

МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ
ДВНЗ «УЖГОРОДСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ»
ФАКУЛЬТЕТ ТУРИЗМУ ТА МІЖНАРОДНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ
КАФЕДРА МІЖНАРОДНИХ КОМУНІКАЦІЙ

Рашкі Н. С., Угляй Л. В.

WRITING TIPS



Ужгород - 2016

ББК 81.432.1-55

УДК 811.111'38

Р 28

Методичні рекомендації до написання та оформлення ділової та повсякденної письмової комунікації з англійської мови для організації практичної та самостійної роботи студентів денної та заочної форм навчання за напрямом підготовки: 6.140103 «Туризм» / Укладачі: Рашкі Н. С., Угляр Л. В. – Ужгород, – 2016. – с.36

Укладачі:

- Рашкі Н.С.** - викладач кафедри міжнародних комунікацій факультету туризму та МК ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет»
- Угляр Л.В.** - викладач кафедри міжнародних комунікацій факультету туризму та МК ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет»

Рецензенти:

- Жовтані Р.Я.** - к.філол.н., доцент, завідувач кафедри міжнародних комунікацій факультету туризму та МК ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет»
- Вальчук Г.В.** - к.філол.н., доцент, в.о. директора Департаменту спеціалізованої підготовки та кінологічного забезпечення ДФС України

Рекомендовано до друку кафедрою міжнародних комунікацій факультету туризму та МК ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет». від « ____ » _____ 2016 року Протокол № ____

Рекомендовано до друку методичною комісією факультету туризму та МК ДВНЗ «Ужгородський національний університет». від « ____ » _____ 2016 року Протокол № ____

Contents

ПЕРЕДМОВА	4
1. Letters	5
1.1. Informal style.....	5
1.2. Semi-formal style	7
1.3. Formal style	9
1.4. Letters of Application	10
1.5. Transactional letters	12
2. Reports	14
3. Reviews	17
4. Article	21
5. Essay	23
6. Composition	27
7. Leaflets.....	30
8. Book Entries	32
References	34
Web sites	34

ПЕРЕДМОВА

Написання есе, листа, статті чи твору англійською мовою може бути серйозною проблемою для студентів. Практично всі дисципліни з англійської мови містять значну кількість письмових та творчих завдань, і важливо, щоб листи або твори відповідали необхідним стандартам.

Методичні рекомендації детально пояснюють процес написання та оформлення різних видів письмових робіт та завдань.

Збірник дозволяє викладачам та студентам швидко та легко написати та оформити письмове завдання. Збірник поділений по темах, що дає змогу швидко віднайти потрібну інформацію, та містить пояснення, приклади та практичні завдання. Збірник може використовуватись як під час занять так і для самостійної роботи.

1. Letters

A **letter** is a written message from one party to another containing information. Letters guarantee the preservation of communication between both parties. They bring friends or relatives closer together, enrich professional relationships and provide a satisfying mean of self-expression. Letters contribute to the protection and conservation of literacy, which is the ability to write and read. Letters have been sent since antiquity.

Reason for writing

Letters are written for a variety of reasons. These include:

- Giving information
- Requesting information
- Making complains
- Asking for permission
- Giving advice, etc.

Style

The style of writing in your letter can be formal, semi-formal or informal, depending on the rubric and the target reader. You should make sure that you keep the same style throughout your letter.

Layout

All letters should include the following:

- An appropriate greeting (e.g. Dear John, Sir, etc), followed by an introduction with your opening remarks and your reasons for writing.
- A main body, which contains the information requested by the rubric.
- A conclusion where you can summarize the main points and/or make reference to future action. You should include your closing remarks, followed by an appropriate ending.

[Obee B., Evans V. Upstream Upper-Intermediate. Student's book]

1.1. Informal style

We usually write informal letters to friends and relatives we know well, or to people of your own age. Characteristics of informal style include:

- Short forms (e.g. I'm, you're, it's, etc)
- Simple/colloquial vocabulary (e.g. really great, fun, you'd better, etc)
- Use of the active, rather than the passive voice
- Informal beginnings and endings (e.g. Hi, how are you doing?, See you soon, etc).

You are supposed to be writing to a friend, so it is a good idea to do what friends normally do – chat. In letters, this typically means that the letter opens with news and closes with the hope that you will see each other soon. This helps structure your letter.

[Obbe B., Evans V. Upstream Upper-Intermediate. Student's book]

Sample friendly letter

Dear Rashid,

It was great to hear from you and I'm really glad that things are working out for you down under. It sounds as if you have landed on your feet!

Many thanks for your kind invitation to come and stay with you and Maybeline in Perth, but I'm going to have to turn you down this time. The problem is that I'm just too busy studying for my IELTS exam and I don't have enough time in the day as it is. Perhaps I can take you up on your offer sometime next year, when I hope that I'll have got that magic band score 8.0.

My other news is that Acme have offered me a promotion and soon I should be the senior accounts manager. Obviously that means more money but the downside is that I'm almost certainly going to have to work much longer hours too. There's a cloud to every silver lining!

Anyway, I must get down to work again. So thanks once more for your kind invitation and I do hope that we can get together sometime in the not too distant future.

All the best,

Dominic

[<http://www.dcielts.com/ielts-letters/informal-letter-to-a-friend/>]

Sometimes we need to give advice in letters. Depending on how formal the writing is, we can use the following phrases:

- **For giving advice** (Why not ...?, Why don't you...?, You should ..., It should be a good idea to/if ..., If I were you, I would ... etc)

- **For showing the results** (This will/would mean that ..., If you do this ..., By doing this ..., The result of this would be ... etc).

[Obbe B., Evans V. Upstream Upper-Intermediate. Student's book]

Exercises

1) Advising a friend about a holiday

An English-speaking friend wants to spend a two-week holiday in your region and has written asking for information and advice. Write a letter to

your friend. Begin your letter as follows: Dear (name). You should write at least 150 words. In your letter:

- offer to find somewhere to stay
- give advice about what to do
- give information about what clothes to bring.

