites.

THE STRUCTURE of a review is the following:

- ✓ introduction;
- ✓ main part (including background information, impressions of the writer, description);
- ✓ conclusion (containing recommendations).

NOTE

- Include factual information about the thing reviewed.
- Readers should be given an idea of the subject matter and some background information as well as saying who the film / book is for.
 - Reviews should include the writer's own opinions and the reasons or explanations for these opinions.
 - Reviews should end with a definite recommendation to the reader.

STYLE OF WRITING: informal or more formal, depending on who the review is for.

SAMPLE REVIEW

Nell, starring Jodie Foster and Liam Neeson, is a wonderful film.

It's the fascinating story of a young woman who has grown up in complete isolation in a remote part of America's deep south. An anthropologist and a doctor discover Nell and study the way she lives. They have to decide whether she can continue to

live alone or whether she needs to be looked after. The close relationship which develops between the doctor and Nell is Sympathetically portrayed by Neeson and Foster. For me this was the most interesting aspect of this film which gripped me from beginning to end.

Don't miss Nell if it comes to a cinema or video shop near you.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

expressing opinion, reasons / explanations for the opinion

I must admit, I found this ... boring.

For a start ..., and at for at last...

It filled me with enthusiasm.

ending a review

You'll be sorry if you miss this ...

Unless you enjoy feeling suicidal, resist your temptation to by this ...

I would certainly recommend it.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the aim of a review?
2. Where is a review published?
3. What should be written in the main part?
4. What information should the writer include to make his work a review?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Read the review of an album and underline all the opinion and preference language in it.

In my opinion, Paco de Lucia's latest album is not as good as his classic *Entre dos aguas*, but it is certainly worth a listen.

As usual, de Lucia's guitar playing is absolutely superb and his amazing voice adds the passion and excitement typical of

flamenco music. Flamenco can be repetitive and unimaginative, but for me de Lucia's music is completely original. He wrote and produced all fourteen tracks on this album, every one is different and I would say brilliant in its own way.

If you are already a fan of de Lucia, you probably bought this one as soon as it came out. If you're new to flamenco, I suggest you go out and buy it today.

TASK 2

Read the review of a production of Pygmalion:

- tick (✓) those lines which are correct. Where a line has an extra word which should not be there, identify the word and write it down;
- divide the text into paragraphs according to the structure of a review.

1 The new Theatre Club production is Pygmalion _____
2 at the Maida Theatre. I was enjoyed it very much. _____
3 It is a most amusing and I would certainly _____
4 recommend it you for an amusing evening's _____
5 entertainment. It was an evening filled with the _____
6 laughter. It was a very superb production. _____
7 Angela Brown was a marvelous in the role of _____
8 Eliza, and yet Bruce Perkins was a superb _____
9 Higgins. Percy Evans ought to be congratulated _____
10 too for the scenery, which had looked magnificent. _____
11 Afterwards, several of people said they had _____
12 been preferred the happier ending of the film _____
13 version My Fair Lady but me personally I prefer _____
14 the bitter-sweet original. I am agree that _____
15 this ending is more faithful to Shaw's intentions. _____
16 It filled me with enthusiasm feelings for his work. _____
17 Tickets are available from the box office. _____

TASK 3

Write a review of a film or play you have seen for a student's magazine. Think about these areas:

- the name of the play/film and the author/director;
- the kind of play/film it is and where it is set;
- the plot;
- how good the actors/direction/scenery are;
- what other people thought about it;
- whether you would recommend it to other people.

3.7. SET BOOK

SET BOOK is a piece of writing based on the read book. It may be presented in the form of a report, a composition, a letter or an article, depending on the task type. That means that the structure of the written work and the style of writing will depend on the form asked.

NOTE

To cope with the task the writer needs to follow the plan below:

STEP 1. Get to know the book:

- read the book several times;
- watch a film version making notes about the differences.

STEP 2. The book:

- write a short summary of each chapter;
- make a list of the main events.

STEP 3. The characters:

- make a list of the main characters making notes about their appearance and personality. What adjectives could be used to describe them;
- make notes about the most important relationships in the book.

STEP 4. The time and place:

- make notes on where and when the story is set;
- if it is set in the past, think about any differences there are with the modern world.

