

L2 FUNCTIONAL SKILLS ENGLISH

BE PREPARED FOR YOUR EXAMS

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The Reading Paper

You will need to read through three different source texts

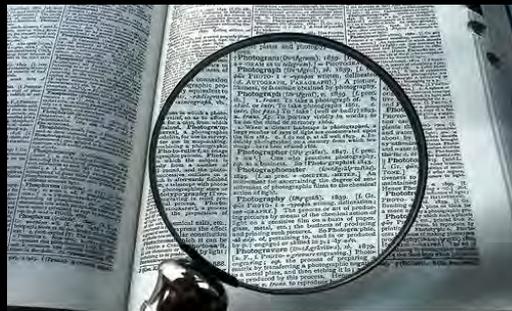
Skimming a text



- You skim a text when you need an overview of what it is about and what the reader is trying to say or do
- Read the text quickly – you don't need to read every word
- Ask yourself: "What is this about?"
"Why has it been written?"

Scanning a text

- Look for headings, key words and images
- Move your eyes quickly over the page
- You don't need to read every word
- Read first and last lines of paragraphs



Close Reading

- Reading carefully to get a detailed understanding.
- Read every word making sure you understand what each word and sentence means, in order to find the details you need for your answer.



Reading Carefully for detailed understanding

Reading a text carefully gives you a detailed understanding of what a writer is saying in a text.

- Decide what you need to find out.
- **Skim** the whole text to gain an overview
- **Scan** to find the parts of the text you need to read carefully
- **Read every word** of those sentences carefully and ask yourself: "What did it tell me?"
- If you don't understand a word or detail, read again to try and work it out.

REMEMBER: Although the question may say ‘you do not need to write in sentences’ it is a good idea to write a short phrase. For example when identifying the purpose of a text, you could write:

‘To inform the reader about opening times for the theme park’

‘To persuade the reader to save energy’

‘To advise the reader about the best way to book tickets for the concert’

‘To instruct the reader how to make a cup of tea’

The Art of Persuasion

- Some texts are written to persuade the reader to think or do something.
- The aim is to make the reader think or act in a particular way.
- For example:
 - Advertisements ➔ buy now!
 - Health posters ➔ look after yourself / make changes

To persuade in words, writers can use a range of techniques.

Persuasive writing often uses techniques to make us **feel** something, or **do** something. It will appeal to our emotions. This is called **emotive language**.

Important: Always use the texts to provide your answers

It is important to make sure that **all** your answers are provided from your reading of the source texts. If you are asked to give reasons for choosing a particular product or venue, for example, then you must provide all your evidence from the text you have just read. Don’t make things up or bring in irrelevant information, as you will not be rewarded for this.

REMEMBER – You are being tested on your reading skills and your ability to extract relevant information from the **source texts provided**.

Fact or Opinion?

You will need to identify whether a statement from a text is a fact or an opinion.

Revision activity:



- ✓ Read each of the mini-texts below.
- ✓ In the appropriate spaces on the table, make a list of the facts and opinions in each text.

The Assault	
<p>The assault took place on Saturday 9th June 2008. At the scene the police found a variety of weapons that may have been used in the attack. The victim was a man called John Brown, a 29 year old from the Kearsley area of the city. One police officer speculated that the crime may have been financially motivated and said 'I would imagine that this crime occurred when the victim failed to hand over his money.' Investigations are continuing while Mr Brown recovers in hospital.</p>	
Facts	Opinions

The Premier	
<p>Jennifer Lopez arrived at the premier looking simply amazing in a Versaci gold dress. She was once again alone, having just announced her divorce from husband Marc Anthony, however what is very clear from the evidence tonight is that she has no shortage of admirers. Lopez stars in the film along with George Clooney and Orlando Bloom and many are anticipating the film will win a slew of awards come Oscar time. However, there are others who feel the film is too frothy and a little wooden in places.</p>	
Facts	Opinions

Identifying Bias

Bias is a strong *opinion* about something.

You can be biased in favour of something or biased against it.

In either case, you may have some facts to support your position, but bias is based more on **feelings and opinions** than on facts.

You can work out a writer's point of view by finding words that reveal their **feelings** ('I feel', 'I love', 'it's terrible', 'it's wonderful'); **beliefs** ('should', 'ought', 'must', 'need to'); **thoughts** ('I think', 'in my opinion', 'I agree with', 'most people think').

A balanced view of a topic includes different points of view. A writer who only gives one side of the argument is showing **bias**.

In the exam you may be asked how the writer shows a positive or a negative view of something. Look for language that has bias, one way or the other.

Reading Between the Lines

Sometimes a writer will try to influence the reader by *only* giving *their* opinion.

- A text might exaggerate something, or ignore the other side of the argument. For example: *North Coast Trains is the worst train company in Britain* – this is someone's opinion and not everyone may agree with it.
- A text might include humour to entertain the reader. For example: *The new Hadawi sports car is the worst car I've ever driven. The engine is pathetic – I think my three-legged tortoise could probably move faster.*
- A biased text might use strong language to make the reader agree with the writer. For example: *My meal was dreadful – the meat was disgusting.*
- A text might show a writer's feelings about something. For example: *I am increasingly concerned about the drop in numbers attending Estrick Leisure Centre; this is very worrying and fills me with dismay.*

Practice Questions

Read the texts below, and then answer the questions underneath each one.

WARHURST WINS AGAIN

Michael Warhurst, the Independent candidate for Gawesbury, has been elected for the third year in a row.

Mr Warhurst has been the best MP Gawesbury has ever seen. He campaigned against the closure of

Gawesbury General Hospital and fought the opening of a new Metromarket supermarket which threatened businesses and shops in the town centre. Mr Warhurst will continue to campaign for the interests of the people of Gawesbury with all the locals' support.

- 1) Find **one** way the writer has tried to influence the reader's opinion from the text above. Support your answers with examples from the text.

Way the writer has tried to influence the reader.....

.....

Example from the text

.....



