

How to write

# On Track<sup>5</sup>

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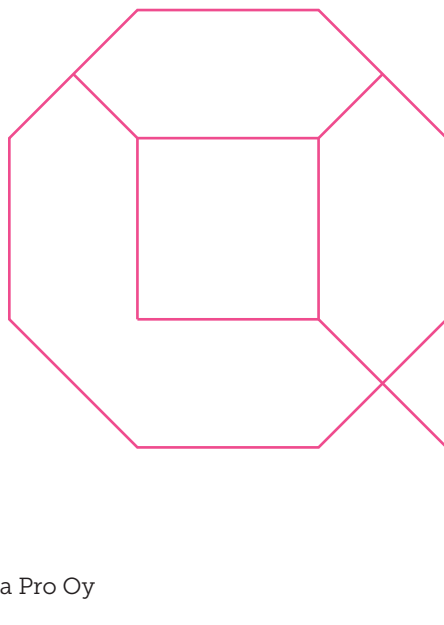
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# Table of contents

## HOW TO WRITE

an argumentative essay .....	3	a news item .....	21
a biography .....	4	a poem .....	22
a citation .....	5	a profile .....	24
a comment .....	5	a quote .....	25
a composition (essay) .....	6	a review .....	26
a conversation between two or more people (dialogue) .....	9	a review of a film .....	27
a description .....	10	a review of a novel .....	29
a graph: a short text explaining a graph .....	11	a review of a musical performance or an album .....	31
instructions .....	12	a review of an exhibition .....	32
an interview .....	13	a speech or a presentation .....	33
a journal and a blog .....	14	a summary .....	34
a letter and an email .....	15	a summary of an article .....	35
a letter to the editor .....	16	a survey .....	36
linking words .....	18	a thank you note .....	37
a mini-research paper .....	19	writing topics .....	38

## HOW TO WRITE



## an argumentative essay

An argumentative essay argues the case (given in the title) for and/or against a subject. Showing that you've thought about both sides of a topic can make your essay seem thoughtful and balanced. It is not enough to just state your opinion; you should also give some examples, facts or reasons to support what you say.

## Possible structure of an argumentative essay

**Opening**

State either

- the subject of the essay
- the problem or
- your opinion

In the first paragraph you can already say whether you agree or disagree with the statement.

**Body    Body paragraph 1**

Give some arguments for the case.

**Body paragraph 2**

Give some arguments against the case.

**Closing**

Conclude your essay by summing up why you are for or against the argument.

Example:

**Is graffiti art or vandalism?**

Anyone walking through an urban cityscape will have seen the colourful, provocative, illegal spray painting that is graffiti. For some these brightly coloured creations are an eyesore, whereas others regard them as a legitimate form of art. In my view they can be both.

To my mind, tagging, or the stylized writing of a person's name, can be classed as vandalism. Simple tags are ugly and annoying. They take very little skill, and do nothing to enhance the appearance of the bus shelter or wall on which they have been sprayed. All tags do is give graffiti a bad name.

On the other hand, a colourful mural can be stylish and a pleasure to look at. Not only does this graffiti have aesthetic value, but it may also have a powerful message about consumerism or police brutality, for example. This requires thought and talent, and it is the kind of graffiti I would call art.

Clearly the art community shares my opinion, because nowadays graffiti art is being exhibited in various galleries around the world. In addition, artists are often commissioned to do legal murals and other work for art shows. Not only is good graffiti art, it can be great art, too.

(208 words)

See also: How to write a composition (essay).

**Tasks**

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 1, exercise 1M/A

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2M/B

On Track 5, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13N/A

On Track 4, Unit 2, Topic 4, exercise 6M

On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16K/A

On Track 3, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5K/B, C

On Track 3, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16L/C

On Track 2, Unit 1, Topic 4, exercise 4H/A, B

On Track 2, Unit 2, Topic 6, exercise 6L/A

## HOW TO WRITE



## a bio

A bio is short for biography. Or if you are writing about yourself, it is short for autobiography. A bio is a brief description of someone's life. It is different from a profile which deals with a specific time period or series of events.

A bio should include:

- Date and place of birth and death
- Family background
- Main achievements
- Key life events
- Effects/impact on society, historical significance

Example:

**Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519)**

Da Vinci was highly influential as an artist and sculptor, but also a talented engineer, scientist and inventor.

He was born on 15 April 1452 near the Tuscan town of Vinci, the illegitimate son of a lawyer. He worked as an apprentice for the sculptor and painter Andrea del Verrocchio in Florence, becoming an independent master in 1497.

Later he moved to Milan where he painted a mural of 'The Last Supper' in the refectory of the Monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie, Milan. However, he had to flee to Florence when the French invaded the city in 1499. During his time in Florence, he painted several portraits, but the only one that survives is the famous 'Mona Lisa' (1503–1506).

Although he painted many famous works of art before his death in 1519, da Vinci's notebooks, which were written in a left-handed mirror script, reveal a fascination with science. There are diagrams and sketches for a bicycle, an aeroplane, a helicopter and a parachute, all created some 500 years ahead of their time.

(175 words)

### Tasks

On Track 3, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13K/B

## HOW TO WRITE



## a citation

If you write a text that refers to content published in a book, newspaper, magazine or on the internet, you should say where it came from. This is called citing the source. There are many ways to cite your sources. Here is one way to cite the source of each text type.

## BOOKS

**How to cite a book in print**

Structure: Author, Initials. (Year of publication). Title of work. City: Publisher.

Example: Rowling, J.K. (1997). Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone. London: Bloomsbury.

**How to cite a book from an e-reader**

Structure: Author, Initials. (Year of Publication). Title of work [E-Reader Version]. Retrieved from <http://xxxx>

Example: Eggers, D. (2008). The Circle [Kindle Version]. Retrieved from <http://www.amazon.com>

## NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

**How to cite a newspaper or magazine article in print**

Structure: Author, Initials. (Date of Publication – Year, Month Day). Article title. Newspaper or Magazine, pp. xx-xx.

Example: Campbell, D. (2016, March 22). Obesity is the new smoking. The Guardian, p. 25.

## WEBSITES

**How to cite an online newspaper or magazine article**

Structure: Author, Initials. (Date of Publication – Year, Month Day). Article title. Newspaper or magazine.  
Retrieved from newspaper or magazine homepage URL

Example: Easter M. (2016, March 31). 3 Things the Fittest Man on Earth Does Every Day. Men's Health.  
Retrieved from <http://www.menshealth.com>

**How to cite a blog post**

Author, Initials. (Year, Month Date of Publication). Article title. Retrieved from URL

Greenfield, R. (2016, March 17). From Clueless Consumer to Real Food Dude. Retrieved from <http://robgreenfield.tv/realfood>

**How to cite a Wikipedia article**

Structure: Article title. (Year, Month Date of Publication). Retrieved from URL

Example: Ellis Island (2016, March 16). Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>

**How to cite a video file**

Structure: Person or group who posted video. (Year, Month Date of posting). Video title. [Video file].  
Retrieved from <http://xxxxx>

Example: Big Train comedy team (2008, December 20). Do you speak English? [Video file].  
Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxUm-2x-2dM>

## HOW TO WRITE



## a comment

Writing comments is often an important part of being visible on the internet.