STEP 5. Expressing opinion

- write notes about advantages of the book;
- write about the favourite part;
- write about disadvantages of the book.

SAMPLE SET BOOK

‘The most interesting characters aren’t perfect. They make mistakes and learn from them.’ Is this true of one of the character from the book, or one of the short stories you have read?

Write your **composition**, explaining your views.

Elizabeth Bennet(1) is the most important character in Pride and Prejudice and at first she seems the most sensible. However, it soon becomes obvious that she is far from perfect (2).

Elizabeth is the second of the five daughters of Mr and Mrs Bennet. Her mother is silly. Her youngest sisters are badly behaved. Her father takes little interest in his family. In comparison, Elizabeth is the most reasonable (3). She is intelligent, she is embarrassed by her mother’s behaviour, and she is loyal to her older sister, Anne.

(4) Mr Darcy is attracted to Elizabeth’s good qualities, but Elizabeth forms an opinion of him which is completely wrong. She cannot see that, although he’s proud, he’s a good man. On the other hand, she likes the worthless soldier, Wickham.

It is only after Elizabeth learns that Wickham has lied and that Darcy has been responsible for making sure Lydia and Wickham are married, that Elizabeth realizes her mistakes (2). She understands her judgement has been wrong and, at last, she and Darcy can find happiness.

- (1) Introduce the subject of the composition in the first paragraph.
- (2) Refer back to the question in the introductory and concluding paragraphs.
- (3) Make a number of points for one side of an argument.
- (4) Make a number of points for the other side of an argument.

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

nouns used in books

main character
minor character
hero/heroine
villain
setting
plot
opening
ending
main event(s)

adjectives to describe the characters

<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>
kind	unkind/cruel
generous	mean
clever	stupid
sensitive	insensitive
brave	cowardly

adjectives to describe the story

<i>positive</i>	<i>negative</i>
mysterious	ordinary
exciting	unexciting/dull
original	unoriginal
interesting	uninteresting/boring

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is a set book writing devoted to?
2. What are the steps to follow in order to fulfill the task?
3. What is the structure of a set book writing?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Read the question and the answer underneath and answer the following questions:

- How effective is the answer?
- How does the writer sum up Boxer's attributes?
- How does the writer deal with his negative points?

Who do you think is the most interesting person in the book you have read? Give a brief account of that person's character and explain why you found her or him especially interesting.

The character I would like to describe is the horse Boxer from *Animal Farm*. He is not all that intelligent but he has qualities which are far more important. He is loyal and hard-working and a good friend. After all, the pigs are intelligent but in the end they betray both the animals and the revolution.

Boxer, by contrast, is strong and virtuous and never lets anybody down. He shows tremendous courage in the battle of the cowshed, and alone of all the animals dares to question Squealer's judgement on Snowball. So he is not that stupid! Without him the windmills could never have been built. If he has a fault it is that he is too trusting. It made me sad to read how cruelly exploited he was by the pigs. The part of the story where he is taken away is very moving. In my opinion, although he is a little naïve, he is the true hero of the book.

TASK 2

Using the composition you have just analyzed as a guide, answer the question based around a book you have read recently.

PART 4. WRITING LETTERS

4.1. FORMAL LETTER

FORMAL LETTER may be of different kind and include: asking for or giving information; initiating action or responding to a request; giving feedback on suggestions; making complaint, suggestions, or corrections.

THE STRUCTURE of a formal letter consists of the following parts:

- ✓ the heading (a);
- ✓ the reference (b);
- ✓ the date (c);
- ✓ the inside address (d);
- ✓ the salutation (e);
- ✓ the body of the letter (f);
- ✓ the complementary close (f);
- ✓ the signature (h).

STYLE OF WRITING: formal.

SAMPLE FORMAL LETTER

Telegrams (a)
GRAJO LEEDS

**GRADEN & JONES
LIMITED**

Telephone
Leeds 978653

Upper Bridge Street
LEEDS 2

JAS/DS (b)

(c) 3 July 2007

Oliver Green and Co. Ltd. (d)
25 King Edward VII St.
MANCHESTER M24 5BD

Dear Sirs (e)

We understand from several of our trade connections in Bolton that you are the British agents for Petrou and Galitopoulos AE of Athens.

Will you please send us price-lists and catalogues for all products manufactured by this company, together with details of trade discounts and terms of payment.

