

PET for Schools

Writing Guide



languages

Part 1- Email

- In part 1 of the writing exam, you have to write a reply to an email you have received. You must answer this question.
- The email has notes which indicate what your answer must contain. You must use all the notes
- The themes of email are familiar, for example sports, hobbies, television, or an event at school.
- Write about 100 words.
- You have 45 minutes for the entire writing exam. Use half that time to write the email.

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Sandy and the notes you have made.

EMAIL

From: Sandy

Subject: Your visit!

Hi,

I'm so excited that you're coming to stay with me for a week!

On your first evening here, there's a rock concert in our town. Would you like to go to the concert or would you prefer us to relax at home?

Also, shall we go climbing in the mountains while you're here?

Let me know if you have any questions.

See you soon

Sandy

Me too!

No, because ...

Say which I prefer

Ask Sandy ...

Read the exam question on the left. Pay attention to the notes on each side. Then read the example answer. Does the boy include all the notes?

Write your **email** to Sandy using **all the notes**.

Hi Sandy,

Thanks a lot for writing back. I'm also really excited about visiting you!

On my first evening, I'd like to relax at home. I will probably be very tired from the trip, so I need to rest and get ready for the other days. Is that okay?

As for climbing, I'm afraid I can't. I forgot to tell you, but I hurt my knee last week, so I can't do sport now.

How about visiting some art galleries in your town? If you want, we could go. You know I love art!

Well, I have to go now, but please let me know what you think.

Take care,

Luis.

Part 1- How to structure an email

Greetings

We say "hi" or "hello" to the person (don't forget to put their name!)

Opening paragraph

We react to the other person's news and ask them how they are feeling.

Main paragraph 1

In this paragraph we deal with the first important point, which we can identify in the instructions.

Main paragraph 2

In this paragraph we deal with the second important point, which we can identify in the instructions.

Main paragraph 3

In this paragraph we deal with the third important point, which we can identify in the instructions.

Closing paragraph

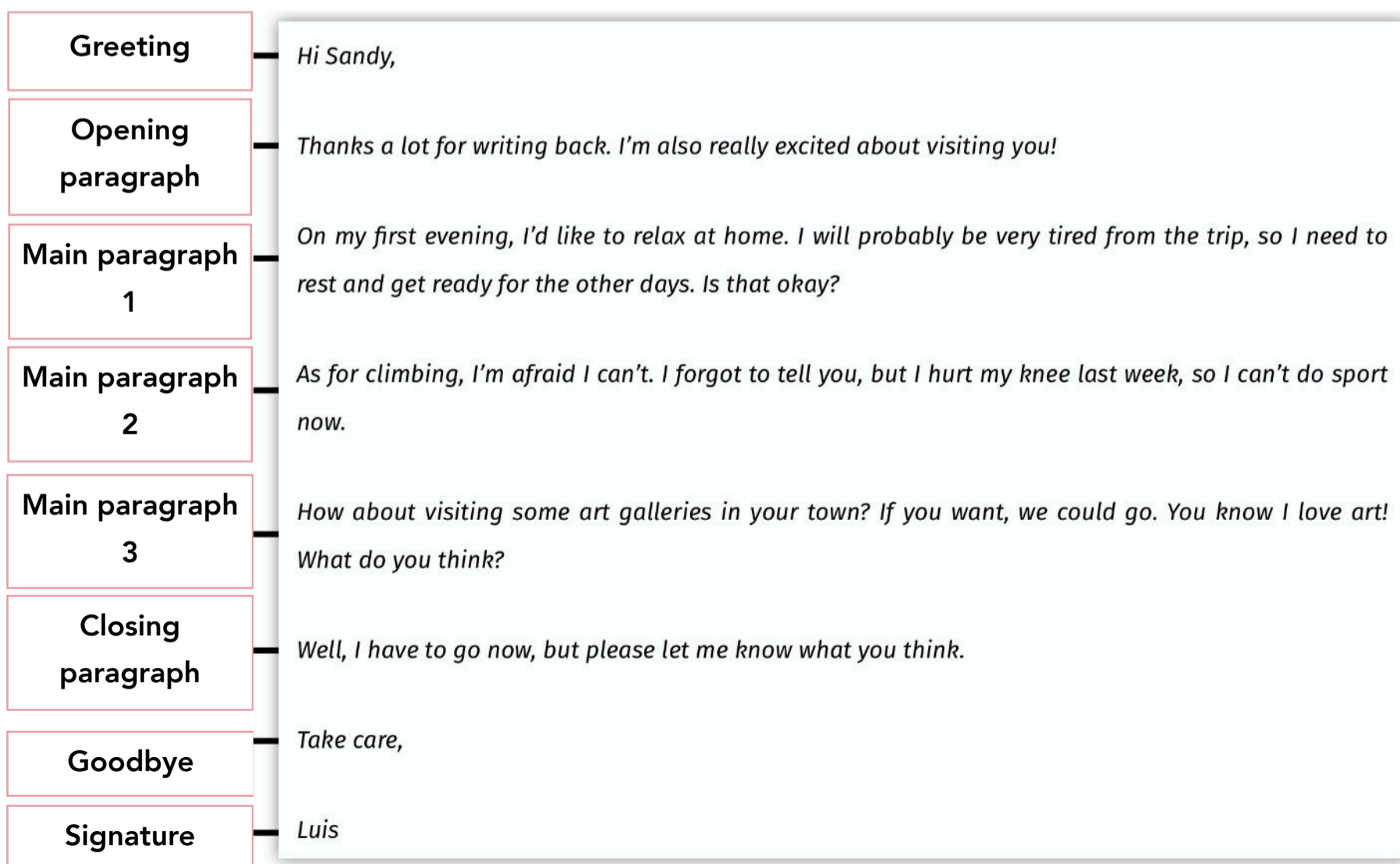
In this paragraph we start to say goodbye by wishing the other person well and asking them to reply to your email.