← → http://www.beautyreviews.co.uk ↻ 🏠

 **beautyreviews.co.uk**

Mane-tame Shampoo Reviewed by Jane Ryan ★★★★★

I'd heard good things about this shampoo so I bought a bottle last week, but sadly I was thoroughly disappointed. Not only was I absolutely outraged by the price, but the product itself smelt horrendous. Despite the hideous smell, I tried washing my hair with it this morning, but it made my hair greasier than a plate of chips. I will not be buying this shampoo again.

- 2) Find **two** ways the writer has tried to influence the reader's opinion from the text above. Support your answers with examples from the text.

First way the writer has tried to influence the reader

.....

Example from the text

.....

Second way the writer has tried to influence the reader

.....

Example from the text

.....

Practice reading question:

Read the following article and answer questions 1-5.

Growing without knowing

There are serious concerns that too many children are failing to experience the benefits of playing outdoors. A recent survey claims that only 40 per cent of today's children would swap time in front of the TV for playing outside, compared with 72 per cent in the 1970s.

The games adults most enjoyed as children are revealed in a survey by the Estrick Nature Society. 88 per cent of men said they enjoyed climbing trees and making a den and 80 per cent of women said they liked making daisy chains and feeding birds. Overall, 96 per cent of those surveyed agreed that the best games were those played outdoors.

Experts believe that today's children are missing out on the outdoor fun their parents and grandparents enjoyed. Sadly, instead of exploring the wonders of nature through outdoor play, today's children are in their bedrooms staring at TV and computer screens.

Alan Marsh, child development expert, fears the essential relationship between children and nature is breaking down. 'It's ridiculous that children know more about TV characters than they do about flowers, birds and butterflies. As for outdoor play, well, it seems that's no longer normal,' says Mr Marsh.

We run the very real risk of bringing up a generation of children who simply have no understanding of, or connection with, the natural world. As Mr Marsh warns, 'If we don't do something pretty drastic, in a few decades there won't be anyone left who can tell a robin from a sparrow or a daisy from a buttercup!'

It doesn't have to be like this, however. We can get our children to explore the natural world by encouraging them to walk through the countryside more often. Even if you live in a town there are plenty of parks full of birds and flowers to appreciate.

1. What is the main purpose of the text?

2. What percentage of children would prefer to play outdoors rather than watch TV?

- A 40%
- B 72%
- C 80%
- D 88%

3. According to the text, when they were children:

- A 80% of women enjoyed making a den
- B 80% of men enjoyed feeding birds
- C 88% of men enjoyed climbing trees
- D 88% of women enjoyed making daisy-chains

4. According to the text, state **two** things children could do to learn more about nature.

1. _____

2. _____

5. How does the writer of the text present a negative view of the way children play today? Give **two** examples.

1. _____

2. _____

How the writer conveys information

Features of the text can help convey information and also help you decide its purpose. For example, you could comment on layout:

- Headings – are they in bold?
- Subheadings
- Images such as photos or pictures
- Different font styles (e.g. *Italic*)
- Bullet points and numbered lists
- Numbered paragraphs
- Also comment on the use of persuasive language to engage the reader; for example the use of the personal pronoun 'you'.
- Punctuation – how is this effective in conveying information?

Bullet
points



Heading in **bold font**



Image that relates to the text

Show respect for animals:

- Wild animals and farm animals can behave unpredictably if you get too close, especially if they are with their young – so give them plenty of space.
- A farmer will normally leave a gate closed to keep animals in, but may sometimes leave it open so animals can reach food and water. Leave gates as you find them or follow instructions on signs (if walking in a group, make sure the last person knows how to leave the gates).
- Use gates and stiles wherever possible – climbing over walls, hedges and fences can damage them and increase the risk of farm animals escaping.

Beware of fire

Fire is devastating to wildlife and their habitats, so be careful when having a campfire. Sometimes, controlled fires are used to manage vegetation, particularly on heaths and moors between October and early April. Signs are always displayed around the area if the fire is controlled. If you see these signs, you do not need to call 999.



Follow the country code and we will all enjoy the countryside for generations to come.

Information / text in a box to make it stand out



The Writing Paper



**KEEP
CALM
AND
USE APOSTROPHES
CORRECTLY**

The Writing Paper

How to get top marks in the Writing Exam

- Read the question **carefully** and identify the form that you have been asked to write in. **Remember – the form that the question is given in may be different to the form you are asked to write in.**
- Ensure you use the conventions of the form that you have been asked to write in.
- Identify the audience – do you need to write formally or informally?
- What is the purpose of the task? This will normally be revealed in the question.
- Present your ideas and information clearly and logically
- Use language for specific purpose throughout your response
- Use a range of sentence types accurately
- Make effective use of paragraphs. If you forget to start a new paragraph, put a double strike (**like this //**) next to where your new paragraph should start.
- Use connectives to link your paragraphs and move from one point to the next.
- Have accuracy in spelling and grammar in both written tasks.
- Use a range of punctuation; for example, commas, apostrophes, inverted commas and exclamation marks (when appropriate!).
- Manage your time wisely. The first question is worth 15 marks and you should spend about 25-30 minutes on this question (including time for planning and checking your work).
- The shorter question is worth 10 marks and you should spend about 15 minutes on this question.

What will you have to do in the writing exam?

There are two tasks, which both assess your writing skills.
The exam will last for 45 minutes and you may be asked to write:

- A formal letter
- An email
- An article
- A report
- A briefing paper
- Detailed internet discussion
- Contribution to an information guide
- Review for a website
- An advice sheet

Spelling, punctuation and grammar are very important

- Spelling, punctuation and grammar make up 40% of your marks.
- You need to accurately use commas, full stops, capital letters and apostrophes.
- Use exclamation marks – but don't overdo it or your work will seem to 'shout out' from the page.
- Colons can:
 - Introduce a list after a statement
 - Introduce a clause that develops or leads from another

Sentence Structures

A **simple sentence** has a subject and a main verb.
I feel happy ('I' am the subject and 'feel' is the verb).