We look forward to hearing from you. (f)

Yours faithfully (g)

J.A.Stevens (h)

J.A. Stevens

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

saying why you are writing

I am writing to complain about / enquire about / tell you about / suggest ...

I would like to request further information about ...

I would be most grateful if you could send me details of ...

In response to your letter of 26 February, I am writing to ...

organizing information

Firstly, ...

Secondly, ...

In addition, ...

Furthermore, ...

Lastly, ...

asking for action

I would be grateful if you could ...

It would be helpful if you would ...

Please could you ...

closing the letter

I look forward to hearing from you.

We look forward to your early reply.

I hope to hear from you soon.

Thank you for your interest.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What are the aims of writing formal letters?
2. What parts precede the body of the letter?
3. What is the meaning of abbreviation JAS/DS?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Read the letter and find out the mistakes which are not appropriate with the formal letter style. Rewrite the letter.

Dear Ms Simpson,

Thank for your letter which I got this morning. It's brilliant that I'm coming to your school.

In answer to your question about my arrival, I will be getting to Heathrow Airport the day before the course starts, which is July 1.

However, an English friend is meeting me, so there is no need for you to send a taxi. Thanks all the same – it was a nice thought.

Secondly, as regards accommodation. I would prefer to stay with a family and I would like to be alone. It isn't that I'm antisocial – it is just that I wish to practice my English conversation.

Finally, as far as trips are concerned, I would like to go to London and Stratford, but not Brighton. I know the town very well as I studied there last year.

My only question to you is, when do I have to pay the course fees? Can I pay in July, or do you want the money now?

Can't wait to meet you all.

Love, Maria.

TASK 2

Continue the letter beginning with:

It was very thoughtful of you to write about the television series that we sponsor. Our mail from viewers has been much heavier than we expected but, as we had hoped, overwhelmingly favorable. Certainly, your general assessment of the series is very satisfying to us.

TASK 3

Write a letter on the given situation:

--

You want to study English in Australia. You have received some details about a school which you think would be suitable but you need more information.

4.2. INFORMAL LETTER

INFORMAL LETTER is mostly written to friends or people you know well. It responds to a request for action from somebody else, such as to give information or make suggestions. Alternatively, it could be to initiate action, for example, to request information or invite somebody to do something.

THE STRUCTURE of an informal letter:

- ✓ the salutation (a);
- ✓ the body of the letter (b);
- ✓ the complementary close (c);
- ✓ the signature (d).

STYLE OF WRITING: informal.

SAMPLE INFORMAL LETTER

Dear George (a),

After I got your letter, I remembered that Maria went to Nepal last year - in fact, to the same village - Kankal. You remember Maria, don't you?

I was thinking that we would get much more useful information from her than from the people that organize the holidays. Could you drop her a line? You always got on with her much better than me. What I'd like to know is:

How old are the other volunteers?

Is it hard work? Do you need to be a good walker to do the Annapurna trail?

Send her my best wishes, and obviously ask any questions of your own (b).

Best wishes, (c)

Sam (d)

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

letter openings

How are you? I'm fine.

Thanks for your letter. It was really nice to hear from you.

I'm sorry I haven't written for such a long time but ...

saying the reason of writing

You asked me to recommend ...

I've managed to find out some information about ...

About your planned visit, ...

letter endings

Write back soon.

Look forward to seeing you soon.

Give my regards to your parents.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What information may be included to an informal letter?
2. What parts does this type of letter consist of?
3. What are appropriate openings to an informal letter?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Look at these opening words for different letters. Which ones will contain good or bad news? Which are formal and which are informal?

A I am pleased to inform you ...

B I am writing to enquire about ...

C I was sorry to hear ...

D Congratulations ...

E With reference to ...

Think of a continuation for each opening.

TASK 2

Put the letter into the right order. The beginning and end have been done for you.

Dear Andy,

Thanks a lot for the lovely letter. It was great news about your promotion. You have a great business brain - you take after Uncle Richard. Well done!