Goodbye

We use a short expression to say goodbye.

Signature

We sign the email with our name.



Useful expressions

Greetings

- *Hi John,*
- *Hello John,*
- *Dear John,*

Opening paragraph

- *It's great to hear from you.*
- *I'm glad to hear your news.*
- *Thanks a lot for writing!*
- *It was good to receive your email.*

Ask your friend or relative how they are feeling

- *Hope you are doing well.*
- *How's it going?*
- *How are you doing?*
- *How are things?*

Introducing paragraphs:

- *Well, first things first*
- *One more thing,*
- *As for...*
- *Oh, by the way,*

Accepting (Saying yes)

- *Of course I'll go (to...).*
- *I'm more than happy to...*
- *I'm glad to...*
- *Great! I'd really like to...*

Refusing (Saying no)

- *I'm sorry, but I can't...*
- *Sorry, but it's impossible for me to...*
- *I'd like to, but I can't...*

Giving advice

- *Why don't you...*
- *How about...*
- *It might be an idea to...*
- *You could always...*

Suggesting

- *Why don't we...?*
- *How about...?*
- *What about...?*
- *Shall we...?*
- *Let's...,*
- *Let's..., shall we?*
- *It could be a good idea to...*

Arranging meetings

- *Let's meet at...*
- *I'll see you ... at ..., okay?*
- *Is it okay if we meet at...?*

Offering

- *Shall I...?*
- *Can I help you with...?*
- *I'll ..., if you want.*
- *Let me know if you need any help with...*

Apologising

- *I'm really sorry about...*
- *I'm sorry that I...*
- *Please, forgive me!*

Ending the email or letter:

- *Well, I have to go now.*
- *Anyway, I should get going.*
- *Make sure you write soon*
- *Look after yourself.*

Closing the email or letter:

- *All my love,*
- *Lots of love,*
- *All the best,*
- *Take care,*

Connectors:

Reason

- *Because (of)*
- *As*
- *Since*

Result

- *So*
- *Therefore*

Purpose

- *To*
- *In order to*

Connecting similar ideas

- *Furthermore*
- *Also*
- *In addition*
- *Too*

Contrast connectors

- *But*
- *Although*
- *In contrast*
- *However*
- *Despite*
- *In spite of*

Synonyms of bad

- *Awful*
- *Dreadful*
- *Terrible*
- *Rubbish*

Synonyms of good

- *Brilliant*
- *Wonderful*
- *Fantastic*
- *Excellent*

Part 1- Article

- In part 2 of the writing exam, you can choose to write an article.
- The article is about something you enjoy, for example films or books. It may also be about a special experience you had.
- Make an interesting title to get your reader's attention.
- Write about 100 words.
- You have 45 minutes for the entire writing exam. Use half that time to write the article.