2) Inviting a friend

You are studying English at a private language school attended by many international students. You are planning a surprise birthday party for a friend who has been feeling particularly sad and homesick. Write to another classmate and invite him / her to the party. Begin your letter as follows: Dear (name). You should write at least 150 words. In your letter:

- explain the reason for the party
- give the date and time of the party
- suggest what the classmate could bring to the party.

1.2. Semi-formal style

Semi-formal letter is type of the letter usually being sent to people we do not know very well or in situations which require more polite and respectful approach (e.g. a schoolteacher, school principal, etc.). Thus, these letters are written in a more polite tone than informal letters. Here are some tips of what a semi-formal letter should consist of:

1. a formal salutation

e.g. dear Mr. and Mrs. Baker, use always last name since you know recipient, do not start with Dear Sir, Dear Madam.

2. Introduction paragraph

Here you should state your opening remarks and clearly state the reason (purpose, motivation) for writing.

e.g. Thank you very much indeed for your kind offer...

I am writing you because.....

3. Semi-formal letter body

In this paragraph you write the main subject(s) of the letter in detail, starting a new paragraph for each topic.

4. A conclusion

This should be a last paragraph of your letter, and you should write your closing remarks.

e.g. I am looking forward to seeing you next month...

e.g. I hope you can meet my request (inquiry)....

5. a semi-formal ending

e.g. Regards/Best regards / Best wishes, etc. + your full name

Other tips: less frequent use of short forms, phrasal verbs and idioms; use a polite, respectful tone.

[<http://formalletter.net/semi-formal-letter/>]

Sample semi-formal letter

Dear Mr. Bigena,

Thank you so much for showing me around the city this past weekend. It was very beautiful. Your family is wonderful, and I couldn't have felt more welcome. I also want to thank you for teaching me those useful phrases so I could speak a little Italian while I finished my business trip. My time in Venice was amazing, and it was just about the only time I could actually get a little rest. The remainder of my trip was busy, but I still enjoyed it immensely.

I would love to reciprocate by inviting you and your family to my home in London. (I'm sure you could use a break from your hard work!) I know the city very well and can show you all my favorite places. And of course you'd all be able to stay at my flat during your trip.

I do hope you are able to attend. Don't worry about the cost; it will be my treat. It's the least I can do to pay you back for your amazing hospitality. Please write back if you would like to visit.

Yours truly,

Mike Ellis

[<http://www.wikihow.com/Sample/Semi-Formal-Letter>]

Exercises

1. You are being sent on a one month work assignment in San Francisco, California. You need a place to stay while you are there. Write a letter to the Maury Samson Real Estate Agency. Begin your letter as follows: Dear Mr. Samson. You should write at least 150 words. In your letter:

- explain the situation
- describe the kind of accommodation you would like
- provide the dates you will need it.

2. You are studying overseas. You need to return to your country before the end of the semester for a family event. Write a letter to your supervisor. Begin your letter as follows: Dear Mr. / Ms. You should write at least 150 words. In your letter:

- Request time off

- Explain why you need to leave early.
- Reassure him / her that your studies will not suffer.

1.3. Formal style

We usually write formal letters to people we have not met. Characteristics of formal style include:

- Long forms (e.g. I am, you are, we will, etc)
- More sophisticated vocabulary (e.g. remarkable, very enjoyable, I would advise you to ... etc)
- Use of the passive, rather than the active voice (e.g. something should be done, etc)
- Formal beginnings and endings (e.g. Dear Sir/Madam, Yours faithfully, etc).

[Obbe B., Evans V. Upstream Upper-Intermediate. Student's book]

Sample formal letter

Dear Mr. Sands,

I am writing to apply for the job of Fitness Instructor, as advertised in Thursday's Courant. This is an ideal job for me given my enthusiasm for sport, my related experience and qualifications.

Sport and fitness training have always been important to me, which is why I chose to take a BTEC Diploma in Sports Science. I obtained distinctions in the Sports Anatomy & Physiology and Sports Injuries modules last year and am confident that I will get similar marks in Exercise Physiology, Mechanics of Sport and Sports Supervision & Management this year. I am a confident user of Microsoft Office 2000 and have worked extensively with Fitness Publisher, a program for analysing fitness.

As you can see from my CV, I've taken the opportunity to gain extra qualifications that were on offer at college, which has helped me get part-time work as a pool attendant. I'm called on to provide cover during busy times so am used to working irregular hours at short notice. I've also run a lunchtime aerobics class at college since the start of this year.

I finish college in six weeks and am keen to find a job rather than carry on with further full-time study. I could start any part time work or training sooner as many of my classes are finishing and most of my assignments are done. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Louise Longford

[<http://library.bcu.ac.uk/learner/writingguides/1.06.htm>]

Exercise

1. You live in an English speaking country and you want to do some voluntary, unpaid work in a developing country. Write a letter to a company called Cultural Expeditions, which organizes such trips. You should write at least 150 words. Begin your letter as follows: Dear Sir / Madam. In your letter:

- Explain why you want to do the voluntary work.
- State what your skills and experience are.
- Indicate where you would like to volunteer and for how long.

2. You have decided to apply for a job as a Spanish instructor that was advertised in the April edition of the magazine Teaching Professional. This ad was posted by Mr John Sullivan, director of the Spanish department at The Language Institute of Great Britain in London, England. Write at least 150 words. In your letter to Mr Sullivan:

- explain why you are writing
- describe your qualifications and experience
- explain how they can contact you.

1.4. Letters of Application

We write letters of application when we want to apply for a job or a course of study. It is important to include only the information that is relevant, and to use a suitable style, formal or semi-formal.

- The first paragraph mentions the reason for writing. It can also include the name of the job/course you are applying for and where you saw it advertised.
- The main body paragraphs can include:
 - a) What you are doing now
 - b) What work experience you have
 - c) Your academic qualifications
 - d) The personal qualities which make you suitable for the job or course

What you write in the main body depends on what is written in the rubric. You should link your ideas with appropriate linking words and phrases.

- In your final paragraph, you can:
 - a) Summarize the points in the main body
 - b) Thank the person for considering your application

- c) Ask the person to consider you for the job/course
- d) Mention the possibility of further communication.

Present tenses are normally used but some past tenses can be used to describe your past experience. You may also use future constructions.