When writing a comment the most important thing is to be quite clear what you are commenting on (mention the original entry or summarise it).

**Language**

Fairly formal language is best suited for all comments. Remember to be polite even when being critical about something.

**Structure**

Usually you are simply asked to comment, so there is no need to give your comment a heading. Many websites automatically add a date to your comment. Comments are generally quite short, usually a paragraph (or sometimes two).

**e.g. A comment from a football fan after a game**

I'm a bigger guy and one of the most annoying things is the tiny seats in the stadiums. At most games you have to sit in these tiny, uncomfortable chairs made for elves, holding a soda in one hand and a hot dog in the other. During this process, you basically can't move, cheer or do anything until the drink and food have been completely consumed. As a result, I now avoid drinking and eating when I go to games. Good for me, but bad for the vendors!

**Tasks**

On Track 3, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2K

On Track 3, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10I/B

On Track 2, Unit 1, Topic 1, exercise 1M

On Track 2, Unit 3, Topic 9, exercise 9M

On Track 1, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5L/A



## HOW TO WRITE



## a composition (essay)

**Step 1: Read the title carefully**

- Make sure you focus on exactly what the title asks you to do. In other words, do not go off the topic.
- Before you start your composition, it helps to make notes or a mind map of the points you want to make on scrap paper.
- Stick to the word limit (e.g. maximum of 250 words). Count your words about three quarters through your essay, and also at the end.

**e.g. A family holiday. Describe a childhood memory of going on vacation with your family.**

This question asks for a holiday description (practical details such as where you went and how you travelled), but also expects you to mention your family (who was with you and what they did), your childhood (your age when it happened) and how you remember it (thoughts, impressions and feelings).

**Step 2: Write an opening paragraph**

- Here you focus your composition

**e.g.** One day when I got back from school, my father was already home. Smiling happily, he told me that he had a surprise for the entire family, but that I'd have to wait until everybody was there. Finally, when my sister and mother came home, my father took us to the back of the garage to see his surprise. It was a brand new caravan! This was the start of many enjoyable family trips with the caravan we named Elvis.

**Step 3: Write the body paragraph(s)**

- Using your notes you can now go into more detail.
- If you give examples of your own personal experience your composition will be more unique and interesting.

**e.g.** The family trips would usually start spontaneously without much planning at all. The caravan was parked in the middle of our yard, and my mother would start filling the kitchenette cupboards with tins and packets of dry food. Dad would make sure there was gas and water. My sister and I would mainly just be in our mom's way. There was always a lot of excitement in the air. We didn't really care where we were going. The most important thing was that we were going, no matter where.

**Step 4: Write the closing paragraph**

- The conclusion can be a general comment about what you wrote in the body paragraphs, or it can offer a final thought on the subject.
- Try to end on a strong note.
- Make sure you are still focused on the topic.

**e.g.** I loved those summers when we had Elvis. We saw a lot of Finland and got to know many campsites. My sister and I were the best of friends on these trips, which was not always true when we were at home. The best memories of travelling as a child come from the little things: the excitement before leaving, the new places, the small sandy beaches, the open-air meals, the simple things that we did together as a family.  
(248 words)

## Tasks

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 1, exercise 1M/B

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 4, exercise 4H/A

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 4, exercise 4H/D

On Track 5, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10J/A, B

On Track 5, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13N/C

On Track 4, Unit 2, Topic 2, exercise 5L

On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 12, exercise 12I/A, C

On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 14, exercise 14O/A

On Track 3, Unit 2, Topic 6, exercise 6L

On Track 3, Unit 3, Topic 9, exercise 9K

On Track 2, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2M

On Track 2, Unit 2, Topic 6, exercise 6L

On Track 2, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16G

On Track 1, Unit 1, Topic 1, exercise 1N

On Track 1, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5L/B

On Track 1, Unit 4, Topic 14, exercise 14G

On Track 1, Unit 4, Topic 15, exercise 15D



## HOW TO WRITE



## a conversation between two or more people (dialogue)

## Language and style

Depending on who is talking, the language can be formal or informal. In a conversation remember to use shortened forms to indicate the spoken form even if the conversation is formal. Try to write sentences that sound as if they are spoken aloud.

## Structure

There are a number of ways to write dialogue. Below is one way to do it. Remember that in a written dialogue there are often sentences that give context to the conversation. So, not all the sentences need to be said by someone and marked as speech.

**e.g.**

*It was a hot summer's day. Jamie was on his way into town when he saw Caz standing in the shade of a maple tree.*

- Hi Caz! said Davey
- Hey!
- What's up?
- Nothing.

Caz was playing with her phone. It was clear that she didn't want to meet Jamie's eyes.

- Can we talk about yesterday? he asked.
- Please go, she said. - I really don't want to talk about it.

Another way to write dialogue is in the form of a play script. A simple script usually has the following elements:

- a title
- a list of the characters and some basic information about them
- a few details about the setting
- stage directions which tell the reader what is happening and how the characters feel.

**e.g. When Sarah met Darren**

Characters

Sarah, a sixteen-year-old high school student

Darren, a classmate

A busy city street. It's raining. Darren standing under an umbrella with a huge hole in it.

Sarah: Hi Darren.

Darren: (pleased to see her) Oh, hi Sarah.

Sarah: You've got a massive hole in your umbrella.

Darren: I know. (He holds the umbrella up and inspects it.) I put it there.

Sarah: (surprised) Why on earth would you do that?

Darren: So I can see when it stops raining.

## Tasks

On Track 4, Unit 2, Topic 7, exercise 7E/B

On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13M

On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16K/B

On Track 3, Unit 2, Topic 6, exercise 6L/C

On Track 1, Unit 2, Topic 6, exercise 6L/B

On Track 1, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13N/B

## HOW TO WRITE



## a description

## Language and style

Use formal language when writing a description of an event, a place or person.

## Structure

Divide your composition into 3–4 paragraphs.

The following questions might help you develop your description

## Introductory paragraph

- Who is the person? / What is the place/event?
- How do you know about him/her/it?
- Why did you choose him/her/it?

## Body paragraphs (1–2 paragraphs)

- What does the place/person look like?
- What kind of a character is she/he?
- What kind of atmosphere does the place/event have?
- Use your senses: What are the sights, sounds, smells, tastes or touch sensations connected with the event or place?

## Closing paragraph

- How would you sum up your thoughts or feelings about the event/place/person?

## e.g. A description of an orienteering event

Earlier this year I participated in my first-ever orienteering competition – not because I love orienteering – but because my friend needed a running partner. The event took place in Iloranta on the shores of Lake Iso-Roine. There were over two hundred orienteers taking part, and the atmosphere was very friendly – lots of jokes about the bears in the woods!

The area was very beautiful: a shimmering lake, lots of hills, bluebells under the trees, and the smell of the pine forest. However, once we started running, I discovered another side to the forest: swampy ground, scratchy tree branches, and sticks all over the ground ready to trip you up. Thank goodness it was early summer so there were no mosquitoes.