- 1 Do let me know as I'll have to get tickets.*
- 2 Would you like to come too? You can stay at my place.*
- 3 What's more, I've just started a new job.*
- 4 I've been taken on as a shop assistant in a bookshop. I'm going to be in charge of the foreign section.*
- 5 You'll be sad to hear that Mr. Green, our old teacher, passed away last month.*
- 6 I'm really sorry for not having written earlier but life has been busy since moving here.*
- 7 I've taken to the other staff, they're nice and friendly, and the job is quite well paid.*
- 8 Guess what! She has just moved here too.*
- 9 Poor Mr.Green. Still, life goes on.*
- 10 Incidentally, I've arranged to go to the theatre to see 'Cats' with Anna in a couple of weeks' time.*
- 11 She told me some awful news, though.*
- 12 By the way, the other day I bumped into Anna Granger in the bookshop.*

Anyway, I must sign off as I want to catch the post. Hope to see you soon.

*Lots of love,
Celia.*

TASK 3

Write a letter to your friends, Paul and Suzanne, congratulating them on the arrival of their new baby. Give a reason why you won't be able to go to the christening.

4.3. INQUIRY LETTER

An INQUIRY LETTER may be general or concrete if an information on definite commodities is inquired.

THE STRUCTURE of an inquiry letter

- ✓ Reference to the source where the address of an inquired firm has been obtained.
- ✓ The reason for inquiry.
- ✓ The object of inquiry:
 - description of the merchandise in question;
 - required quality;
 - request to send printed matter (such as booklets, catalogs, price lists and reports), sample products, sketches, etc. As well as terms of delivery and payment.
- ✓ References if available (or just indication to them).

STYLE OF WRITING: formal.

SAMPLE INQUIRY LETTER

Ch. Hancock & Sons, Ltd.
10 Haymarket Terrace
London SW 6 4HZ
Tel.: +44 189 326 8587

29 January 2008

Carpet Factory
Almaty, Kazakhstan

Dear Sirs

We learnt from the Exhibition of Goods produced in your country organized in London by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in the UK from 10 to 17 of January, 2008 that you are producing hand-made woolen carpets for export.

There is a steady demand here for high-class goods of this type.

Will you please send us your catalogue and full details of your export prices and terms of payment.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

Ch. Hancock

Ch. Hancock

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

introduction

We learnt ...

We have seen your advertisement ...

asking for inquiry

there is a demand/ need

I would appreciate

Would you please send me

Will you please quote us for the following

ending the letter

I look forward to receiving ...

I look forward to your reply.

I look forward to hearing from you.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the aim of an inquiry letter?
2. What does the object of the letter include?

EXERCISES

TASK

Write an inquiry letter according to the situations:

SITUATION 1

Niko Koitsu, Manager at Nisso Boeki, a leading Japanese producer and wholesaler of knitted menswear, womenswear and childrenswear of high quality, writes to Knitting and Clothing, a British company specializing in designing and production of new brands of them. Nisso Boeki is interested in the supply of stretch yarns which have very sound characteristics and meet customers' demands. It is

looking for a manufacturer who can supply it with stretch yarns in big quantity at one time. Niko Koitsu asks Knitting and Clothing to send him its current catalogue and price list if it agrees to the conditions of Nisso Boeki (besides above mentioned, the company wants a quantity discount, and its terms of payment are for collection).

SITUATION 2

An affiliate of Cross International (based in St.Petersburgh) in Moscow informs Weston, an American firm with headquarters in New York, NY, that their printing press Model 12A38B against Contract #1411 was received in the time stipulated by the Contract. But they compelled to express their regret that while assembling and mounting this printing press there were discovered many insignificant defects, that it was difficult to put it into operation. They ask to replace it by another one of the same model, and agree to retain the Contract provided Weston grants them a 20 per cent reduction from the price.

SITUATION 3

A representative of Order Department, Ms Rosalyn Higgins, at Silver Imports Ltd. based in San Anselmo, California, thanks Mr. Tim Clifton, a manager of Flatware and Silverware, a specialty store selling tabletop products, for their recent order and informs that six soup tureen in the traditional style (item 15b) and one dozen pastry folks (item 8a) have been shipped by United Parcel. She expresses her regret that their stock of boxed set of silver spoons has been depleted because of a delay in shipments from Australia. She informs that their dozen of boxed sets of silver spoons has been put on back order, and assures that they will deliver them by the end of the month.