[Obbe B., Evans V. Upstream Upper-Intermediate. Student's book]

Sample letter of application

Dear Mr. Chan,

Application for the Post of Management Trainee

I am writing to apply for the post of Management Trainee, which was advertised on the Student Affairs Office notice board of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University on 1 February 2016.

My working experience at Lucky Star Garment Manufactory Limited improved my leadership skills, communication skills and ability to work in a team environment. I have fluent spoken and written English. I also have fluent spoken and written Mandarin, and can therefore work in mainland China.

Currently I am studying a B.A. in Management at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, graduating in 2016. Subjects which I am studying that are relevant to the post of Management Trainee include Operations Management, Human Resources Management, Accounting, Marketing and Strategic Management.

My final year project is entitled Knowledge Management Practices in HK. Carrying out this project has improved my communication skills, my leadership skills and my ability to lead and supervise subordinates effectively. I have also learned how to run a project from the planning stage to its completion.

During my studies I have held the post of Executive in the Management Society. While leading and organising Management Society activities I have improved my ability to lead and supervise subordinates effectively, ability to work under pressure and ability to work in a team environment.

Working for Wong And Lim Consulting appeals to me because it has a good reputation and it provides excellent training. Your organisation produces a high-quality service, and I can contribute to this with my leadership skills and my ability to work under pressure.

I am available for interview at any time. I can be contacted most easily on the mobile phone number given above. I look forward to meeting you.

Yours sincerely,

Wong Wai Man Wilfred

[<http://apaaajaboleh27.blogspot.com/>]

Exercises

- 1) write a letter of application for a receptionist job which you see in an english-language magazine in your country.
- 2) You want to study in Indiana University. Write a letter of application to study at the university.

1.5. Transactional letters

A «transactional letter» has specific purpose and a result. For example, a letter of invitation, a letter of complaint and others that require a reply or subsequent actions.

We write a transactional letter to respond to some kind of written input. This input may be a letter, an advertisement, an invitation, notes, etc, or a combination of these. When we write a transactional letter, we have to:

- Read the rubric carefully, underlining the key words/phrases
- Choose a writing style depending on who we are writing to (informal, semi-formal or formal)
- Cover all the points in the rubric in full sentences.

[<http://www.uzdevumi.lv/p/valsts-eksamens-anglu-valoda/12-klase/writing-7007/re-db47a865-5e6c-4025-9df1-f7be44202738>]

Sample transactional letter

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to ask for information about your language courses. I am especially interested in a two-week intensive course.

I have been studying English for three years at a state-run language school in Madrid (Common European Framework B1 level). However, I would like to improve my oral skills.

I have looked at your website but there is no detailed information about dates and prices for your intensive summer courses. Which are the courses you will be offering in July and August? I would also like to know if you have multi-cultural groups, preferably with non-Spanish-speaking students.

Finally, my partner plans to visit me while I am there, for a couple of days. We would prefer to stay at the same place. Would that be possible?

I would be grateful if you could send me this information to your e-mail@domain.ext or to the address below.

Thank you for your time. Looking forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

María Gómez

[http://www.talkingpeople.net/tp/skills/writing/letters/transac_enquiries.html]

Exercises

1) You are planning to do an evening class with a friend who has sent you a letter and a leaflet advertising a music school. Then write to the school asking for the information which your friend has suggested, adding any relevant questions of your own. Write a letter of between 120 and 180 words in an appropriate style. Do not write any addresses.

2) A newspaper has recently printed an article arguing that movie stars are paid too much money. Write a letter to the newspaper giving your views on this issue.

2. Reports

A report is a systematic, well organised document which defines and analyses a subject or problem, and which may include:

- the record of a sequence of events
- interpretation of the significance of these events or facts
- evaluation of the facts or results of research presented
- discussion of the outcomes of a decision or course of action
- conclusions
- recommendations.

Reports must always be:

- accurate
- concise
- clear
- well structured.

Understand the assignment. If your teacher, professor, or boss gave you guidelines for your report, make sure you read them (and reread them). What is the assignment asking of you? Are you supposed to inform your audience about a topic? Generally if you are writing a report for an elementary, middle or high school class, you will be asked to present a topic without inserting your opinion. Other assignments might ask you to persuade your audience about a certain way of perceiving your topic, or analyze a topic. Ask your teacher about any questions you might have as soon as possible.

Keep in mind that if your purpose is only to inform your audience, you should not put your own opinion into your report or add any persuasive elements.

Choose a good topic that you love. Feeling passionate about a topic will drive you to do your best work possible. Of course, sometimes you will not have the option to choose your topic. If this is the case, try to find something about the assigned topic that you can get passionate about. Always make sure to run your ideas by your teacher to make sure that it is okay that you approach the report in this way.

Visit the library. Libraries are an excellent place to find information. Search the library's database for any books or materials related to your article. If you are having trouble, ask a librarian for help.

If you find a great book that covers your topic well, look at the sources the author used (these will generally be listed in the back of the book.) These sources can often lead to even more useful information and websites.

Write your introduction. Your intro is where you introduce your topic and state your thesis. Your intro should be engaging but not corny - the goal should be to hook the reader so that they want to read the rest of your report. You should provide some background information on your topic and then state your thesis so that the reader knows what the report is going to be about. When you are revising make sure you look at the first word in every sentence and try not to let any of them be repetitive.

Write your body paragraphs. The body paragraphs are where you state your evidence that supports your thesis. Each body paragraph consists of a topic sentence and evidence supporting the topic sentence. The topic sentence introduces the main idea of the body paragraph and links the paragraph back to the thesis.

Support your topic sentence. After you write your topic sentence in the body paragraph, provide evidence found in your research that supports your topic sentence. This evidence can be descriptions of things mentioned in your topic sentence, quotes from experts on the subjects, or more information about the topic listed.

Write your conclusion. This paragraph both summarizes your thesis again, and provides your final thoughts on your topic. It should reiterate to the reader what the reader should be taking away from your report.

[<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Report>]

Sample Science Report

Assignment: *Explain how the scientific method works.*

The scientific method is fundamental to successful experimentation. It consists of four main stages: observation, hypothesis, experimentation, and analysis. A successful scientific endeavor covers each of these stages thoroughly.