A **compound sentence** is a series of simple sentences joined together, usually with 'and' or 'but'. For example: *I feel happy and am enjoying spending time with my friends.*

A **complex sentence** adds extra detail to a simple sentence (the main clause). For example: *I feel happy and am enjoying spending time with my friends, who live in Dorset.*

The main clause will make sense on its own but the extra detail will not.

A **minor sentence** is not really a sentence at all because it doesn't have a main verb - *Cup final. Well gutted!*

Writing to suit purpose

What you write and how you write it should help you achieve your purpose.

1. Read the task and find the key words which tell you about your purpose for writing (for example, inform, persuade, explain, instruct).
2. Work out the content your writing should have to achieve its purpose (for example facts and evidence).
3. Decide what style you need to use (for example, formal standard English, rhetorical questions, facts, opinions).
4. Decide what presentation features to include (for example paragraphs, bullet points and lists, persuasive techniques).

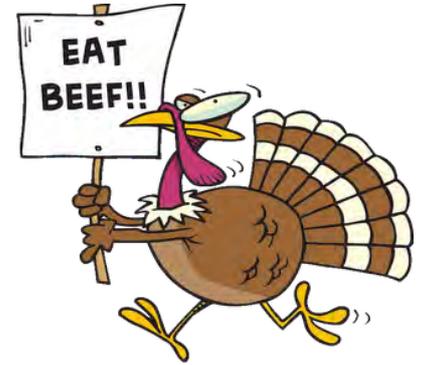
Writing: Thinking about your audience

- Suit the content and style of your writing to your audience
- Read the task carefully and find the key words which tell you
 - Exactly **what** you have to write
 - **Who** is it for? Who are your audience?



Writing Persuasively

Persuasive writing convinces the reader to do something



You need to be persuasive in a lot of different types of writing.

- If you are writing an email asking for someone to make a guest appearance, or to sponsor a charity event, then you will need to be persuasive.
- In a letter of complaint you may try to persuade the reader to give you a refund or some form of compensation.

When you write to persuade you need to explain why the reader should do what you want them to. There are three appeals you can use in persuasive writing:

1. **Logical** appeal – uses facts, statistics, data and expert opinion
2. **Emotional** appeal – appeals to people's emotions and feelings
3. **Moral** appeal – convinces people that something is the right thing to do

For example:

Logical appeal – the facts and reasons

Did you know that the last decade has seen an 8% rise in the number of animal testing procedures carried out in Britain? More than **100 million animals** every year die in laboratories as a result cosmetic, chemical, drug and food testing.

Emotional appeal – appeal to your reader's heart using emotive language

Right now, millions of mice, rats, rabbits, primates, cats, dogs, and other animals are locked inside cold, barren cages in laboratories across the country. They languish in pain, ache with loneliness, and long to roam free and use their minds.

Moral appeal – convince your reader what is right

Each of us can help save animals from suffering and death in experiments by demanding that experiments on animals stop and by buying cruelty free products.

Using personal pronouns like **you** and **your** makes a text more persuasive.

Text D: Persuasive text

Heading tells reader ... and grabs attention by...



Opening statement tells reader...

As part of our Student Enterprise Scheme you'll be supporting our work and making a real difference to children's lives while you develop your skills and hopefully have fun!

- Develop a business.
- Organise and publicise a fundraising event.
- Co-ordinate a campaign.

You choose!

Gain skills in:

- Marketing
- Event management
- Media and publicity
- Campaigning
- Leadership and team work
- Finance and business sense

Learn more about:

- How charities work
- Your power to change the world
- The impact of your support
- How to make your voice heard

Writer's viewpoint supported by facts, opinions, evidence

Powerful descriptive words and verbs and emotive language used to ...

Images and graphics to...



Directly addresses reader to...

The Best Bit...

Save the Children has just become an Approved Activity Provider under the volunteering section so taking part in our Student Enterprise Scheme will help you to fulfil the volunteer criteria of your Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Sound good?



Rhetorical questions used to...



For more information call the Schools and Youth Team at Save the Children on 020 7012 6400 or visit our website savethechildren.org.uk/enterprise to register for your student enterprise pack.

We're the world's independent children's charity. We're outraged that millions of children are still denied proper healthcare, food, education and protection. We're working flat out to get every child their rights and we're determined to make further, faster changes. How many? How fast? It's up to you.

Memorable closing statement to...

Persuasive Words and Phrases

I am writing to...

I have heard a rumour that...

We can do without this...

How unfair!

Now...

Obviously...

We can solve this by...

I believe that...

This will cause...

A friend of mine says...

If these plans go ahead...

Do you really think.....

Is it really worth...

I am speaking to you today because...

This needs to be dealt with

It will ruin our quality of life.

No-one but a complete idiot will believe that...

Surely...

Of course...

Local people feel that...

This will mean that...

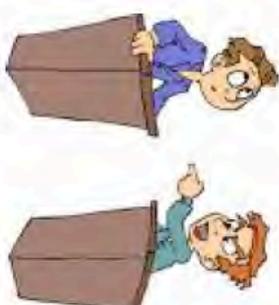
Another thing...

Just think about...

How could you (we) possibly...

What would happen if...

Do you want to be part of...



Try to use some of these words and phrases in your writing.

Remember to write in a forceful manner. You want people to agree with you!



Using Paragraphs

Paragraphs make your writing easier to read.
You will lose marks if your writing is not in paragraphs

- A **paragraph** is a group of sentences, which talk about the same thing and develop an idea.
- Use a new paragraph to introduce a new idea, topic, place or time.
- To indicate a new paragraph, start a new line and leave a space (indent) at the beginning of the line.
- The first sentence of a paragraph is often a topic sentence, which gives you the main idea of what the paragraph is going to be about.
- Develop your ideas in the paragraph with two or three more sentences.

Remember: Your paragraphs should always be longer than one sentence. Read through your work and check to make sure you have used punctuation to break up long sentences

Use the following three steps to write your paragraphs:

1. Topic sentence (introduce main idea of your paragraph)
2. Develop your points/idea using two or three sentences
3. Use connectives to link paragraphs and progress your ideas

Connectives

Use connectives, or joining words, to link your sentences together and form your paragraphs.