4.5. COMPLAINT LETTER and ADJUSTMENT LETTER

A COMPLAINT LETTER informs the supplier of the problem. It presents the facts and expresses the buyer's dissatisfaction. A complaint does not call for action or compensation from the offending company but offers an opportunity to improve its shortcomings. A complaint that claims to make restitution is called a claim.

A letter which responds to the claim is called a letter of ADJUSTMENT.

THE STRUCTURE of a letter of complaint:

- ✓ Confirmation of receiving and examining a merchandise.
- ✓ Accurate indication to defects.
- ✓ Request to take measures and suggest a fair solution.

THE STRUCTURE of a letter of adjustment:

- ✓ Indication to the fact that the case is properly investigated.
- ✓ Objections to or admission of claims.
- ✓ Agreement to an offer of the client or own offer of a compromise adjustment.

STYLE OF WRITING: formal.

SAMPLE COMPLAINT LETTER

Jack's Hardware store

72 Elm Street
Kennebunk, Maine 06860
March 23, 2008

Eterna-Tools, Inc.
Route 8
Saddlebrook, New Jersey 07654

Dear Gentlemen and Ladies:

On March 1, we ordered and subsequently received one case of handsaw, model 88b. We paid for the order with our check no. 7896, a photocopy of which is enclosed.

When we decided to order these saws instead of model 78b, it was at the urging of your sales representative, Harold

Saunders. He assured us that the new saws were more durable and efficient than the older model.

However, we have now had the saws on our selling floor for three weeks, and already six have been returned with broken teeth by extremely dissatisfied customer.

We are therefore returning the entire order of 88b saws and would like to be refunded for their full purchase price plus shipping expenses.

Yours truly,

Jack Patterson

Jack Patterson

SAMPLE ADJUSTMENT LETTER

Eterna-Tools, Inc. Route 8, Saddlebrook, NJ 07654

March 28, 2008

Mr. Jack Patterson
Jack's Hardware Store
72 Elm Street
Kennebunk, Maine 06860

Dear Mr. Patterson:

We are sorry that the model 88b handsaws you purchased have not lived up to your expectations. Frankly, we are surprised they have proved so fragile and appreciate your returning them to us. Our lab people are already at work trying to discover the source of the problem.

We are glad to assume the shipping costs you incurred, Mr. Patterson. But may we suggest that, instead of a refund, you apply the price of these saws to the cost of the order of model 78b saws. Your own experience will bear out their reliability, and we are sure your customers will be pleased with an Eterna-Tool Product.

If you will drop us a line okaying the shipment, your 78b handsaws will be on their way within the week.

Sincerely yours,

William Wilson
Office Manager

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Letter of complaint

introduction, giving information about a purchase or a service

On (the 1st of July), I (bought, leased, rented, or had repaired) a (name of the product, with serial or model number or service performed) at (location and other important details of the transaction).

I am writing to draw your attention to a problem in your customer service section.

I wish to complaint in the strongest possible terms about the treatment I received from a member of your staff.

I am writing to express my strong dissatisfaction with the goods I received this morning.

I am writing to complain about the quality of the product I purchased on-line from your website.

I am writing in connection with the negative attitude of a member of your staff.

describing the problem

Unfortunately, your product (or service) has not performed well (or the service was inadequate) because (state the problem).

I am disappointed because (explain the problem: for example, the product does not work properly, the service was not performed correctly, I was billed the wrong amount, something was not disclosed clearly or was misrepresented, etc.).

The equipment I ordered has still not been delivered, despite my phone call to you last week to say that it was needed urgently.

To resolve the problem, I would appreciate it if you could (state the specific action you want—money back, charge card credit, repair, exchange, etc.). Enclosed are copies of my records (include copies of receipts, guarantees, warranties, cancelled checks, contracts, model and serial numbers, and any other documents).

I look forward to your reply and the resolution of my problem, and will wait until (set a time limit) before seeking help from a consumer protection agency or the Better Business Bureau.

Please contact me at the above address or by phone at (home and/or office numbers with area code).

Please deal with this matter urgently. I expect a reply from you by tomorrow morning at the latest.

I insist on a full refund otherwise I will be forced to take the matter further.

Unless I receive the goods by the end of this week, I will have no choice but to cancel my order.

I hope that you will deal with this matter promptly as it is causing me considerable inconvenience.