Observation consists of noticing a phenomenon, asking questions about it, and researching what is known about the phenomenon. For example, you might notice that two objects of the same dimensions fall at the same rate. A question this might raise is whether the mass of these objects affects how quickly they fall. You can then look for information from previous experiments or equations that seek to explain the phenomenon.

After you're done observing, you move on to hypothesizing. A hypothesis is an educated guess about the phenomenon. After doing research on falling objects and deriving equations about them, you might hypothesize that objects of the same dimensions will fall at the same rate regardless of mass because the same forces are acting on each object.

Once the hypothesis has been formed, you can move onto experimentation. A good experiment will have a control, or a result against which other results can be gauged. For this experiment, it could be falling objects of the same dimensions and same mass. The variable group, which is compared to the control group, could include falling objects of the same dimensions and variable masses. The results of these experiments would then be recorded accurately in pen so they cannot be changed to better suit the hypothesis.

When the experiment is over, the data is analyzed. If the data correlates to the hypothesis, the hypothesis is considered to be supported. If it doesn't, the hypothesis can be considered disproved. Either way, the analysis is generally published as a scientific report, which is then subject to critique by the experimenter's peers. Ideally, the experiment is then repeated to determine if the results are the same every time.

To be successful in science, the scientific method should be used for all experiments. The experimenter should observe, hypothesize, experiment, and analyze to retain accuracy. When the scientific method is employed, the results should speak for themselves.

[<http://www.wikihow.com/Sample/Science-Report>]

Exercises

- 1) Write about global warming.
- 2) Write about invention (describing the function of the invention, when it was invented, who invented it, and how the invention changed people's lives).

3. Reviews

From books and movies to plumbers and hotels, reviewing a product or service can be a useful skill. Reviews allow a consumer to share their opinion of a product or service, and others can glean information from that review to make an informed decision about whether or not to try out the product or service.

Briefly describe the product or service. In a couple of sentences or less, describe the product that you're reviewing. You will reveal other details throughout your review, but the initial description will give your reader a sense of what you're talking about. If it's a movie or book, don't spend your entire review summarizing the plot. There's no need to give the entire story. Just a brief overview in 1-2 sentences will suffice.

Write with detail. Give lots of detail and evidence for the argument that you're making. If you're reviewing a music album, talk about the instruments or vocals on a particular track. If you're reviewing a movie, talk about why the cinematography is groundbreaking and give examples from the film.

Use complete sentences. Your review will carry much more weight if you write in complete sentences, rather than fragments that leave the reader wanting more. Don't write things like, «okay food, terrible service.» This doesn't tell the reader anything specific and therefore doesn't make for a helpful review.

Include useful descriptive words. Skip words like «meh» and «okay.» These words are not very useful in terms of describing a product. If you want to write a compelling review that gives the reader an idea of what you experienced, choose more descriptive words.

Personalize your review. Relate your review directly to your personal experience. Don't use vague statements and generalities. People reading your review will want to know about your experience, so they can determine if they'd like to use that service as well. Tell a story about why you like to go to a particular nightclub or why you find your yard service so reliable.

Position this product or service among its peers. Think about where this product fits among similar products. You should certainly judge the product on its own merits, but people reading your reviews will find it useful to have a reference to a restaurant they're familiar with. This makes the comparison - and thus, the evaluation of whether to try a product or service - easier for readers of your review.

Include a sample. If possible, give your reader a sample of what you've experienced. This might be a picture of a meal that you ate, or it might be

a link to a trailer for the movie, or it might be a snippet of a song from an album you're reviewing.

Keep it truthful. Be honest in your review. Don't stretch the truth to fit with your argument one way or another. Don't make up stuff or exaggerate to make your point. If you don't have enough evidence to support a point you're making, leave it out.

Give a fair review. You may have had a terrible experience with a particular plumber, but balance your review with what the plumber did right. If a meal was excellent except for the crud in your water glass, mention the negative part. People find reviews more credible if they admit the good and the bad together.

Be creative and interesting. The best reviews are ones that hook the reader and draw them in. Write in a way that is imaginative and that captures the essence of the product or service that you're reviewing.

Some reviews are written in different formats, even as poems or haiku. Other reviews are tongue-in-cheek, conveying the facts in a humorous way.

Add privileged information to your review. Include information that a reader wouldn't have from checking out the service's website or seeing an ad for the service. Provide information or details that you can only get when you're using the service.

[<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Review>]

Sample book review

So many of the beloved heroes and heroines of children's literature -- from Cinderella and Snow White to Oliver Twist and the Little Princess to Matilda, Maniac Magee and the great Gilly Hopkins -- begin their lives being raised by monstrously wicked, clueless adults, too stupid to see what we the readers know practically from page 1: This is a terrific person we'd love to have for a best friend.

And so it is with Harry Potter, the star of «Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone,» by J. K. Rowling, a wonderful first novel from England that won major literary awards and has been at the top of the adult best-seller lists there, and is having the same kind of success here too. Poor Harry Potter is orphaned as a baby and is sent to live with his odious aunt and uncle, Petunia and Vernon Dursley, and their fat son, Dudley. While Fat Dudley Dursley has two bedrooms (one just for his surplus toys, like the television set he put his foot through when his favorite show was canceled), Harry is forced to sleep in a crawl space under the stairs, has never had a birthday party in his 11 years and must wear his cousin's way baggy hand-me-down clothes.

But Harry is destined for greatness, as we know from the lightning-shaped scar on his forehead, and one day he mysteriously receives a notice in the mail announcing that he has been chosen to attend Hogwarts, the nation's elite school for training wizards and witches, the Harvard of sorcery. Before he is done, Harry Potter will meet a dragon, make friends with a melancholy centaur and do battle with a three-headed dog; he will learn how to fly a broom and how to use a cloak that makes him invisible. Though all this hocus-pocus is delightful, the magic in the book is not the real magic of the book. Much like Roald Dahl, J. K. Rowling has a gift for keeping the emotions, fears and triumphs of her characters on a human scale, even while the supernatural is popping out all over.