Instruct / Recount / Sequence (Temporal Connectives)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first (second third etc.) • when • now • at this point • meanwhile • after a while • in the end • before that • since 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finally • next • lastly • at this moment • next time • at once • afterwards • on another occasion • while 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • then • here • hitherto • until then • soon • straightaway • previously • whenever • later on
Compare / Discuss / Argue (Comparative Connectives)		
To show a similarity or add a point		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • also • moreover • let alone • not only 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in addition • additionally • as well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • furthermore • even • indeed
To show difference or opposition to a point		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • however • in contrast • by contrast • yet • whereas • instead • but 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nevertheless • though • alternatively • anyway • on the contrary • rather • in spite of this 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • on the other hand • in fact • even so • differs from • in other respects • elsewhere • in that respect
To reinforce a point		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • besides • moreover 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anyway 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • after all
Explain		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for example • that is to say • in that 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for instance • besides • i.e. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in other words • e.g.
List		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first(ly) • finally • for another • next 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • second(ly) etc. • lastly • in the first place • in summation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first of all • for one thing • to begin with • to conclude

Using Joining Words to Link Ideas

Use 'for example' or 'for instance' to back up your point.

Example: Owning a pet can be expensive, for example costly vet's bills.

Practice questions: choose 'therefore', 'for example' or 'however' to complete these sentences.

- a) I broke my leg, I couldn't play football.
- b) It was very rainy, it was still quite warm.
- c) I'm a really bad cook, I once set the oven on fire.
- d) The tyres need changing, the lorry isn't safe to drive.
- e) I want to go somewhere warm on holiday this year, Greece or Spain.
- f) He was angry when he got to work, he cheered up later in the day.

Use 'firstly', 'secondly', 'therefore', 'for example' and 'however' to complete this text.

....., the main argument for banning mobile phones is that they can be harmful. They can cause all sorts of problems,, if they are used while driving, they can lead to road traffic accidents.

....., mobile phones are bad for your health. Some reports suggest that texting could cause arthritis.

..... mobile phones have become an important part of everyday life, and they help people stay in touch with their friends and family.

....., I think we should think carefully about how much we use mobile phones, and try to avoid using them where possible.

Common Grammatical Errors

Its or it's?

Its – when it means `belonging to it', it doesn't have an apostrophe.

For example:

- The group made its decision.
- The bird ruffled its feathers.

The *only* time *'its'* has an apostrophe is when it means `it is' or `it has'. *It's* is a contraction, where the apostrophe takes the place of missing letters.

For example

- It's going to rain.
- It's been a lovely day.

Write the correct it's/its in these sentences. Try saying the sentence out loud – if you can use `it is' or `it has' in the gap, use `it's'.

1. I don't know if _____ a good idea.
2. The cat ate all _____ dinner.
3. _____ a good day to go for a walk.
4. The book has lost _____ cover.
5. _____ not fair.
6. Have you seen my coat? _____ gone missing.
7. That shirt has one of _____ buttons missing.
8. My dog has a black spot on _____ ear.
9. Is it still snowing? No I think _____ stopped now.
10. _____ almost the end of the lesson.

Don't put an apostrophe in its unless you mean it is

Then versus Than

'Then' is used when talking about time. For example: *I bought a Kindle, and then I downloaded my favourite novel.*

'Than' is used for comparisons. For example: *My Kindle is much lighter than my book.*

Loose versus lose

If something doesn't fit properly, it is loose. For example: *The key is loose in the lock.*

Lose is used to refer to something that has been lost. For example: *I always lose my keys.*

There versus their versus they're

These three homonyms are always getting muddled up on websites and in emails. It is always worth extending the sentence in your head to find the right match.

- 'There' is used to indicate a place. For example: *Look over **there!***
- 'Their' is the possessive case of they. For example: *I think they've forgotten **their** books.*
- 'They're' is a contraction of they are. For example: ***They're** looking forward to the Book Fair.*

Articles or determiners in the wrong place, or missing altogether:

- a) I bought new computer last weekend.
- b) I had some interesting journey to work this morning.

Use articles correctly:

- a) I bought a new computer last weekend.
- b) I had an interesting journey to work this morning.

Using the Apostrophe

There are only **two** occasions when you need to use the apostrophe:

1. **Contraction** – when letters are removed to shorten words or join them together.

For example: *do not* becomes *don't*, or *they are* becomes *they're*.

Apostrophes show you that some letters have been taken out of a word to shorten it.

For example: *Do not* becomes *don't*. *I will* becomes *I'll*. *Could have* becomes *could've*.

The apostrophe goes where the letters have been removed. Apostrophes are used this way in **informal** writing.

NOTE: sometimes words are shortened in an irregular way. The apostrophe, however, is still used to show where letters are missing. For example: *Will not* becomes *won't*.

You should not shorten words, or use contractions when you are writing formal letters

2. **Possession** – to show ownership; for example the teacher's pen.

Apostrophes show that something belongs to or is connected with something else.

To show belonging you add: 's

The cat's tail - says that the tail belongs to the cat. The newspaper's readers - says that the readers are connected with the newspaper. Tony's hair - says that the hair belongs to Tony.

NOTE: usually the apostrophe goes before the 's'. However, if the owner already ends in 's' then the apostrophe goes after the 's' that is already there. You just need to add an apostrophe.

For example: The dogs' bowls - says that the bowls belong to some dogs. The boys' coats - says that the coats belong to some boys. The cars' wheels - says that the wheels belong to some cars.

Watch out for plurals that don't end in 's'. Words like 'men' and 'children' don't end in 's', but they are talking about lots of people. These words use 's' to show possession. For example:

The men's hats - says that the hats belong to the men. The women's house - says that the house belongs to the women

Remember – You do NOT use the apostrophe to indicate a plural

Writing a Formal Letter

- The success of a formal letter depends a great deal on correct layout and organisation.
- You need to know where to place your address and the address of the person you are writing to.
- You need the date and the correct form of greeting.
- You need to use the correct form of signing off.
- You must write in standard formal English.
- Avoid using contractions in formal writing
- Use persuasive techniques if you need to.