Letter of adjustment

appreciating for informing about some problems

Thank you for bringing the matter/issue/problem to our attention.

I appreciated your advising me of this incident ...

apologizing

We are very sorry to hear that ...

I am very sorry for this situation ...

We apologize for...

Please accept our apologies for...

explanation

Please be assured that we will...

You have my assurance that ...

To compensate for the inconvenience caused...

We are doing everything we can do to resolve the issue

I can assure you that this will not happen again

I am trying to sort it out/sort the problem out as a matter of urgency.

Please return the faulty goods, and we will refund you/repair them/replace them

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of writing a complaint letter?
2. What is the structure of an adjustment letter?
3. What style of writing is used in both letters?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Read the advertisement carefully, and the notes which give you details about why you were dissatisfied with the holiday. Write a letter complaining about the quality of the holiday.

Rigby activity holiday

Test yourself and learn new skills in the glorious Lake District. Holidays for people who don't want to laze around on a beach. Learn to sail and windsurf at our exclusive fully-equipped lakeside facilities. Rock climbing and survival skills taught by professionals. Beginners welcome. Get fit – learn confidence. Ten action-packed days for just \$600. Holidays begin the first and third Saturdays of each month.

Notes

- Instructors ex-soldiers – expected too much.
- Like a prison camp.
- Not enough surfboards/life jackets.
- Cabins cold – had to clean them.
- Not enough food.
- Cold and frightened! Left after one week.

TASK 2

Write a complain letter and an adjustment letter on the given situation.

Attika company in Moscow, specializing in trading of furniture and domestic technique, writes a complaint to Lube company, Italy, which produces kitchens and accessories to them. It informs that on October 7 Attika placed an order for five “Ruta” kitchens which are in demand among customers for their classical and refined style. By December 10, the kitchens have not still arrived, and there has been no letter from Lube explaining the delay. Attika asks whether the order arrived, why an acknowledgement letter wasn't sent, and whether the kitchens will be delivered in time for pre-New Year shopping.

4.5. A LETTER OF APPLICATION

The purpose of a job APPLICATION LETTER is to get an interview. If you get a job through interviews arranged by your campus placement office or through contacts, you may not need to write a letter. However if you want to work for an organization that isn't interviewing on campus, or later when you change jobs, you will. Writing a letter is also a good preparation for a job interview, since the letter is your first step in showing a specific company what you can do for it.

In a letter of application you should:

- Address the letter to a specific person.
- Indicate the specific position for which you are applying.
- Be specific about your qualifications.
- Show what separates you from other applicants.
- Show a knowledge of the company and the position.
- Refer to your resume (which you would enclose with the letter).
- Ask for an interview.

THE STRUCTURE of an application letter:

- ✓ reference to the advertisement;
- ✓ work record description;
- ✓ mentioning qualifications;
- ✓ description of a present work;
- ✓ achievements/personal qualities;
- ✓ reasons for applying;
- ✓ closing the letter.

STYLE OF WRITING: formal.

SAMPLE APPLICATION LETTER

4930 Sherman Avenue
Studio City, CA 91478

October 8, 2007

Mr. Michael Tolian
Vice President, Personnel
Target Department Stores
637 South Lucas Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90017

Dear Mr. Tarkanian,

Since I have focused my education and training on retail management, your advertisement for a management trainee, appearing October 7 in Section F of the Los Angeles Times, captured my attention.

Recent sales and management experience at Rike's Department Store enabled me to develop the interpersonal and supervisory skills specified in the Target advertisement. I started as a salesperson and was soon promoted to assistant manager, a position demanding initiative and responsibility.

In addition to this experience, I am enrolled at Valley Community College and expect to receive an associate's degree in June. In my marketing major, I successfully completed courses in marketing, management, microcomputing, and communication, earning a 3.5 grade-point average in my major.

Please examine the attached resume for details of my qualifications. At your request, I would be pleased to provide the names of individuals who could verify my education, skills, and performance.

I would appreciate an opportunity to discuss with you how my background and training could contribute to Target Department Stores. Please call me at (818) 359-9920 to arrange an interview at your convenience.

Sincerely,

M. Colin

M. Colin
Enclosure

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

Referring to the advertisement

I am writing with reference to your advertisement for ...

I am interested in the position of ... advertised in ..., and would like to apply.