We feel Harry's fear when for the first time he is traveling to a faraway place, an 11-year-old boy arriving alone at the King's Cross train station with a trunk bigger than he is, and no idea how to find Platform 9. This is a world where some people know from birth that they are wizards, and are raised by their sorcerer parents to attend fair old Hogwarts, while others, like Harry -- raised in human or what Rowling calls «Muggle» families -- don't find out that they have special powers until they receive their acceptance letters. As Harry worries that first day about whether he can compete with the privileged children of Hogwarts alums, I found myself thinking back 30 years to my first days at Harvard, wondering how, coming from a blue-collar shipyard town and a public high school, I could ever compete with preppies from Exeter and Andover.

«I bet I'm the worst in the class,» says Harry.

«You won't be,» says a friend. «There's loads of people who come from Muggle families and they learn quick enough.»

The book is full of wonderful, sly humor. Exam period at Hogwarts means not just essay tests, but practical exams too. «Professor Flitwick called them one by one into his class to see if they could make a pineapple tap-dance across a desk. Professor McGonagall watched them turn a mouse into a snuffbox -- points were given for how pretty the snuffbox was, but taken away if it had whiskers.»

Throughout most of the book, the characters are impressively three-dimensional (occasionally four-dimensional!) and move along seamlessly through the narrative. However, a few times in the last four chapters, the storytelling begins to sputter, and there are twists I found irritating and contrived. To serve the plot, characters begin behaving out of character. Most noticeably, Hagrid, the gentle giant of a grounds-keeper who has selflessly protected Harry over and over, suddenly turns so selfish he is willing to let Harry be punished for something that is Hagrid's fault. That's not the Hagrid I'd come to know.

These are minor criticisms. On the whole, «Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone» is as funny, moving and impressive as the story behind its writing. J. K. Rowling, a teacher by training, was a 30-year-old single mother living on welfare in a cold

one-bedroom flat in Edinburgh when she began writing it in longhand during her baby daughter's nap times. But like Harry Potter, she had wizardry inside, and has soared beyond her modest Muggle surroundings to achieve something quite special.

[<http://www.nytimes.com/1999/02/14/books/children-s-books-199338.html>]

Exercises

- 1) Write about favourite book
- 2) Write about favourite film

4. Article

Articles are written for newspapers, magazines, newsletters, etc, and use a variety of styles. In general, an article should contain:

- A suitable eye-catching title, followed by an introduction which makes the reader wants to read more. Techniques for attracting the reader's attention include:
 - a) Direct address
 - b) A rethorical question
 - c) Background information.
- A main body, in which you write about the main points in the rubric.
 - a) You should start a new paragraph for each point
 - b) Each paragraph should begin with a topic sentence, followed by explanation or example.
- A conclusion, in which you can summarise the main points or re-state your opinion.

The style o writing should be appropriate for the target reader (which in this case is determined by the type of publication).

Most articles are a blend of different types of writing. For example, an article describing a jorney you have made is clearly narrative. However, descriptive writing will also be used to describe the scenery, your feelings, etc, and then you will need to use discursive writing as well.

[Obee B., Evans V. Upstream Advanced. Student's book]

Narrative writing

Narrative writing is used when we want to describe a series of events. This can be in the present or in the past. Characteristics of narrative writing include:

- An introduction which sets the scene
- Correct use of tenses to link the main events
- Use of appropriate time words and phrases
- Describing feelings
- Mentioning the senses.

Descriptive writing

All articles contain some descriptive writing. You may have to describe people, places, objects, etc. In your writing, you should use a variety of vocabulary.

[Obee B., Evans V. Upstream Advanced. Student's book]

Sample newspaper article

Against all odds

Christopher Brodie is this morning celebrating his gold medal success in the paralympics 100m sprint.

Yesterday, in the packed stadium in Sydney, Australia, where the games have been taking place all week, Chris ran the race of his life to cross the line in the gold medal position.

For any athlete a championship medal is the ultimate achievement, but for Chris it was also the culmination of years of determination and courage. The 20 year old was just 5 when he had to have his right leg amputated below the knee. The pain caused by his artificial leg was not enough to stop the lively youngster from Motherwell running around living life to the full.

When he joined the local athletics club he never dreamt that he would end up an Olympic champion.

Now, thanks to the pioneering work of sports scientists and the doctors at Glasgow's St Thomas' Hospital, Chris has been able to take advantage of the latest sports technology, a new prosthetic sports leg.

«The new leg is made of light weight materials and the foot section has as close to normal foot movement as an artificial leg can get,» said Ken Brown, one of the doctors who worked on the project. Chris backed up Dr. Brown's claim when he said that the new leg allowed for fluid movement and a much less cumbersome running style.

Certainly, the benefits the artificial leg will bring to sports women and men all over the world could be seen yesterday in Sydney, when Chris Brodie showed the world what a powerful combination courage and innovation can be.

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/standard/english/lit_form/newspaper/revision/1/]

Exercises

1) A magazine for students of English is planning a feature on friendship, and readers have been asked to send in articles describing the relationship that they have with one of their friends. You have decided to write an article. Describe your friendship, saying what is about the person that you like.

2) A magazine for students of English is planning a feature entitled «Personalities of the World». Readers have been asked to send articles about one famous person who they think is suitable. Write your article describing the person and saying what is that makes them a great personality.

5. Essay

Throughout your academic career, you will usually be asked to write an essay. You may work on an assigned essay for class, enter an essay contest or write essays for college admissions. This article will show you the writing and revision processes for all types of essays. Then, it will explore how to write narrative, persuasive and expository essays.

Research the topic. Go online, head to the library, or search an academic database or read newspapers. You may ask a reference librarian.

- Know which sources are acceptable to your teacher.
- Does your teacher want a certain number of primary sources and secondary sources?
- Can you use Wikipedia? Wikipedia is often a good starting point for learning about a topic, but many teachers won't let you cite it because they want you to find more authoritative sources.
- Take detailed notes, keeping track of which facts come from which sources. Write down your sources in the correct citation format so that you don't have to go back and look them up again later.
- Never ignore facts and claims that seem to disprove your original idea or claim. A good essay writer either includes the contrary evidence and shows why such evidence is not valid or alters his or her point of view in light of the evidence.