Text E: Formal letter

Your address on the...

24 Eden Grove
Walmsley
Essex
21st March 2010

Place the date...

Reader's name and address are placed...

Ms J Sandhu
Human Resources Officer
The Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Gulliver House
Madeira Walk
Windsor SL4 1EU

The greeting is placed...

Dear Ms J Sandhu,

**Use 'Dear' + name when...
Use 'Dear Sir' or 'Dear Madam' when...**

The opening sentence tells the reader why...

I should like to apply for the post of Young Person's Support Officer as advertised on the Duke of Edinburgh Award website on 2nd Feb 2010. Please find enclosed my CV giving my details as requested. As you will see I have extensive experience of working with young people in this area and would welcome the opportunity to contribute to the welfare of young people. I look forward to hearing from you.

The last sentence should express what response the writer...

Yours sincerely,

Rhia Williams

Sign your name...

**Place the salutation...
Use 'Yours sincerely' when...
Use 'Yours faithfully' when...**

Signing off a letter

How formal?	Begin a letter with:	Sign off with:
Formal	Dear Sir or Madam	Yours faithfully
Formal	Dear <u>Mr, Mrs, or Ms</u>	Yours sincerely
Less formal	Dear Alison Woolcock	Yours sincerely / Yours truly / Best wishes / Kind regards
Informal	Dear Alison	Much love / love / Cheers



Writing an Article

- What is the **purpose**? Who are the **audience**?

- What are your opinions on the topic?
- Catchy **headline** to grab reader's attention.
- Keep your reader interested with a **strong opening paragraph**, which creates an introduction to your subject, perhaps including some background or history.
- Organise your ideas using **paragraphs**.
- Provide **evidence** or **reasons** for every argument you make.
- Don't forget to use **subheadings**.
- Include a **counter argument or opinions** if you are writing to persuade or creating an article – then argue your case.
- Include other viewpoints and comments, or facts and statistics.
- Include details of how to get further information.
- A clear, strong **conclusion**, which leaves the reader with a definite picture of your opinions.

Tone and Style

- You need to write for your **audience**.
- Although you need to use a **formal style overall**, the **tone** of your article can have a personal touch – if appropriate to your reader.
- Involve and convince your audience.
- Opening and closing statements should have impact and leave an impression.

Think about the structure of your article

An answer to an **article question** might look like this.

Example

You organised an event for the children in your local community.
Write an article for a local newspaper informing readers about the event.

Your article needs a headline or a title.

Rewarding and worthwhile

Your first paragraph can be a summary of what your article is about, or your most important point.

volunteering to organise an event in your community is a tiring but enjoyable experience. It is a great way to have fun, meet new people and gain some life skills.

Write in paragraphs and use formal language.

Not a moment's rest

I volunteered to organise a football tournament for boys and girls under 12. It was my responsibility to set up the pitches properly and make sure the children were supervised at all times. Keeping track of 48 children was hard, and I was constantly running around after them. One of the volunteers I worked with said, "I bet I am more tired than the footballers at the end of the day." She was right.

You can include quotes from people in your article.

Subheadings can break up the text.

A great experience

It was lovely seeing the whole community coming together to provide an enjoyable day for the children. I learnt a lot about how to work with other people and how to organise an event like this. These are skills that I think that I could use in the future.

Get involved

I found the whole experience very rewarding and I would encourage more young people to volunteer for similar events. Our local communities will really benefit if more people get involved with events like these.

The last paragraph can be a summary or conclusion.

Writing a Leaflet

Leaflets can have different purposes

- 1) A leaflet can provide **information** about something
- 2) A leaflet can **persuade** a reader to do something

Know who your audience is

You need to make sure the **language** and **style** used in the leaflet suits the audience. You might use formal and serious language for a leaflet about fire hazards at home. You might use less formal language for a leaflet persuading people to come to an event you are organizing.

Information in a leaflet needs to be laid out clearly

Brief Example

Give your leaflet a title

Use the first paragraph to give a summary of your leaflet

You can break up information into Bullet points or numbered lists

You can use subheadings

Provide as much important information as possible

Writing a

You may write a place, even a

Review

be asked to review about event or facility. A

FUN AND GAMES
 Ways to safely enjoy fun and games when living with half a heart.

GOLDEN RULE
 If you become so breathless that you can't talk - STOP!

In this leaflet we are going to explore sport and exercise and look at other team activities that you can take part in with your friends. When you have only half a heart you often get told that you can't do something, that it is not safe, you might injure yourself or make your heart work too hard. It's true that there are some sports or competitive games that may not be right for you but there are lots of things that you can do. Exercise that makes your arms and legs work but does not make your heart too tired.

To help you choose your sport do the following:

- ✓ Take your doctors advice (see the back page).
- ✓ Read the information in this leaflet.
- ✓ Talk to your PE teacher or club leader about what each activity involves.
- ✓ Listen to your body - your body knows when it is working too hard!

A company limited by guarantee in England and Wales, number 06442071, registered office: 11 Greenfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2AJ, registered charity number 1125290.

review gives your opinion about something. Your task will be to inform the public of your experiences, positive or negative.

Here are some guidelines for writing a review.

Introduce what you are going to be reviewing in your opening paragraph. Then, use a new paragraph for each new point or idea you make in your review. Give detailed reasons why you like or dislike something.

Be Opinionated: First and foremost, be bold and strong. Give your true opinion but do not say simply “I think that Estrick Shopping Centre is rubbish!” It is better to write, “Estrick Shopping Centre is a dreary, out-of-date mall with a monotonous range of shops”. Or, be very positive: “Estrick is a fantastic place for shopping, there are outlets to suit everyone’s taste and budget”.

Add Facts: Most reviews mix facts with the basic opinions. Information could include the running time of a movie, for example, or the opening times of a particular shopping outlet. Without some facts your review will be too short of substance and leave the reader without the opportunity to find out for themselves whether they agree with you.