Describing work record

I have 9 years experience of ...

After leaving ..., I worked for 8 months in ... as a ...

For the last 2 years, I have worked as ... with ...

Describing qualifications

My main qualification for the position is my 8 years sales experience with ...

I trained for 3 years in ... as a ... and have a Higher Certificate in ...

A am quite fluent in English and use the language regularly.

Describing present job

My main duties are to sell to ... and to give demonstrations on ...

My present responsibilities consist of ...

I am in charge of ...

Describing achievements/
personal qualities

I hope you will see this as evidence of my capacity for hard work.

I believe that these qualities have enabled me to ...

Explaining the reasons for applying

Due to ..., my contract expires at the end of ...

I would like to apply as I would welcome the challenge / the opportunity to work for a ...

I wish to gain experience in ...

Closing the letter

I can arrange for you to receive letters of reference ...

Please do not hesitate to tell me if there is anything else you would like to know.

I enclose my curriculum vitae and hope to hear from you soon.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is the main purpose of a job application letter?
2. How can you organize a letter of application?
3. What useful expressions can you use explaining the reasons for applying?
4. How can you close the application?

EXERCISES

TASK 1

Rewrite this job application in its full form:

Dear Sir,

I/interested/position/advertised/5th April/like to apply.

Main qualification for/position/my 8 years' sales experience/Jason/American photographic goods manufacturer. When I joined/their European trade/limited to France. Since then/extended this trade into Britain and Holland/doubled the number of companies on Jason's European export list.

Trough lacking formal training/photographic goods manufacture/acquired considerable on-the-job know-how/range and capabilities of high-sensitivity photo-materials. Published several articles/photographic journals. Attended several company sales training courses/wide experience/technical demonstrations.

Enclose/curriculum vitae/hope/hear from you soon.

Yours faithfully,

Ronald Burns.

TASK 2

Write an application from yourself in reply to this advertisement:

WANT TO WORK IN THE U. S.?

If you have a professional qualification, skill or trade, let us find the appointment you are looking for.

17,000 professional and executive appointments on file.

Information service on immigration requirements
(e.g. visa, work permit) also available.

For confidential appointments service, send c.v. to:

Accord Placement Bureau

5905 Vista

Charleston

North Carolina 29412

USA

4.6. COVER LETTER AND RESUME

There are some general rules for writing COVER LETTERS. Each cover letter should:

1. Always be on good quality paper.
2. Be limited to one page.
3. Conform to good business style and be free of errors.
4. Be addressed to a particular person by name. Avoid addressing your letter to “Sir”, “Madam”, or “Personnel Office” unless an ad so specifies.
5. Always be accompanied by a resume for reference.

THE STRUCTURE of a cover letter resembles the letter of application (see above).

A RESUME (a curriculum vitae) must contain a summary of essential facts about the background:

- ✓ Name, address, phone, e-mail.
- ✓ Education: graduate school(s), undergraduate school(s), training institution(s), study abroad. Note degrees and dates. Note dissertation title and/or master’s thesis.
- ✓ Experience: paid, unpaid, full-time, part-time. Might group as “teaching”, “research”, “other”. Include internships, assistantships, fieldwork, work.
- ✓ Honors and awards: scholarships, fellowships, grants, prizes, honor societies.
- ✓ Publications as well as work submitted for publication. Conference presentations, seminars, talks. Research. Professional affiliations, organizations and divisions within organizations.
- ✓ Leadership positions.
- ✓ Professional services.
- ✓ Community service.
- ✓ University service.
- ✓ Skills and special training: languages, computer, etc.
- ✓ Travel.
- ✓ Media: television and radio appearances.

- ✓ You could list references. It has become acceptable practice to write "References: Available upon request" since addresses, titles, phone numbers are subject to change. Choose references carefully and always get permission to use their names as references.

STYLE OF WRITING: formal.

SAMPLE COVER LETTER

Shirley Lyons
52 Fortfield Lane
Parteen, Co. Limerick

Uncle Jed's Bar and Grill
589 Mayfield Street
Ocean City, MD, 20587

January 3, 2008

To whom it may concern:

I will be a participant on the J1 Summer Work and Travel programme sponsored by _____ and would be interested in the possibility of working at Uncle Jed's Bar and Grill. I will be in possession of all the necessary legal working documents for employment in the United States (dates you will be eligible to work). I will apply for a Social Security card once I arrive in the U.S. on (date of arrival).