We had a map marked with the control sites we had to visit. Unfortunately, we got a little lost and ended up finding the flags in the wrong order. Luckily, we found our way to the finishing point. It would have been really embarrassing if the organisers had had to send out a search party.

I don't think I'll be entering another orienteering competition any time soon. It took three days for the blisters on my feet to go down, and my legs were covered in cuts from tree branches. On the other hand, it was a totally new way to see the forest. Normally, when I walk my dog, I stick to the forest path so I never see how wild and scary the woods can be.

## Tasks

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2M/A

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 4, exercise 4H/B

On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10L/B

On Track 3, Unit 4, Topic 14, exercise 14J/A, B

On Track 2, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5I/B

On Track 2, Unit 2, Topic 8, exercise 8F

On Track 2, Unit 4, Topic 14, exercise 14J/A

On Track 1, Unit 3, Topic 9, exercise 9J/B

On Track 1, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13/c

## HOW TO WRITE



## a graph: a short text explaining a graph

Here are five tips on how to explain a table or graph using the following graph as an example.

## Carbon dioxide concentrations in Antarctica over 400,000 years

- Tip 1** Use the correct term. Is it a line graph, a bar graph/chart or a pie chart?  
e.g. The line graph shows/illustrates/presents...
- Tip 2** Explain what the graph aims to show. The title usually tells you this.  
e.g. The line graph shows carbon dioxide concentrations in Antarctica over 400,000 years.
- Tip 3** Summarise the information  
e.g. Carbon dioxide concentrations are higher today than at any time in the past 400,000 years.
- Tip 4** Mention the overall trend, but highlight the differences too.  
e.g. In the past there have been regular rises and falls in the level of carbon dioxide every 100,000 years. The 100,000 dips show the ice-age cycle that affects the global climate. The last two centuries, however, have seen a dramatic rise in carbon dioxide concentrations.
- Tip 5** Offer some explanation for the results shown in the graph. This might be your own interpretation or the interpretation put forward by the researchers who produced the graph.  
e.g. The period from 1850 onwards shows the effect of the industrial revolution. Burning coal, and later oil, raised the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

## Key verbs

- 400,000 years ago the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere stood at 290 parts per million (ppm).
- Over the next 50,000 years this fell/dropped/went down/decreased/dipped to just 100 ppm.
- The level of carbon dioxide reached its lowest point 150,000 years ago.
- 325,000 years ago the level of carbon dioxide peaked at/reached a peak of 300 ppm.
- After 1850 carbon dioxide levels rose/went up/increased dramatically.
- There is no sign of carbon dioxide concentrations levelling out/off.

## Tasks

On Track 5, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5O

## HOW TO WRITE



## instructions

Writing clear instructions and rules is a valuable skill in life.

Before you can write instructions or rules for anything, you need to know exactly how to do the task and what the end result should look like or what is achieved.

Instructions can take the form of a recipe, how to assemble a piece of furniture, directions to a place etc.

Rules can be about a game or about how to behave in a certain area (campsite, sports field, gym etc).

**Language**

Start sentences with verbs. Use short clear main clauses. Warn and instruct the reader when needed.

**Structure**

Depending on the topic, you could use bullet points or use numbers to show the order which should be followed. You must tell what is done first, second, third.

**e.g. Describe how to make a cup of English tea.**

First, you put some cold water in the kettle. Then you turn on the kettle and wait for the water to boil. While you wait for the water to boil, you spoon the tea into the teapot – one teaspoon of tealeaves for each person, and one extra. When the water has boiled, you carefully pour the hot water into the teapot. You have to wait for about five minutes for the tea to be ready. After five minutes, you pour the tea into each separate cup or mug. You have to use a tea strainer, otherwise you may get tealeaves in your mouth.

**Tasks**

On Track 2, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2M/C

On Track 2, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5I/A

## HOW TO WRITE



## an interview

**Focus**

An interview should focus on a key aspect of the person being interviewed e.g. an achievement, something that happened to them, something they were involved in.

**Structure****Opening**

An interview should be preceded by a short text explaining who the person is, and why they are being interviewed.

**Middle**

Then the interview follows with the names of the speakers listed on the left.

**e.g.**

Interviewer: So tell me about your first novel? I heard it started life as fan fiction?

Cassandra Clare: That's right, I was always an admirer of Harry Potter...

**End**

Interviews often end by looking to the future.

**e.g.**

Interviewer: So what's next? Are you working on anything at the moment?

Cassandra Clare: Well, I've been thinking about...

**For model see:**

On Track 3, Unit 2, Topic 6, Laughter: a serious business

You may not know much about him, but the South African stand-up comedian Trevor Noah landed one of the biggest jobs on US TV. The boy from Soweto has been appointed as the host of *The Daily Show*. But who is he and why does it matter? Simon Brown from *Baltimore Today* interviewed Trevor's friend, the journalist Karen Landman, to find out more about the man behind the comedian.

**Simon:** I heard that he had a rather unusual childhood?

**Simon:** What about his break into the stand-up circuit? I heard that it happened quite by accident.

**Karen:** Apparently – and this is hearsay, but it makes such a good story that I think people are starting to take it as gospel – he was at a gig one night and not laughing at any of the jokes. The host, getting a bit irritated, said to him, “Do you think you can do any better?” And he got up on stage, totally unprepared, and just spoke about his day. The audience loved him. He got a standing ovation, and he's never looked back. He took to stand-up like a fish to water.

**Karen:** Well yes, stand-up comedy is very often politically incorrect, and Trevor Noah has certainly raised some hackles with some of the things he has said. But you raised an interesting point there: many stand-up comics now use the internet to reach a wider audience, don't they? Post some skit online, then remove it after a while... also, downloads, social media, that sort of thing.

**Simon:** Right. But somehow I feel that laughing by yourself, in front of a screen, is not quite the same as laughing with others, in a theatre or a club – you know, with a stand-up comic standing in the spotlight on stage. When it comes to stand-up comedy, I think old-fashioned live performance is always better, don't you?

## HOW TO WRITE



## a journal and a blog

Both a journal and a blog have entries. Sometimes you may be asked to write an entry about a topic for either a journal or a blog.

**Language and style**

Language in a blog and a journal can be formal, but if you are writing a personal blog which is meant to be shared between you and your friends, it can also be informal. A journal may be very personal, but today more and more journals appear online and are often open to anyone.

**Structure**

If you are given a title, use it. If not, invent a heading for your blog. The simplest heading for a journal is the date.

If you are asked to write between 150–250 words, divide your blog entry or journal entry into paragraphs (3–4 paragraphs). In a blog and a journal the paragraphs may have separate subheadings.

You may also include a comment box in your blog for the readers' comments.

**Tasks**

On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 9, exercise 9P/A

On Track 3, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2K

On Track 1, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2K

On Track 1, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5L



## HOW TO WRITE



## a letter and an email

## Language

It is best to use formal language in a letter to a person you do not know well. If you write to a close friend or family member, you can use informal language with shortened forms, e.g. it's (it is), they're (they are), would've (would have).

## Structure

Both a letter and an email can have the same basic structure shown below. The same phrases can also be used. However, in an email you do not need to worry about writing your address or the date.