Analyze well-written essays. In your research you'll probably come across really well-written (and not so well-written) arguments about your topic. Do some analysis to see what makes them work.

Brainstorm your own ideas. Sure, you can use the arguments of others to back up what you want to say. However, you need to come up with your original spin on the topic to make it uniquely yours.

- Make lists of ideas. You can also try mind mapping.
- Take your time. Walk in your neighborhood or local park and think about your topic. Be prepared for ideas to come to you when you least expect them.

Pick your thesis statement. Look at the ideas that you generated. Choose one to three of your strongest ideas that support your topic. You should be able to support these ideas with evidence from your research. Write a thesis statement that summarizes the ideas that you plan to present. Essentially, let the reader know where you're going and why. A thesis statement **should** have a narrow focus include both your topic and what you plan to present. For example, «*Although Eli Whitney's cotton gin ushered*

in a new era of American prosperity, it also widened the gap in suffering for African-American slaves, who would soon be more in demand, and more exploited, than ever». A thesis statement **should not** ask a question, be written in first person («I»), roam off-topic or be combative.

Write the body of your essay. You do want to think about length here; don't write pages and pages if your teacher wants 5 paragraphs. However, you should freewrite to let your thoughts reveal themselves. You can always make them more concise later.

- **Avoid sweeping generalizations.** Statements such as «_____ is the most important problem facing the world today,» can cause your reader to dismiss your position out of hand if he/she disagrees with you. On the other hand, «_____ is a significant global problem» is more accurate.
- **Don't use «I» statements such as «I think».** Likewise, avoid the personal pronouns «you», «we», «my», «your» or «our». Simply stating your argument with supporting facts makes you sound much more authoritative. Instead of writing, «I found Frum to have a conservative bias», tell the reader why your statement is true: «Frum displays a conservative bias when he writes...».

Come up with a compelling title and introduction. Your title and introduction make people want to read your essay. If your teacher is the audience, then of course your teacher will read the whole piece. However, if you're submitting to an essay contest or writing an essay for college admissions, your title and introduction have to hook the reader if you want to meet your objectives.

- Skip obvious expressions such as, «This essay is about», «The topic of this essay is» or «I will now show that».
- Try the **inverted pyramid** formula. Start off with a very broad description of your topic and gradually narrow it down to your specific thesis statement. Try to use no more than 3 to 5 sentences for short essays, and no more than 1 page for longer essays.

Conclude your essay. Summarize your points and suggest ways in which your conclusion can be thought of in a larger sense.

- Answer questions like, «What are the implications of your thesis statement being true?» «What's the next step?» «What questions remain unanswered?»
- Your arguments should draw your reader to a natural, logical conclusion. In a sense, you are repackaging your thesis statement in your concluding paragraph by helping the reader to remember the journey through your essay.

- Nail the last sentence. If your title and first paragraph make the reader want to read your essay, then your last sentence makes the reader remember you. If a gymnast does a great balance beam routine but falls on the landing, then people forget the routine. Gymnasts need to «stick the landing,» and so do essay writers.

[<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-an-Essay>]

Sample essay

How to Become an Adult

In the US, legal adulthood comes at 18, but it is my understanding that adulthood comes through responsibility, tears, laughter, and most of all: parenthood. It is effortless to watch other people's children grow and flourish, but having my own was a terrifying new world for which I was ill-prepared. I was not ready for my first, Stanley, but now I cannot envision a world without him. Today, I am the proud parent of not one, but seven beautiful, boisterous, carnivorous plants. Within my small family I have four sundews, two Venus flytraps, and one tropical pitcher plant. Of course they have scientific names, but I only use them when I am angry and my inner-parent reveals itself. Many might ask, "How does a person become the parent of seven carnivorous plants?" and I can only answer that with a story, my story.

It was an ordinary Wednesday afternoon when I came home from school only to find a charming plant that resembled a leafless, dew-splattered fern perched on the counter. With the eloquence that only a teenager could muster, I asked my mother, "What's that?" She carefully explained that he was our new carnivorous plant and he was going to be on fruit fly kitchen duty. Over the next couple of weeks my fascination with him grew, and eventually I adopted him as one of my own. In all sincerity, I did not begin as the ideal parent. I would give Stanley water to drink if he looked drier than usual and that was the extent of my nurturing efforts. However, my complacency did not last. Come winter, around his half birthday, Stanley became afflicted with a mysterious ailment. His stems curled and his one delicate green frond dried up. After carefully examining him, I concluded that not only was the lake water I had been using contaminated with some sort of root-eating larva, but my mother's African violets had given him aphids. It was then that I was faced with the harsh reality of the situation: I had a plant that I was absolutely obsessed with, but knew nothing about.

In my desperation to keep my sundew alive, I began to contact other plant enthusiasts in an increasingly desperate attempt to help my poor Stanley. To my great surprise, a close friend was also a carnivorous plant caregiver and was well versed in childhood care. His advice, coupled with some new dirt and the stocked shelves of the nearby library's horticulture section, allowed me to nurse Stanley back to health. Stanley regained his strength and shortly after the winter incident, I adopted Simone,

another sundew. Then came Diana, my first Venus flytrap. Consequently, the carnivorous plant aficionado was so impressed with Stanley's care that he entrusted me with the care of his carnivorous plants when he left for college. This brought my family's size to the current seven.

My true reward of having Stanley is that he opened the door to the world of botany. I would never have invested so much time learning about the molecular structure or chemical balance of plants if not for taking care of him. I have loved learning for his benefit, whether it be discovering the best fluoride-free water, finding the ideal amount of sunlight, or reading that he uses a form of electrical signaling to improve digestion. I also love the rarity of being Stanley's parent. People have their judgments, but I have also found that most people are genuinely curious and I am always open to questions. Ultimately, I love how Stanley has forced me to be adaptive. That first winter I did not have a «Gardener's Guide to Carnivorous Plants» I simply had my own observations. This was the most significant lesson that Stanley and friends taught me: the universe lacks a guide to the galaxy, and life is all about discovering your own way.