Be Detailed: If you don't like something, explain why. Don't just say, "Estrick bowling alley is dull." Instead, describe why it is so boring. Is it out of date? Does it need some restaurants and bars to liven it up? Does it need updating? You want your audience to understand why you had the reaction you did.

Develop a Rating System of Your Own: One of the best parts of writing a review is giving a rating. Some people use stars, others use the "thumbs up/thumbs down" method.

Give Suggestions: It's appropriate to make some suggestions for improvements or change. For example: “although the transport system works adequately for most people in Estrick, it would be so much better if more buses ran at regular intervals during peak times to enable students to get to college on time”.

Finally: In the end, your audience is looking for you to give them some direction, so don't hold back. Be fair, be honest, and you'll wind up with a great review.

Writing a Report

When you write a report:

- Include a **heading** that makes the purpose of the report clear (e.g. 'Report on ...')
- Organise the information you want your reader to know so that it is easy to find.
- Use headings, bullet lists, numbered lists and different type styles such as bold or italics to help readers find the information they need.
- Tell readers why the report is being written in the introduction.
- Use the main part of the report to explain what evidence was gathered and what you think it means.
- Sum up your findings in a conclusion, and then make recommendations.
- Include facts and figures as evidence.
- Write in formal Standard English.

Suggestions for headings:

1. Title of the report
2. Purpose of your report (underneath this heading write an introductory sentence which tells the reader why the report is being written).
3. Key factors to consider
4. Recommendations
5. Conclusion



Text A: Report

Title tells readers...

Tense mainly ...

Images and graphics to...

Money matters

Introduction tells readers...

This year we have supported 275,000 young people with total expenditure of around £6m. We achieve this impact by working with a very strong network of partners and volunteers, who together contribute many times more than this to our cause.

Where the money comes from

Our three main sources of income for the charity are donations and grants, fundraising events, and trading income from operations, literature and merchandise sales. We work hard to maximise the return from each of these sources.

Facts and evidence to...

- Over **80% of income** from donations and grants goes to charitable purposes.
- For every **£1** we spend on fundraising events, we receive **£1.83** of income. Our fundraising events are self-financing.

This year we raised a total of **£6.22m** net to spend on our Charity's work.



Where the money goes

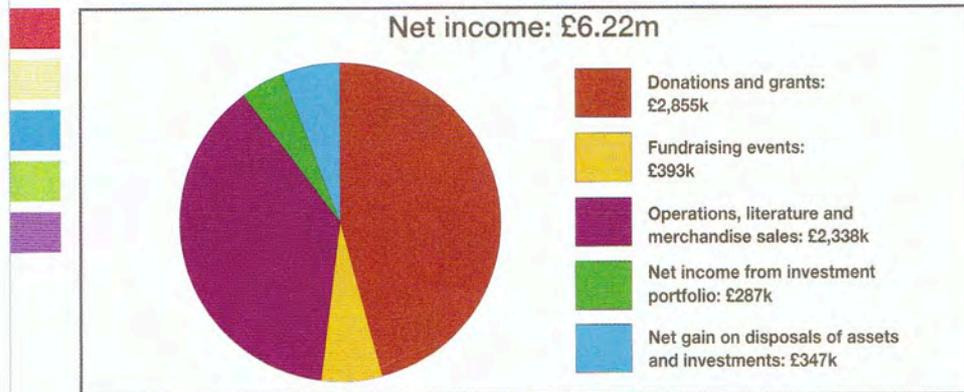
Enabling more young people to access our programmes: £1,771k

Subheadings tell readers...

We aim to make sure every young person has the ability to access our programmes, regardless of background or barriers.

Paragraphs are used for...

This part of our work supports our activity with excluded and vulnerable young people, as well as setting up new groups and supporting the recruitment of new young people to our programmes.



Writing a Message for an Internet Discussion

You may be asked to read two contributions to an Internet discussion and then write your own message in response to the views given.

You will need to say whether you **agree** or **disagree** with the views of the previous contributors and give **your own views in detail**.

In other words, you need to give **your own opinion** about something. Your opinion can't be right or wrong, however you will have to back it up with evidence.

For example:
Parents, not schools, should be responsible for teaching their children to read. **Children learn more quickly when they are taught one-to-one.**

This is the writer's opinion

This is the evidence to support the writer's opinion

Your opinion will sound more convincing if it is supported by evidence

It is fine to have opinions for both sides of an argument...you may agree, or disagree with something said by the previous contributors to an internet discussion. You can quote what they say; for example:

'Lucy, I agree with you when you say that: "*teenagers spend too much time watching TV*".'

However, you need to include **your opinion** on this matter too – **don't just repeat** what has already been said. If you disagree with a contributor then say so, but back this up with evidence. Always use language that is polite and respectful, write in Standard English – **not slang**.

Remember to structure your argument in **paragraphs**.

Finally, try to reach a conclusion – choose one opinion over the other.

Writing Emails

- It is really important that the style of your email is right for the audience.
- Make sure you read the question carefully so you are clear how formal your language should be.
- When you are emailing a company, someone in authority, or someone you do not know personally, then you should always use **formal** language.
- If you are asked to email a friend, then your language can be less formal. However, always remember you are being tested on your writing skills so this does not mean you should start using abbreviations, slang and jargon in your email. Always use Standard English.
- In the exam you will be given an email template to write your answer in and this will normally include an email address of the recipient.
- **Important:** Always open and close your email appropriately. You will not need to set out addresses, as you would if writing a letter, however you will need to start and close your message correctly.
- If you are writing a **formal** email **do not** write 'Hi Christine' or 'Hi there' – this is far too informal. You should always open as if you are writing a formal letter; for example:
 - Dear Mr. Brown / Mrs. Brown / Miss Brown / Ms. Brown (if we do not know a woman's marital status)

Sign off in the same way as a formal letter:

- Yours sincerely – if you know the name of the recipient
 - Yours faithfully – if you are writing to an unnamed recipient
-
- If you are writing to a friend then your language can be friendlier with a less formal tone – sign off with 'Best wishes' or 'Best regards'.
 - Remember to always write in paragraphs and use **all the information** in the question to structure your response.