## Your own address

## The date

## Greeting

Dear...

## Opening paragraph

Thank you... It was good to hear from you... Sorry that it has taken me so long to write to you...

## 1-3 paragraphs

## Closing phrases

Well, time to go to bed now... I hope to hear from you soon again... Looking forward to seeing you in...

## Closures

Love, All the best, Best wishes, Best regards

## Your signature

e.g. Dear Kathy,

Thanks for showing me around London. I know it was only three weeks ago, but it seems like I've been back in Finland for ages. I really enjoyed seeing all those places you took me to, especially the outdoor markets. A lot of people have complimented me on the jacket I bought in Camden.

Back in Finland, I've been busy with schoolwork. I've also volunteered to help out at the international gaming convention in Helsinki. There will be people coming from all over the world so I'll need my English skills. Luckily, I got plenty of practice in London!

How's your new flat mate? Did you get someone who's tidy? The nursing student you shared with last year sounded like a complete nightmare!

Anyway, hope you're well and enjoying the sunshine. According to my computer it's 18 °C over there right now. Give Jason my best wishes, by the way. It was really nice of him to get up at 4 am and drive me to the airport! If I ever pass my driving test, I'll do the same for you and him one day.

Take care!

Niko

## Tasks

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 4, exercise 4H/C  
On Track 5, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16E/C  
On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10L

On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 12, exercise 12I/D  
On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16K/C, D  
On Track 1, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13N/A

## HOW TO WRITE



## a letter to the editor

Usually you write a letter to the editor as a response to something that has been published in the paper previously, or to take part in a discussion that you feel passionate about.

- 1 Take into account the kind of audience the newspaper is aimed at.
- 2 Be clear about the reason for writing the letter. It can be a response to a specific article, but it can also be a response to an event or issue in your community.

**Language**

Since you are not writing to a friend, it is best to write your letter in a formal style.

**Structure**

**Start with:** To the editor (or whatever salutation the newspaper uses)

**Refer to** issue or article you are talking about.

**e.g.** Having read Mr Males' article "Why raising the smoking age to 21 is a bad idea" (May 9), I wish to add a teenage perspective to the issue.

**Summarise** the argument you're responding to and state your position.

**e.g.** He argues that there is no research to suggest that changing the law will cut smoking among young people. This is simply not true.

**Make your point** (and it is usually just one point) and offer some evidence.

**e.g.** statistics, a recent event, a personal experience.

**End with a sentence** that makes your point clearly and forcefully.

**e.g.** Mr Males' article is not only inaccurate, it is irresponsible.

**Sign off** with your name and the name of your town. If it is a small town, add the name of the county.

If you live abroad, simply sign off with your name and the name of your country.



## Style

You may show emotions in your letter: anger, disappointment, joy etc. Often these are the kinds of letter to the editor that get published.

Check other letters to the editor and follow the way they open and close.

Your letter should be to the point and not too long (max 250 words). Remember to divide your letter into paragraphs.

Example:

To the Editor:

I was amazed to read Mr Males' article "Why raising the smoking age to 21 is a bad idea" (May 9). He shamelessly states that there is no research to suggest that changing the law will cut smoking among young people. Hard to believe he hails from Massachusetts where a 2015 study found a larger reduction in smoking among teens in Needham, Massachusetts—which raised the minimum purchase age in 2005. And that's despite the surrounding communities allowing cigarette purchases for those under 21. If it goes into effect for the whole state, it will have a larger effect.

Smokers don't just affect themselves. They affect other teens who see them and want to fit in. They affect others who inhale their smoke (e.g. increased ear infections in exposed children). And they affect their families when they themselves develop side effects from smoking: higher rates of impotence, emphysema, poor wound healing, bad breath, stomach ulcers, higher rates of suicide, and higher medication costs.

Does Mr Males have tobacco company funding, by any chance?

DR. A. SCOTT  
Wellesley  
Massachusetts

## Tasks

On Track 4, Unit 1, Topic 4, exercise 4G

## HOW TO WRITE



## linking words

How do we use linking words? Read this before writing a paragraph.

Linking words and conjunctions make a text more unified and cohesive. Think of linking words as the glue that holds the sentences and paragraphs together.

**Conjunctions** link main and subclauses.

They won't be allowed to leave the class **unless** they get a written permit.

They boys were dancing **while** the girls just watched.

**Not only** is sports good for your physique, **but** it is **also** good for your mental health.

**Linking words** link clauses.

The Indian people I know prefer tea to coffee. **However**, when in travelling in Europe, they also drink coffee.

A dip in a cool lake is very refreshing after a sauna. **Similarly**, a roll in the snow can be an invigorating experience.

Airports around the world have beefed up their security. **Therefore**, there are often delays during peak season.

## CONJUNCTIONS

- **after** sen jälkeen; sitten
- **as / as long as** kuten; koska; niin kauan kuin
- **as soon as** kun; heti kun
- **because** koska
- **before** ennen kuin
- **but** koska
- **for** sillä
- **not only ... but also** ei ainoastaan ... vaan myös
- **since** sen jälkeen kun; siitä lähtien kun; koska
- **so** jotta; joten; eli
- **so that** jotta; että
- **unless** jollei; ellei
- **when** koska
- **while** sillä aikaa kun; samaan aikaan kun; vaikka

e.g.

Let me explain what has happened here **before** you get the wrong idea Nina!

Oh Carlos, I knew that you would cheat on me **as soon as** I left Brighton.

Nina, **not only** are you the most beautiful girl in the world, **but** you are **also** the smartest.

That is why I am breaking up with you, Carlos, **because** I am smart.

## LINKING WORDS

- **gradually** vähitellen, hiljalleen, asteittain
- **however** kuitenkin; silti; kuitenkin
- **instead** sen sijaan; sijasta
- **meanwhile** sillä aikaa; samaan aikaan; sillä välin
- **nevertheless** kuitenkin, kumminkin; sentään
- **on the one hand – on the other hand** toisaalta – toisaalta
- **on the contrary /contrary to** kun taas; päinvastoin
- **similarly** samalla tavoin, samoin; yhtä lailla
- **subsequently** myöhemmin; jälkeen pain; sitten
- **therefore** siksi; sen takia; joten
- **yet** silti; huolimatta; kuitenkin

e.g.

I liked reading and I **therefore** preferred to spend my free time indoors. **However**, I couldn't be indoors all the time, so I went jogging every now and then. **Gradually**, and quite by accident, I found that I could run further and further. Now I'm running marathons **instead** of reading books.

## HOW TO WRITE



## a mini-research paper

**What is it?**

A mini-research paper is a short summary of a topic you have researched.

**What do I do?**

A mini research project involves

- choosing a topic.
- checking relevant sources of information.
- making notes on what is important to the topic. (Use you own words; don't copy and paste.)
- compiling the notes into a short report.