[<https://apply.jhu.edu/apply/essays-that-worked/>]

Exercises

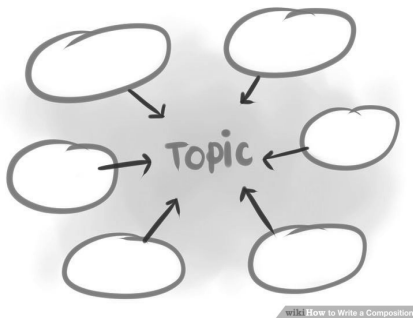
- 1) Write about: Should teachers have to wear uniforms or have a dress code?
- 2) Pretend you woke up one day and there were no rules. People could suddenly do whatever they wanted! Explain what the world would be like. Use your imagination!
- 3) Write about: Should student's textbooks be replaced by notebook computers?

6. Composition

You don't have to be a good writer to write well. Writing is a process. By learning to treat writing as a series of small steps instead of a big all-at-once magic trick you have to pull off will make writing a composition much easier and much more fun. You can learn to brainstorm main ideas before you start writing, organize a draft of those main ideas, and revise your composition into a polished essay.

Read the assignment closely. It's important to get a clear understanding of what your teacher expects from your composition. Each teacher will have a different set of things they'll be looking for, both for the topic and the style. Keep your assignment sheet with you at all times while you're working on your composition and read it closely. Ask your teacher about anything you feel unsure about. Make sure you have a good sense of the following:

- What is the purpose of the composition?
- What is the topic of the composition?
- What are the length requirements?
- What is the appropriate tone or voice for the composition?
- Is research required?



Try a cluster or bubble exercise. A web diagram is good to create if you've generated lots of ideas in a free write, but are having trouble knowing where to get started. This will help you go from general to specific, an important part of any composition. Start with a blank piece of paper, or use a chalkboard to draw the outline diagram. Leave lots of room.

- Write the topic in the center of the paper and draw a circle around it. Say your topic is «Romeo and Juliet» or «The Civil War». Write the phrase on your paper and circle it.
- Around the center circle, write your main ideas or interests about the topic. You might be interested in «Juliet's death», «Mercutio's anger», or «family strife». Write as many main ideas as you're interested in.

- Around each main idea, write more specific points or observations about each more specific topic. Start looking for connections. Are you repeating language or ideas?
- Connect the bubbles with lines where you see related connections. A good composition is organized by main ideas, not organized chronologically or by plot. Use these connections to form your main ideas.

Consider making a formal outline to organize your thoughts. Once you've got your main concepts, ideas, and arguments about the topic starting to form, you might consider organizing everything into a formal outline to help you get started writing an actual draft of the paper. Use complete sentences to start getting your main points together for your actual composition.

Think in fives. Some teachers teach the «rule of five» or the «five paragraph format» for writing compositions. This isn't a hard and fast rule, and you don't need to hold yourself to an arbitrary number like «5», but it can be helpful in building your argument and organizing your thoughts, to try to aim for at least 3 different supporting points to use to hold up your main argument. But some teachers like their students to come up with:

- Introduction, in which the topic is described, the issue or problem is summarized, and your argument is presented
- Main point paragraph 1, in which you make and support your first supporting argument
- Main point paragraph 2, in which you make and support your second supporting argument
- Main point paragraph 3, in which you make and support your final supporting argument
- Conclusion paragraph, in which you summarize your argument.

Think of questions that need to be answered. A common complaint from student writers is that they can't think of anything else to say about a particular topic. Learn to ask yourself questions that the reader might ask to give yourself more material by answering those questions in your draft.

Proofread as the last step of the process. Don't worry about commas and apostrophes until you're almost ready to turn the draft in. Sentence-level issues, spelling, and typos are called «late concerns», meaning that you should only worry about them when the more important parts of your composition – your thesis, your main points, and the organization of your argument – are already as good as they can be.

[<http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Composition>]

Sample composition

Today, millions of people want to learn or improve their English but it is difficult to find the best method. Is it better to study in Britain or to study in your own country?

The advantages of going to Britain seem obvious. Firstly, you will be able to listen to the language all the time you are in the country. You will be surrounded completely by the language wherever you go. Another advantage is that you have to speak the language if you are with other people. In Italy, it is always possible, in the class, to speak Italian if you want to and the learning is slower.

On the other hand, there are also advantages to staying at home to study. You don't have to make big changes to your life. As well as this, it is also a lot cheaper than going to Britain but it is never possible to achieve the results of living in the UK. If you have a good teacher in Italy, I think you can learn in a more concentrated way than being in Britain without going to a school.

So, in conclusion, I think that if you have enough time and enough money, the best choice is to spend some time in the UK. This is simply not possible for most people, so being here in Italy is the only viable option. The most important thing to do in this situation is to maximise your opportunities: to speak only English in class and to try to use English whenever possible outside the class.

[<http://www.esl-lounge.com/level3/lev3learnengcomp.php>]

Exercises

Write about:

- 1) A day at the beach
- 2) The funniest zoo animal
- 3) What if I met a ...
- 4) Why I like to read.

7. Leaflets

Leaflets are written in both formal and informal situations, depending on the target reader. Like articles, they often have a main heading but they are usually divided into sections with subheading, in the same way as reports and proposals.

More formal tasks should focus on providing factual information, but may need to use tactful or diplomatic language.

For less formal tasks, as well as providing information, more light-hearted or persuasive language may be needed.

Leaflets are intended to **inform**, **persuade** or **warn**. The two main aims are therefore to catch the reader's attention and to present the message as clearly as possible. To do this, layout and organisation need to be as effective as possible. Short paragraphs with clear headings are much easier to read and absorb than long blocks of text, for example. The best approach is to imagine yourself as the reader and to ask what you would want to know, and in what order you would find it easiest to absorb the information.

Leaflets should include:

- A title which attracts the attention of the reader and states the content
- An introduction which makes the reader want to continue
- A main body divided into headed sections, focusing on the relevant information in the rubric
- A brief conclusion where main points are summarized.

Layout is important - use clear headings and make sure your writing is well spaced out on the page. Bullet points can be used to separate your points.