As you will notice from my resume, I have previous experience working in a Last summer I waited tables, made weekly staff schedules andetc. I gained valuable experience in handling many different tasks; including interpersonal and customer care skills, while working in a fast paced environment.

I would greatly appreciate receiving any additional information regarding employment opportunities at Uncle Jed's Bar and Grill including an application form if necessary.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I may be reached at the above address or by telephone or e-mail listed on my resume.

Sincerely,
Shirley Lyons
Shirley Lyons

SAMPLE RESUME

Lawanda Dean
1905 Blimey Drive
Grimsby, Lincs, DN35 1TT
ENGLAND
Tel: 011-44-9822-267
Fax: 011-44-9822-291
E-mail:Ldean@uwest.uk.edu

- Education Bachelor of Science, International
Management (*May 2000*)
University of Westminster, London, England
Language and Area Studies Program
(*January – June, 1998*)
University of Alicante, Spain
- Experience Student Assistant (*August, 1998-Present*)
Periodicals Department, Edmon Lowe
Library University of Westminster
- Recorded periodicals received by the library
 - Ordered new publications
 - Assisted students with research
- Waitress (*June-August, 1998 & 1999*)
Bandana's Restaurant, Grimsby, England
- Waited tables
 - Scheduled work shifts for waiters/waitresses
 - Assisted manager with bookkeeping
- Volunteer Peer Counselor (*August, 1996-May, 1997*)
Grimsby High School, Grimsby, England
- Assisted high school counselor in advising and informing students of college and university course opportunities
- Skills/Interests: Fluent in English and Spanish; working knowledge of Japanese
- Computer experience: WordPerfect, Lotus, Desktop publishing, Internet
 - Type 50 words per minute
 - Possess full driver's license

- Certified lifeguard and downhill ski instructor
- Sing in university choir, play violin, enjoy mountain hiking, participate in intramural sports

References

Available upon request.

COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What are cover letters for?
2. What message does each paragraph convey?
3. What are resume formats?
4. What is a resume? What information does it contain?

EXERCISES

TASK

Look through the advertisements, choose a suitable position and write a cover letter, attach your resume.

ADVERTISEMENT 1

Procter and Gamble is looking for outstanding managerial candidates who desire to make their career in a first class international company. Continuous and sustainable growth of the company's business has created new opportunities for future managers in the following functions:

- Customer Business Development (CBD)
- Human Resources (HR)
- Finance & Accounting (FA)
- Customer Service (CS)

Required qualifications for all positions:

- good command of written and spoken English;
- excellent initiative, outstanding leadership and communication skills;
- be competitive, persistent, results oriented and capable of working within teams;
- no travel restrictions and no military obligations;
- be aged below 29 and possess computer skills;
- university degree in any field;

- driving license (for CBD department only).

Send your CV and a cover letter to job_for_you@mail.ru

ADVERTISEMENT 2

Position Announcement: Secretary

Non-profit American organization seeks qualified individual for full time secretarial position. Job responsibilities include answering phones, ordering supplies, ordering airline tickets, keeping accurate computer database records, and general office management duties. Qualified candidates should have a higher education degree, similar previous work experience and fluency in English. Please fax resumes before 19/3/08 to ANNA at 50-13-71

REFERENCES

- Carter, R.A. and McCarthy, M.J. (1997) *Written and spoken vocabulary*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carter, R.A. (2002) *Recognising creativity*. IH Journal of Language and Development, 133: 9-14.
- Sharpe, P.J (2004) *How to prepare for the TOEFL test*. 11th ed. NY: Barron's Educational Series, Inc.
- King, G. (2004) *Good punctuation*. Glasgow: Harper Collin Publishers.

INTERNET

- <http://www.saulebusinesscorrespondence.freenet.kz/un6.htm>
- <http://www.gel.ulaval.ca/~poussart/gel64324/McMurrey/texte/complnt.htm>
- <http://www.gel.ulaval.ca/~poussart/gel64324/McMurrey/texte/aplic.htm>
- <http://www.windsor.ru>
- <http://articles.business-man.biz/resumes-cover-letters/>