**What does it look like?**

A mini-research paper often follows this structure:

TITLE	State the focus of your paper as clearly as possible.
INTRODUCTION	Explain why the topic is important. Explain key terms and issues.
SOURCE REVIEW	Summarise the different points your sources make about the topic. State what you have learnt from the sources you used.
DISCUSSION	Give your personal opinion on the topic and explain the reasons behind it. Mention any questions about the topic that were unanswered by your research.
LIST OF SOURCES	Cite the print and online sources you have used. (This avoids accusations of plagiarism.) See <i>How to write a citation</i> p. 5.

Example:

### **Are GM crops harmful to humans?**

Genetically modified (GM) crops are plants whose genes have been artificially altered to modify their characteristics. Since their use is spreading in agriculture, it is important to know how safe they are for human consumption.

Opinions are divided on this issue. The researchers who develop these products and the companies who sell them point out a range of benefits. These include better yields, better resistance to disease, and an ability to grow in soils where other crops can't grow. They also argue that GM crops can improve human health by containing, for example, healthier oils or higher levels of antioxidants.

On the other hand, groups campaigning against GM foods worry that the genes in bioengineered foods may harm human health. They are also concerned about the damage to the environment caused by the herbicides sprayed on GM crops. In addition, they worry about the risks posed by GMO crops pollinating natural plant varieties in the wild.

Despite the passion the subject arouses, neither side of this debate can be sure whether GM crops are harmful or not. GMOs have only been part of our food supply for a few decades, so we have no long-term data about the effects of these crops on human health. The simple answer to the question is that nobody knows yet.

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## **Tasks**

On Track 5, Unit 2, Topic 8, exercise 8J

## HOW TO WRITE



## a news item

**When is an event newsworthy?**

In general, something is considered newsworthy if it includes one, or several, of the following aspects:

- Magnitude (One person getting food poisoning after eating a bad cucumber is not news. 1 Million people getting food poisoning after eating bad cucumbers? That is news.)
- Famous people (If your parents adopt an orphan from Malawi, it is not news. When Madonna adopts an orphan from Malawi, it is.)
- How close is it to home? (is a Finn involved?)
- Weirdness (Dog bites man is not news. Man bites dog is.)

**Content:** Any good news story tries to give answers to each of the following questions:

- Who? Who are the people involved.
- What? What happened?
- Where? Where did the events take place?
- When? Date and time of the event.
- Why? The reason for the event. What led to it?
- How? Details about the way in which the event happened.

**Structure:** Most news stories take the form of “the inverted pyramid”:

- The first paragraph gives the reader a good overview of the entire story
- The rest of the article explains and expands on the beginning.

**Keeping readers interested:** To hold readers’ interest most newspaper articles

- have a gripping headline.
- focus on people. How are they affected? How do they feel?
- have an angle. What’s your approach to the story? This helps give the story focus.
- quote people. This makes your article sound more authentic and varied.
- keep sentences and paragraphs short. Avoid heavily descriptive language.

**e.g.** Robot vacuum cleaner ‘attacks’ woman

A 52-year-old Korean woman left the robot to clean the floors while she took a nap, but soon came to regret the decision.

Ms Lee Su-jin, a housewife from the South Korean city of Changwon left the device to clean the floors and decided to take an afternoon nap on the floor. But the rogue machine, which either thought her hair was dirt or was striking back at its human overlord, scooted over and sucked up the strands. Her hair got caught up in the machine and the pain of having her scalp tugged woke her up. She realised she was trapped and was forced to call emergency services to get free of the rebellious robot.

South Korean newspaper Kyunghyang Shinmun reports paramedics were able to free her without injury, but it is not known if she intends to keep the mechanised marauder.

Robotic vacuum cleaners have soared in popularity in recent years and it is estimated that there are now more than 30 million units worldwide.

**Tasks**

On Track 5, Unit 4, Topic 14, exercise 14N

On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10L/C

On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 14K

On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 14O/B

## HOW TO WRITE



### a poem

Writing a poem means taking a close look at the world around you. Or the world inside your head. A poem can be about anything – love, a computer game, a wasps' nest outside your window. A good poem will pack the description about the experience into a few well-chosen words.

Here are some tips to help you write one.

#### 1 Find the spark

Choose a subject that is personal to you in some way.

**e.g.** something you were scared of as a child, a person you know well, a memory that won't go away, a situation that made you see things in a new way

#### 2 Make notes

List the all details you can about the subject. Don't think too critically. Include

- observations of tiny details.
- sensory references: sights, sounds, touch, smell, taste.
- your feelings.

Don't worry about sentences; single words and phrases are fine.

Can you compare what you are writing about to other things?

**e.g.** The school walls were as grey as a winter sea.  
**e.g.** Grandpa groaned like an old door.

#### 3 Structure your notes

Now try putting things to put things in a logical order.

- Have a strong opening line to hook the reader.
- Have a strong last line that leaves the reader thinking.
- Leave out all unnecessary words.
- Remember that a poem does not have to rhyme.

#### 4 Rewrite

When you have got a first draft, write it again.

- Keep the parts that are fresh and interesting.
- Throw out anything that seems over-familiar or clichéd or fake.

#### 5 Revisit

- Put away your poem for a day or two.
- Reread it and try to make it better.
- You could a friend to read it and get their opinion.

## Practical exercises for poetry writing

One way of writing poems is to follow a pattern. Here are three examples.

### 1 Use opposites to introduce a topic.

What I like  
I like X  
I like Y  
I like Z.  
But I don't like A.

**e.g.**

Snowboarding  
I like the feel of the board under my feet  
I like the rush of cold air  
I like the tight turns and the jumps  
But I don't like hospitals.

What a \_\_\_\_ is  
A \_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_  
A \_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_  
A \_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_  
It isn't \_\_\_\_.

**e.g.**

Weekend  
A weekend is sleeping late  
A weekend is time with your mates  
A weekend is watching television  
It isn't two days of exam revision.

### 2 Activating your senses: hearing, smell, taste, touch, vision.

Think about a phenomenon or an object and describe how it sounds, smells, tastes, feels and looks.

**e.g.**

**Procrastination**

Sounds like a must-see video clip  
Smells like another cup of coffee  
Tastes like ice cream from the fridge  
Feels like the screen of cell phone  
Looks like the shortest essay anyone has ever written.

### 3 A poem of five lines (cinquain pattern).

If you write a poem with this pattern, you can make it look like a diamond.

Line 1: the title of the poem (one word)  
Line 2: two words describing the subject  
Line 3: three words expressing an action by the subject (-ing-forms)  
Line 4: four words telling about a feeling you as the writer have about the subject  
Line 5: a synonym for the title to sum up the poem.

**e.g.**

**Cabin**

Up north  
Carries family memories  
A place of peace  
Home

## Tasks

On Track 5, Unit 4, Topic 16, exercise 16E/A, B

On Track 3, Unit 1, Topic 3.1, exercise 3.1B

On Track 3, Unit 1, Topic 3.2, exercise 3.2B

## HOW TO WRITE



## a profile

A profile is a magazine or newspaper article that explores the background and character of a particular person (or group). The focus is usually on one aspect of the subject's personal or professional life, and begins with explaining why they are currently in the news.

**Tips for writing a profile**

- Mention relevant background e.g. the subject's interests, career, education, family.
- Mention surroundings as well as the subject's habits and mannerisms.
- Encourage your subject to express their thoughts, feelings or opinions.
- Interview other people about this person so you get a variety of perspectives.