Headings and subheadings

As in reports and proposals, the section heading should give a clear indication of the content of the section that follows. In leaflets, there is often a general heading as well (similar to the title of the article).

[Obbee B., Evans V. Upstream Advanced. Student's book]

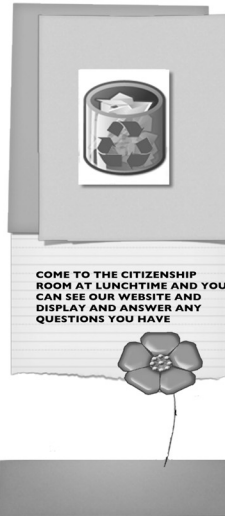
Sample Leaflet

LOOK AT WHAT WE'RE DOING TO OUR STREETS, ITS DISGUSTING AND DIRTY. AND IT'S NOT GOOD FOR THE ENVIRONMENT. DID YOU KNOW THAT 25 MILLION TONNES OF LITTER ARE LEFT EVERY YEAR AND IT COSTS MORE THAN £373million TO CLEAN IT UP IN 2006-2007.

DON'T LITTER RECYCLE

AND YOU CAN HELP SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT TOO.

We all need to do something to sort this mess out. Pick your rubbish up and recycle it too.



Exercises

Write about:

1) You work in a fitness centre. The centre would like to encourage more business people to use its facilities after work. There are many companies in your town which have English-speaking employees and you have been asked to prepare the text for a leaflet aimed at them.

You should:

1. Introduce the fitness centre and its facilities.
2. Emphasise the benefits of regular exercise.
3. Give brief general advice on ways of avoiding stress in daily life.

2) Some foreign lecturers are due to visit your university for a series of seminars but know very little about the area. You are the President of the Students' Union and have been asked to make a leaflet to be sent to the visitors. You should include details about the university, the area, and the activities that are available to them during their stay.

8. Book Entries

Some writing tasks ask you to write an entry or a contribution to a book that is to be published. Depending on the exact task, what you write should be similar to an article. You may have to include practical information (such as how to get to a place or where to find out more about a person). It is important that what you write should look like an authentic text and be as realistic as possible.

Points to consider:

- Emotions - Why does the section resonate with you?
- Characters - Who is involved? Why is he/she involved?
- Language - What do you notice about the choice of words? What literary tools does the author use to enhance the section and how does it affect the story, characters, scene, etc?
- What else do you find interesting? What are you confused about? What don't you like?

Tips

- Write about feelings of the characters, not just what happened.
- If typing on a computer, turn off the internet to avoid wasting time
- Don't read large chunks and expect to fully understand the text when writing about it. Instead, read a small section (one short chapter or half of a long chapter) and then write.
- Work in a quiet environment free of electronic distractions
- You can try pre-writing exercises such as free writing, brainstorming or mapping to collect your thoughts.
- Use sticky notes and/or highlighters to mark important passages.

[Obee B., Evans V. Upstream Advanced. Student's book]

Sample book entry

If God Disappears: 9 Faith Wreckers and What to Do About Them

Everyone has or will face crises of life and faith. These pivotal times are part of everyone's spiritual journey. Why then do some people emerge from the crisis with their faith intact while others give up on God, the church, and holy living? Walking through each crisis—while purposefully maintaining our faith—is the key to emerging from the crisis with our faith still vibrant and alive.

Books by George Barna, George Gallup, Jr., et al., have noted the growing American trend toward spiritual drifting. Yet few books specifically address the millions of American Christian adults who are caught in this trend. One of the most impor-

tant titles, Walking Away from Faith by Ruth Tucker (InterVarsity, 2002), offers a brilliant historical and anecdotal analysis of the problems—but doesn't offer readers hope.

It takes more than analysis to help readers overcome the perils of faith crises! For every Christian who is spiritually drifting—or is on the verge—or knows someone who is considering leaving God and the church behind—here is the book that compassionately comes alongside readers and empowers them to re-embrace their faith.

This book is written in a popular, conversational style. It's easily accessible to those who don't know much about the Bible, yet the book's message is solidly evangelical, theologically accurate, and culturally informed. The chapters include contemporary real-life stories and insights from a wide spectrum of Christian leaders.

[<http://writersedgeservice.com/sample-book-proposal-from-a-professional-literary-agency/>]

Exercises

Write about:

- 1) An international publisher is planning a book on the role of computers worldwide. You have been asked to submit an entry for the book describing the way computers are used in your country. You could include:
 - The importance of computers in education
 - The use of computers in the workplace
 - The popularity of home computers.
- 2) A guide book is going to be published featuring places to visit for people who are interested in art. You have been asked to write an entry for the book recommending a suitable place in the area you live. You could include:
 - A description of the place
 - Why people should go there
 - Practical information such as travel details, opening times, etc.

References

1. Obee B., Evans V. Upstream Upper-Intermediate. Student's book / B. Obee, V. Evans. - Express Publishing, 2003. - 264 p.
2. Obee B., Evans V. Upstream Advanced. Student's book / B. Obee, V. Evans. - Express Publishing, 2003. - 256 p.

Web sites

1. <http://www.esl-lounge.com/level3/lev3learnengcomp.php>
2. <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Composition>
3. <https://apply.jhu.edu/apply/essays-that-worked/>
4. <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-an-Essay>
5. http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/standard/english/lit_form/newspaper/revision/1/
6. <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/02/14/books/children-s-books-199338.html>
7. <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Review>
8. <http://www.wikihow.com/Sample/Science-Report>
9. <http://www.wikihow.com/Write-a-Report>
10. http://www.talkingpeople.net/tp/skills/writing/letters/transac_enquiries.html
11. <http://www.uzdevumi.lv/p/valsts-eksamens-anglu-valoda/>
12. <http://apaajaboleh27.blogspot.com/>
13. <http://library.bcu.ac.uk/learner/writingguides/1.06.htm>
14. <http://www.wikihow.com/Sample/Semi-Formal-Letter>
15. <http://formalletter.net/semi-formal-letter/>
16. <http://www.dcielts.com/ielts-letters/informal-letter-to-a-friend/>