Writing a Briefing Paper

Briefing papers are used to give information on particular subjects, and suggest possible courses of action. When writing a briefing paper remember:

- You are writing for a particular audience. Ask yourself what they already understand and what they need to know.
- State who the paper is for at the top left of your page
- Give your paper a title that makes its purpose clear

Organise information under the following headings:

- ❖ **Issue** – what it is about, why your audience should read it
 - ❖ **Background** – information, history and explanations
 - ❖ **Considerations**
 - **Options** – what could be done
 - **Pros** - advantages of the considerations
 - **Cons** - disadvantages of the considerations
 - **Analysis** – what you need to consider overall
 - ❖ **Conclusion** – what the current situation is and what should happen next
-
- Use different ways of presenting information – bullet lists, numbered lists etc. –to help readers find the information they need.
 - Write in Standard English.

Text B: Briefing paper

A briefing paper is for a particular audience. it should take into account their needs and ...

Subheadings are used to...

Briefing paper for Board of Governors

Should our school run the Duke of Edinburgh Award?

Title sums up the ... of the briefing paper.

Issue

Many schools already offer the Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) Award to students as an extra-curricular activity. Currently we do not. This means students at our school may be missing out on a valuable experience.

Issue — sum up in a couple of sentences what ... and why the audience...

Background

Background — give information, history, and explanations that will help the reader...

DofE programmes are for 14–19-year-olds. Awards are achieved by completing a personal programme of activities and all activities must be completed before student's 25th birthday. There are three levels: Bronze, Silver and Gold. The four categories that have to be completed for Bronze and Silver are: Volunteering, Physical, Skills, Expedition. For Gold a Residential category has to be completed. A huge variety of activities is possible within each category. Each stage done in turn takes at least 6 months, but if a stage is done singly then it's 6 months for Bronze, 12 months for Silver and 18 months for Gold. Students keep a record book so they can complete their programme elsewhere if necessary.

Considerations

Considerations — list...

Priorities

- To develop the range of out of hours school activities to make the school attractive to all students.

Different ways of presenting key information...

Pros

- DofE offers something for everyone.
- It is highly valued by Further Education colleges, universities and employers.
- It develops students' characters and life skills — and broadens their outlook.
- It is very motivating for students and generates good publicity for the school.
- It's a well-developed organisation, with lots of resources and back-up via website.
- It fits in with the school's values and ethos.

Cons

- Staff commitment – needs a course leader and other staff to support activities. The time staff have to give is high, especially for expeditions.
- Cost – each student pays £11.50 for Bronze and Silver, £17.25 to participate in Gold. Additional costs depend on students' choice of activities.
- Additional use of our minibus which is already in great demand for sports events.

Conclusion — this should...

Options

We could link in with another current provider to share costs and skills.

Conclusion

DofE is a well-established and highly valued course which would benefit many different students. A questionnaire could find out how many students would like to take part. The costs are a concern, but the option of linking with another provider to share costs is a possibility to investigate.

Example of a Briefing Paper Exam Question

There are **two** tasks which assess your writing skills.

Remember that spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in **both** tasks.

Task 1

Information

Your school/college/workplace has asked for ideas about a charitable project to support. You have found this information about mobile phone recycling.



The Phone Shop Mobile Phone Recycling Scheme

Recycle your phone – to help the environment and to help local charities.



Recycling is easy to do, great for the environment and won't cost you a penny. The Phone Shop has teamed up with Charitable Mobile Recycling (CMR) to launch a simple scheme that raises money for charity from unwanted mobile phones. This also prevents mobile phones going to landfill sites. For every 200 phones donated we will receive £300 for local charities.

Mobile phone facts

- The average mobile phone user will replace their handset once every 18 months.
- Less than 20% of all unused mobile phones in the UK are currently recycled.
- Latest figures suggest close to 90 million phones are never used. If you put 90 million phones end to end, they would stretch from Lands End to John O'Groats and back **OVER THREE TIMES**.
- Mobile phones contain toxic substances which need to be disposed of in a safe manner. If these end up in landfill sites they become a threat to human health and the environment

How do I recycle my mobile phone?

First you need to register to the scheme at our website. www.thephoneshop/Recycling Collection boxes are available if you are collecting 20 phones or more. Just order a collection box when you register and when it is full arrange a **FREE** collection through our website. This is ideal for an office, college or school collection. You can recycle mobile phones of any brand and in any condition. Every phone can make a difference.

Writing Task

Write a briefing paper about this scheme to help your school/college/workplace make its decision.

In your briefing paper, you may include:

- background information about the scheme
- the advantages and disadvantages of running this scheme at your school/college/workplace
- whether or not you recommend this scheme.

(15)

Briefing paper for 'The Phone Shop Mobile Phone Recycling Scheme'

states purpose

Background information.

Good format & structure of information

Two companies, The Phone Shop and Charitable Mobile Recycling (CMR) have joined together to help recycle mobile phones. They raise money by donating £300 to local charities for every £200 phones donated.

Any type of phone, new or old, working or damaged can be recycled. All you have to do is register at www.thephoneshop/Recycling.

Collection boxes will be sent out as requested. Collection is free!

Why Recycle? (Advantages)

- 1/ Mobile phones contain toxins that will cause pollution and other problems if put into landfill. By recycling, this can be much reduced.
- 2/ It's free, and everyone can take part.
- 3/ All types of phone can be recycled, any age or condition.
- 4/ Money is donated to charity.

less phones going to landfill.

clear & concise
language consistent
accurate.

Disadvantages

- 1/ The collection boxes make take up a lot of space.
- 2/ You need to register online. This means you need to have an internet connection and access to it.
- 3/ Someone needs to keep an eye on how many phones are donated and how much money is raised.

Recommendation.

clear recommendation.

I would recommend starting this scheme at work. Any scheme that promotes recycling and the environment is a good thing. Collection boxes can be put in the office so phones can be placed securely. I would recommend that the local ~~childrens'~~ childrens' hospice has the donated money.