**e.g.** The cyclist who is fighting for justice on our roads

Lewis Dediare is a man with a mission – to make London's roads safe for cyclists. Now he is back in the spotlight after a taxi driver appeared in court accused of knocking him off his bicycle.

I've never met a superhero on a bike, but self-styled 'Traffic Droid' a.k.a. Lewis Dediare comes close. Dressed from head to foot in black lycra, with five video cameras mounted on his cycling helmet, Lewis rides around the streets of London with one aim – to rid the streets of 'idiot' drivers who are a threat to cyclists.

As we ride together through the rush-hour traffic, Dediare, a 49-year-old telecoms supervisor, attracts attention. He rides steadily, at a slower pace than most other cyclists, and often sits in the middle of the lane. His arms signal so often that he seems to be doing a prolonged robot dance. And the cars around him slow down as though they've seen the police.

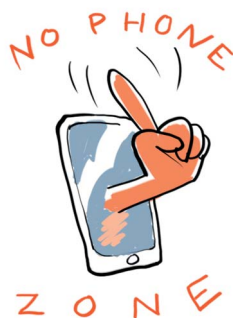
If he sees anyone breaking a traffic rule he will confront them immediately.

"Infringement!" yells Dediare when he spots two cyclists jumping a red light. "Put that mobile down," he shouts at a lorry driver that has stopped in traffic.

People's reactions vary. Some apologise, some ignore him. Others shout back. After one argument with a driver, the passenger turns to me and yells, "Knock him over, would you?"

**Tasks**

On Track 4, Unit 2, Topic 8, exercise 8F





## HOW TO WRITE



## a quote

**When you want to quote a speaker...**

Make your point e.g. Oscar Wilde enjoyed being a celebrity.

Then give the quote e.g. He said, "The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about."

**e.g.**

Selfies can make you feel good about yourself. Emma Kirby, a 22-year-old Instagram user from Durham, says, "It's always nice to document a good hair day, or an outfit you love."

Singer Bob Dylan does not feel he has to please his fans. He once famously told them, "Just because you like my stuff doesn't mean I owe you anything."

**When you want to quote from a text...**

Take the part of the quote you think is important

Then blend it into the sentence.

e.g. The writer explains that *The picture of Dorian Gray* "upset many people when it was first published".

**e.g.**

The writer describes Oscar Wilde as "wild" and "controversial".

According to the article we should "take more selfies".

NightNotes argues that church music in the middle ages was slow "because it had to work within the four-second echo of the stone-walled cathedrals".



## HOW TO WRITE



### a review (general)

Reviews can be written about a variety of topics: accommodation, a product or a service, for example. Reviews are based on your personal experiences. So, do not use general opinions or vague statements. Your readers want to know about your experience – and based on that even decide whether to try out the product or service or not.

#### Language

Language in a review is usually quite formal, especially if it is written on a public site, and meant to be taken seriously. However, if you are writing a review to a restricted audience, it can also be informal and humorous. The best reviews are often personal.

More and more reviews are written online on various sites.

#### Structure

##### Opening

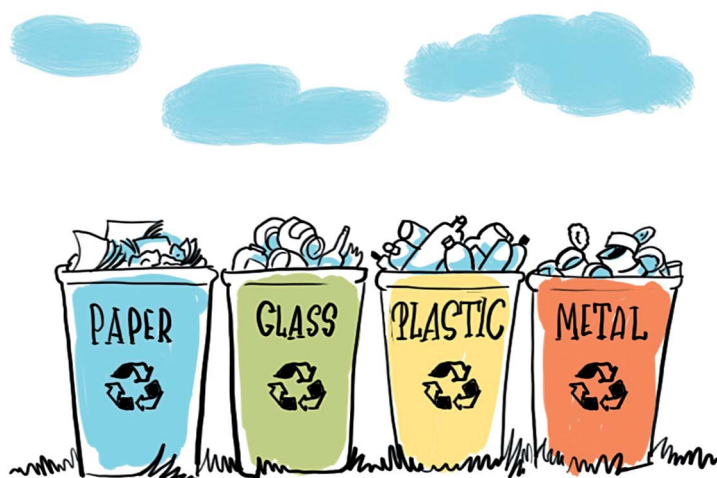
First give a brief description of the product or service. The description will give a rough idea of what you are writing about.

##### Body

Think of some specific details and evidence you can give to support your opinion in the review. For example, if you are reviewing a hotel site, mention the location, rooms, quality of service, etc. Remember to be polite, fair and truthful, but also try to be creative and interesting.

##### Closing

In one or two final sentences a review usually either recommends a place, or advise people against it.



## HOW TO WRITE



### a review of a film

#### The title of the film

#### The film

- What type of film is it (e.g. romantic, realistic, political, action, comedy etc.)?
- What genre does it represent? Can it be classified?

#### The director

- Who directs the film?
- When was it released?

#### The setting

- Where does the film take place?
- Does the location change often? Why? Was it shot on location or in the studio? – Does this affect the film in any way?

#### The plot and the characters

- What is the main storyline of the film? How well does it hold your interest?
- Who plays the main characters? How well do they play their roles?

#### The photography

- How realistically is the film shot? Or does it look unreal? Why?
- How successful is the photography in creating atmosphere and conveying the theme of the film?  
How is colour used?

#### The special effects and the stunts

- Describe the special effects and the stunts: how important are they to the film?
- What would the film have been like without them?

#### The soundtrack

- How is sound used to back up the story? What role does music play in the film?

#### The theme or the message

- Analyse the message or the main theme of the film.

#### Your opinion

- How does the film make you feel?
- What is good about the film? What could have been better?
- Is it worth seeing? Who would you recommend it to?

Example:

### **The Martian – A review**

Directed by Ridley Scott and released in 2015, it is difficult to say what kind of genre the film *The Martian* represents. It is not a typical sci-fi film, so I would probably classify it as a survival space drama.

The plot is straightforward. Matt Damon plays the botanist Mark Watney on an expedition to Mars. He is left alone on the planet after his crew are forced to flee the planet. Most of the film, and the most enjoyable part for me, concentrates on how he overcomes one difficulty after another before he is eventually rescued.

What I found interesting about the film is what was left out: there are no aliens, there is no love interest, and there are no villains at all. The hostile planet itself is the antagonist Watney has to fight in order to survive. The only other characters in the film are his crew and the scientists on earth who have to come up with a plan to save him. Matt Damon dominates the film in every way. Most of the actor's lines are monologues, and it is a testimony to his acting skills that this never becomes boring.

*The Martian* was shot on location in Jordan, but it is so realistically done that it is easy to believe you really are looking at Mars. There are many technical elements in the film, but they are clearly explained, and it was easy to follow what was going on. I highly recommend this film.

(249 words)

## HOW TO WRITE



### a review of a novel

#### The writer and the title

##### The setting

- Where and when does the story take place?
- Is there a special importance in the choice of setting?

##### The characters

- Who are the main characters?
- What are the relations between them like?
- What are your feelings about them?
- Can you identify with any of them?

##### The plot

- Outline the plot briefly.
- Pay special attention to the highlights and turning points.
- Stick to the same tense when outlining the plot.

##### The message

- Is there a message in the book?
- If there is, is it convincingly presented?
- If not, what is the purpose of the book?

##### The language

- Did you find the language easy or difficult?
- Was it enjoyable?
- Can you say anything about the style?

##### Your opinion

- How did you like the book?
- Was it worth reading?
- Who would you recommend it to?

**Final point:** Make sure everything is described using the present simple tense.

Example:

### **A review of *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro**

This dystopian science fiction novel was published in 2005. The story takes place in England during the late 1990s, although there are flashbacks to the past. The narrator, 31-year-old Kathy, looks back at her school days, and describes how she and her friends then grew up in cottages in the countryside. Kathy's closest friends are Tommy and Ruth, a couple who are the same age as her. Ruth, a confident, outgoing person, and Tommy, a boy who was bullied by other pupils, both studied with Kathy at Hailsham boarding school.

The characters feel realistic because Ishiguro gives us many details about their lives. And when I realised the terrible situation they were in, I felt strong sympathy for them. It is easy to identify with Kathy as she keeps going back over difficult memories.

The plot is structured around Kathy's memories. She remembers meeting her best friend Ruth, and describes the things they worried about and enjoyed as children. Hailsham is an isolated community and this is why the children have strong relationships. There is also a mystery about why the children are there and this keeps the reader interested in the story.

The language is easy to follow, but the story moves slowly so some readers might lose patience. I think the slow pace is important because I got to know the characters well. This means that when the reason they are being raised at Hailsham is revealed, it is truly shocking. This is a book about why science has to be linked to ethics. The moment we stop treating people as human beings, terrible things can happen.

In my opinion *Never Let Me Go* is an excellent novel. The story is touching and cleverly constructed so we are curious to find out more about the life of Kathy and her friends. I would recommend it to readers who are looking for a book that is gripping and refreshingly different to anything they have read before.

## HOW TO WRITE



### a review of a musical performance or an album

#### **Introduction to the artist(s) and the concert / the album**

artist: singer, musician, band, group, orchestra, soloist, conductor, guitarist, bass player  
genre: instrumental, vocal, orchestral, chamber, classical, folk, choral, recital, pop, rock, soul, reggae, R&B, hip hop, emo, rap, funk, jazz  
venue: concert hall, sports arena, music festival, club, recording studio

#### **The concert / The album**

symphony, concerto, opera, set, cover version, lyrics, chorus, composition, accompaniment  
track, compilation, charts, album cover  
applause, standing ovation, extra piece

#### **Comments**

chord, key, bar, major, minor, rhythm, beat, tempo, pitch, volume, tune, melody, note, harmony, duration, arrangement, special effects  
technique  
audience

#### **Personal comments**

the feelings it aroused in you  
comparisons with past performances and other bands/singers/albums  
predictions for the future  
who would you recommend this to?

## HOW TO WRITE



## a review of an exhibition

**Introduction to the artist(s)**

artist: painter, sculptor, photographer, graphic artist, ceramist  
 genre: drawing, painting, sculpture, mural, fresco, print  
 venue: art gallery, art museum, museum of modern art

**Exhibits**

still life, portrait, landscape, statue, bust, relief, print  
 abstract, representational, surreal, caricature  
 canvas, oil, water colour, tempera, pastel, brush, charcoal, pencil

**Comments**

recurring themes  
 impressions as a whole  
 appeal it might have for others  
 names of works  
 Layout and organisation of the exhibition

**Personal response**

focus on the most interesting works, advice and suggestions for visitors  
 development of the artist, the future, comparisons with other artists  
 final impression this artist makes on you

**Tasks**

On Track 5, Unit 1, Topic 1, exercise 1M  
 On Track 3, Unit 2, Topic 5, exercise 5K/A  
 On Track 3, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13K/A  
 On Track 2, Unit 3, Topic 9, exercise 9M/A



## HOW TO WRITE



## a speech or a presentation

Three things to remember when writing a speech:

- 1 be clear what the speech/presentation is about.
- 2 give the audience two or three things to think about afterwards.
- 3 keep sentences short. Short sentences are easier to say.

## Language

You don't have to use complicated words even if you knew some. You may use words and expressions that you would normally use when talking. Remember, though, to take into account who your audience is. If you are talking to young people it is alright to use colloquial expressions and even slang (to spice your speech up), but if you're talking in a more official situation or to an audience you don't know, it is best to use more formal, standard language and expressions.

## Structure

## Opening

Signal the start of your speech/presentation with a clear opening.

e.g. *Ladies and gentlemen./ Good morning everybody. / Hello.*

Tell your audience why you are there and what you are going to be talking about.

## Body

Make two to three points.

If you can, make references to real incidents or personal experiences.

Remember, in a speech, it is OK to repeat things!

## Closing

Signal that your speech is over.

e.g. *Thank you for coming... / Thank you for your attention...*

*So, welcome to our school.*

*And finally, I'd like thank you all for making this evening such a success. Thank you.*

*And now, over to Jackie.*

*Can we give Jackie a round of applause.*

## e.g. Introducing a visiting speaker

Hello. Today, we have a special visitor from London. He works at Queen Mary University and has an unusual job title. He is a stand-up mathematician. This means that in his work he is able to combine his two great passions in life: mathematics and comedy. If you are wondering how that is possible, you are going to find out.

Our speaker's name is Matt Parker, and he has done shows in many countries. We are very lucky to get him to our school, because he's only in Finland for two days. The presentation he will give today is called Number Ninja.

Matt Parker, welcome to our school.

## Tasks

On Track 5, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10J/C  
 On Track 5, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13N/A  
 On Track 4, Unit 1, Topic 2, exercise 2O  
 On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 3, exercise 9P/A

On Track 4, Unit 3, Topic 12, exercise 12I/B  
 On Track 4, Unit 4, Topic 14O/C  
 On Track 2, Unit 4, Topic 13, exercise 13K

## HOW TO WRITE



## a summary

A summary is a shorter version of a larger text (or a speech, TV show etc). To write a summary, use your own words to briefly express the main idea and relevant details of the piece you have read, listened to or seen. The aim in writing a summary is to give a basic idea of the source material.

It is easier to write a summary if you take notes. When taking notes, these questions may help you: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

Then use your notes to write the summary.

**e.g.**

**A summary of a newspaper article**

The article is about a new technique police in the UK are using to catch bicycle thieves: bait bikes. A bait bike is a bicycle fitted with a hidden GPS device. Then it is left unlocked on the street by the police. If a thief steals the bike, the police can track it and arrest the criminal.

The advantage of using bait bikes is that they dramatically cut cycle theft. When the idea was used in London 30% fewer bicycles were stolen.

The problem with bait bikes is that they encourage people to steal. If an impulsive young person sees an unlocked bike, they might try to ride it. This is the reason bait bikes are not being used all over the UK.