Full marks 15

(Total for Task 1 = 15 marks)

KMUNESHOTIA

19770

Check your Work

- ✓ After you have finished writing, **always** read your work through to check you have used spelling, punctuation and grammar correctly.
- ✓ Look out for any one-sentence paragraphs.
- ✓ Make sure you have used commas, full stops, apostrophes and question marks accurately.

Subject –verb Agreement

- After writing always check your work.
- Make sure the meaning of every sentence is clear.
- Make sure the subject and the verb agree.
- The verbs must be right for the number of people doing the action.

To check this:

- Find the verb, for example 'is working', 'are walking'
- Decide who or what is doing the verb – they are the **agent**
- Check the verb is written in the correct way for the number of **agents**.

He is hoping to be given work experience - correct
They is hoping to be given work experience - incorrect

Writing practice questions – spend 45 minutes on each set of questions.

Set 1 Task 1

There are **two** tasks that assess your writing skills.

Remember that spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in **both** tasks.

Task 1

Information

Estrick Education for Life

As part of the new Estrick Education for Life programme, Estrick Council is introducing cookery lessons into all Estrick primary schools. Children from the age of 8 will be taught how to make simple and healthy meals such as vegetable soup, jacket potatoes and pasta dishes.

Estrick Council is also looking at introducing other life skills into the secondary school curriculum like first aid and money management.



Writing Task

Write an article for your school/college/workplace magazine giving your views about the Estrick Education for Life programme.

In your article you could include:

- whether you think learning to cook at a young age is important
- whether you think schools should be teaching life skills like first aid and money management.

You could also include suggestions on any life skills you think schools should teach.

(15)

Begin your article on the next page.

Task 2

Information

You read the following contributions to an internet discussion on whether 'watching TV is just a waste of time'.

Posted: [report](#) [quote](#)

Katerina

... in my view watching television is just a waste of time. The programmes that people watch week after week are so boring and mindless. Look at all the soaps that are on TV. Live your own life rather than living it through unreal characters on TV.

Get outside in the fresh air, take a walk, go for a cycle ride, take photographs or paint pictures. Don't waste your time becoming a couch potato in front of the TV.

Responded: [report](#) [quote](#)

Eileen

... I like watching TV. When I have had a hard day there is nothing nicer than sitting down and spending a night relaxing in front of the TV. I enjoy the programmes because they allow me to escape from reality for a while and unwind. Other programmes can be informative and educate you about things you don't know.

Watching TV can be more than just entertainment and it certainly isn't a waste of time. Long live the TV!

Writing task

Write your own message to this internet discussion forum giving your **detailed** views on whether watching TV is just a waste of time.

Use sentences and write in Standard English.

Writing practice questions – Set 2



Task 1

Information

NewPlacesFreshStarts.com is a website which gives information about the places people live in. It is used by people who are thinking about moving to a different area.

The website welcomes reviews from people about places where they live.

Writing Task

Write a review for NewPlacesFreshStarts.com about the place where you live.

In your review you may want to include:

- details of the place, such as shopping, transport links, leisure facilities and local attractions
- the good points about the place where you live
- any other information/comments.

(15)



Set 2 - Task 2

Information

You are a member of the gym at your local leisure centre and receive the following information about changes to the membership scheme.

Changes to monthly gym membership scheme

The leisure centre has reviewed its monthly gym membership scheme. The following changes will come into effect from 1 August 2011:

- The monthly membership fee will increase from £19.50 to £32.50
- Boxercise and yoga classes will no longer be included in the membership rate but sessions can be booked at an additional charge of £5 per hour
- All gym members will continue to benefit from exclusive, member only, access to the spa and sauna facilities but Saturday and Sunday morning sessions will also be open to non-members.
- Last admissions to the gym on Sundays will now be at the earlier time of 2pm.

If you wish to renew or upgrade your gym membership package please contact Brian Dooley, Gym Manager, Smithfield Leisure Centre.

email: brian.dooley@smithfieldcentre.co.uk

Writing Task

You are very unhappy about the changes to the terms and conditions in your gym membership package.

Write an email to Brian Dooley about:

- why you are unhappy with the changes
- how you feel about renewing your membership
- what you would like him to do about the situation.

Set 3 - Task 1

There are **two** tasks that assess your writing skills.

Remember that spelling, punctuation and grammar will be assessed in **both** tasks.

Task 1

Information

You read this letter in your local newspaper.

Dear Editor ...

Estrick News 5th December 2012

Letter of the week

Most school/college summer holidays last for at least six weeks and I strongly believe that is far too long a break. Surely this interrupts learning? Not only that, pupils get bored and parents have to organise childcare. Wouldn't two weeks be long enough?

Bill Sagar
Estrick



Writing Task

Write a letter to: The Editor, Estrick News, High Street, Estrick ES1 2TN responding to the letter of the week.

In your letter you should:

- explain why you are writing
- state whether you agree or disagree with the views in the letter
- give detailed reasons for your own views.

Remember to set out your letter correctly.

Begin your answer on the next page.

Set 3 – Task 3

Task 2

Information

You are taking part in a 20-mile sponsored walk on Sunday 5th August to raise money for your local hospital. You want to raise as much money as possible so you decide to email everyone you know.



Writing Task

Write an email to everyone you know giving them details of the walk, persuading as many of them as possible to sponsor you, support you on the day or even sign up for the sponsored walk themselves.

(10)

A Final Checklist

Check your work...Are you using...	Tick if you are confident
Correct format for each question type?	
Varied punctuation?	
A variety of sentence types?	
Connectives?	
Topic sentences?	
Paragraphs with more than one sentence?	
Links between paragraphs?	
Commas to separate clauses?	
Standard English?	
Apostrophe correctly?	
Subject-verb agreement?	
Accurate spelling?	
Contractions? Avoid these in formal writing.	

Do you know how to...	Tick if you are confident
Set out a formal letter?	
Open and close a formal letter appropriately?	
Use the correct sign off in a formal letter?	
Write an email to a friend?	
Write a formal email?	
Write an article?	
Join an internet discussion?	
Write a leaflet?	
Write a review?	
Write to persuade?	
Write to advise or instruct?	
Use descriptive language?	