### Tasks

On Track 2, Unit 1, Topic 1, exercise 1N

On Track 2, Unit 3, Topic 10, exercise 10D

On Track 2, Unit 3, Topic 12, exercise 12H

On Track 1, Topic 1, exercise 1C

On Track 1, Topic 2, exercise 2L

On Track 1, Topic 4, exercise 4G



## HOW TO WRITE



## a summary of an article

When you summarise a text you make it shorter by just giving the main points.

Here is one way to do it:

- Read the text quickly and decide what it is about. What is the overall idea? Why was this article written?
- Reread the text more carefully and underline the main points. These are often in the first sentence of each paragraph.
- Now list the main points in a logical order using (mostly) your own words. You can normally leave out examples that illustrate points.
- Cut most adjectives and adverbs.
- Make sure the title or the first sentence clearly says what the summary is about. Often the idea is to make the summary a quarter of the length of the original.
- When you have finished, count the number of words. If it is still too long try using shortened clauses.  
e.g. Researcher who are working in this field have funding problems. (10 words) → Researchers working in this field have funding problems. (8 words)

Example:

**A summary of “Processed food bad, natural food good? We’ve got it so wrong”  
from New Scientist magazine**

The article argues that not all processed food is bad for the consumer. In fact, the word processed is difficult to define. It can refer to food that is heated, frozen or dried. This means flour, milk, rice and many other things we cook with can be described as processed. The important point is what the food contains, not whether or not it is processed. Food that is good for us has a high nutritional value, and a lot of processed foods contain healthy ingredients. Unhealthy eating is not caused by processed food, it is caused by poor food choices.

Original article

Warner, W. (2016, April 28). Processed food bad, natural food good? We’ve got it so wrong. New Scientist. Retrieved from <https://www.newscientist.com>

## HOW TO WRITE



## a survey

A survey is a way of gathering information on what people think about a specific subject. Here are some hints on how to design an effective survey.

- 1 Have a clear goal.** What exactly do you want to find out? Prepare short, clear questions that will give you that information.
- 2 Choose a method for collecting information.** What will work best for your survey? Face-to-face interviews? A questionnaire? Online inquiries?
- 3 Choose the type of question.** What is the best way to ask for a response?
  - If you're collecting new ideas, unstructured questions can be useful.  
e.g. How would you improve the quality of science education in our school?
  - If you are gathering data about things you already know, structured questions can be useful.  
e.g. Which science subject do you like most?
    - a) biology
    - b) chemistry
    - c) physics
    - d) no answer
  - e.g. Are you lactose intolerant?      yes/no
  - If you are using structured questions but want to leave room for free responses, you can add spaces for respondents to fill in.  
e.g. Where does your knowledge of science come from? (Tick as many boxes as you like.)
    - ☐ school
    - ☐ science websites
    - ☐ documentaries
    - ☐ news articles or books
    - ☐ parents
    - ☐ friends
    - ☐ other \_\_\_\_\_

## AFTER THE SURVEY

**Decide how to present your results**

- visually: Chart? Graph? Table? List?
- in writing: State what you wanted to find out.
- Describe the people questioned and the method used.
- Point out trends or specific findings that are worth highlighting.
- Mention similarities and differences in the answers given by respondents.
- Offer an explanation for your results.
- State whether there is anything we can learn from the data.

## HOW TO WRITE



## a thank you note

In many cultures it is considered good manners to send a message thanking someone for a gift or for hosting them. This can take the form of a card, an email or even a text.

Here are some useful phrases:

**Starting**

Hi (informal)

Hi Robin (more friendly)

Dear Robin (a little more formal)

**Thanking**

Thanks for looking after me when I visited London.

Just a quick note to say thank you for a great party.

Thanks for the Union Jack socks you sent me.

**Showing appreciation**

It was great to see you and your family.

I had a really good time.

I'm wearing the socks to my English lessons.

**Ending**

Love (informal)

All the best (more formal)

Best regards or Best wishes (neutral)

Jill

**e.g.**

Dear Uncle Robin,

Thanks very much for the money you sent me for my birthday.

I'm saving up for my driving lessons at the moment so I really appreciate it!

Love,

Jill

**Tasks**

On Track 1, Unit 2, Topic 8, exercise 8G

# Writing topics for On Track 5

On Track<sup>5</sup>

## UNIT 1

### Leaving for Mars

You have volunteered for a scientific expedition to Mars, where you will live for three years before returning to Earth. All the basics will be provided. You may take one large backpack with you. What personal items would you pack? Write your list, explaining the reason for each of your choices. Also mention some of the items you would leave behind, and why.

### The Robots are coming

“If we are not careful, computer-generated robots will take over our world. They are already taking our jobs.”

Write an argumentative essay discussing whether you agree or disagree with this statement, and why. Support your point of view by giving examples.

### Weapons: The second amendment

A: Everyone has the right to carry a gun.

B: Everyone has the right not to be endangered by another person carrying a gun.

Consider the two statements and write a dialogue between two people, where one supports the right to carry arms, and the other is opposed to it.

On Track<sup>5</sup>

## UNIT 2

### Explaining a natural phenomenon

Explain one of the natural weather phenomena below. First, define the phenomenon, then describe what causes it, or how it is formed. Include some examples.

- The Northern Lights
- Rainbows
- Rain
- Snow
- Lightning and thunder
- Hurricanes and tornadoes

### I had a dream...

Describe a dream or a nightmare you have had in detail.

### Designing babies

An online magazine ran the following question: Now that we can, why shouldn't we design our babies? After all, who would want an unattractive child of below-average intelligence?

Readers were invited to post their responses on their website.

What is your opinion? Write your own response to these questions.

## UNIT 3

### Interview with an inventor

Imagine that you are journalist, interviewing a famous inventor. The inventor can be a historical figure, like Alfred Nobel, for example, or someone alive today. What kind of questions would you ask? Invent answers for the famous person, and write down the interview.

### The Finnish diet

You are an exchange student in an Asian country. The home economics teacher at the school has asked you to give a talk to the students about the Finnish diet. Write your speech. Include examples of traditional Finnish dishes that your family typically eats, and add comments about your own, personal diet.

### Dear Sir/Madam

There has been a lot of media coverage of the Bio-Bus, and the use of public transport in general. Write a letter to the editor of a newspaper (either online or traditional) expressing your views on one of the following topics:

- Using excrement as fuel – the way forward.
- Ban all cars – take the bus.
- Public transport should be free.
- My own, personal bus adventure.

## UNIT 4

### The future of food

In 2050, there will be an estimated 9.7 billion people on earth. How are we going to ensure that everybody has enough to eat?

Write an essay where you consider alternative sources of food. What are the pros and cons of your suggested alternatives? Also give some suggestions about how you would convince people to make your suggested food sources part of their daily diet.

### How to drive a car

Write clear, simple instructions on how to drive a car. Choose a short route, from your home to the shop, for example. Your instructions have to include the following basic steps:

- How to start the car
- What to consider while driving
- How to park
- How to stop

### Brave new world

Write a news report on one of the following topics. Use your imagination to answer the five W's (what, when, who, why, where) and an H (how) in your report.

- First robot teachers appointed
- Mars colonised at last
- The latest invention – you won't believe this!
- Unexplained mystery in Enontekiö
- I was a designer baby.