Read the exam question below. What are the three points you must write about?

Then read the article that an exam student wrote.

You see this notice on an English-language website.

Articles wanted!

FILMS

What kind of films do you enjoy?

Do you prefer watching them at the cinema or at home? Why?

Write an article answering these questions and we will put it on our website!

Write your **article**.

Thrillers are the best! ← **Title**

Watching films is one of my favourite hobbies. I try to watch a film or two every week. However, although I watch many films, I don't like all types of movies. My favourite ones are thrillers. ← **Introduction**

I love thrillers because the plot is usually awesome and you can never predict the ending. Also, I think thriller actors and directors normally do a very good job! ← **Main paragraphs**

The best place to watch a good movie is at the cinema. The screen is huge, the seats are comfortable and you can have popcorn! That's why I try to go to the cinema every weekend! ← **Main paragraphs**

What about you? Do you like thrillers? What type of movies do you enjoy? ← **Conclusion**

Part 1- How to structure an article

Title

Make the title attractive and interesting to get the attention of the reader.

Main paragraph 1 : Introduction

Introduce the general topic and try to make the reader want to read more.

You can begin with a question or a general opinion.

Main paragraphs

Start a new paragraph for each main point.

This means you may have 2 or 3 main paragraphs.

▸ Main paragraph 1

- In this paragraph we deal with the first important point, which we can identify in the instructions. (What kind of films do you enjoy?)

▸ Main paragraph 2

- In this paragraph we deal with the second important point. (Do you prefer watching them at the cinema or at home. Why?)

Conclusion

You should end your article with a nice final sentence. It can be a little bit funny or surprising, but you can also just summarise your article. You can also speak directly to the reader.

Remember, the more interesting your article is, the better it is for your marks!

Expressions to use in an article

Involving the reader

- *Have you ever...?*
- *Do you ever wonder...?*
- *What do you think about...?*
- *Are you one of those people who...?*
- *If the answer is yes/no, you should...*

Introducing new ideas

- To begin with, ...
- The coolest thing about... is...
- Another thing to consider is...
- As for...
- Secondly, ...
- In addition, ...

To conclude

- *In conclusion,*
- *To sum up,*

Connectors:

Reason

- *Because (of)*
- *As*
- *Since*

Different ways to say:

Good

- Great
- Fantastic
- Excellent
- Brilliant
- Awesome

Bad

- Terrible
- Awful
- Rubbish
- Dreadful

Interesting

- Fascinating
- Captivating

I like

- I love
- My favourite... is...
- ... is the best...
- I'm a big fan of...

I prefer

- ...is better than...
- ...isn't as good as...
- ...is much [comparative adjective] than ...

I don't like

- I hate...
- The worst thing is...
- I'm not a fan of...
- I'm not keen on...

Part 2- Story

- In part 2 of the writing exam, you can choose to write a story.
- The email has notes which indicate what your answer must contain. You must use all the notes.
- The question may include the title of the story, or the first or last sentence of the story. You must follow these instructions.
- Write about 100 words.
- Include a title
- You have 45 minutes for the entire writing exam. Use half that time to write the story

- Your English teacher has asked you to write a story.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

I felt nervous when the phone rang.

- Write your **story** on your answer sheet.

Read the exam question on the left.

Then read the story that an exam student wrote.

Title

THE CALL

Exposition

I felt nervous when the phone rang. It was midnight and I was trying to sleep. Who could it be?

Action

I got up and ran to the phone. However, as I was running, the phone stopped ringing. I was angry, but I decided to go to bed again. But when I was falling asleep, the phone started ringing again. "Oh, my God! This is so annoying!", I thought. This time I picked up the phone quickly and shouted, "Hello?!". Nobody said anything at first, but all of a sudden I heard, "Happy birthday, brother!".

Resolution

I had completely forgotten that it was my birthday. My sister was always the first person to congratulate me.

How to structure a story

A story can be divided into the following parts:

Title

The title should either summarise the whole story (without spoilers!) or have something to do with the main theme.

Beginning:

This is where the characters and setting are established.

It introduces the next part (the action or problem of the story.)

Action

In this part, the characters deal with conflict and do things to solve it.

Resolution

This is where the conflict is resolved and the story concludes with an ending, normally without any **loose ends**.

Expressions to use in your story

How to begin a story

When you start a story, if the first sentence isn't given to you, you can use phrases like these:

- *It all began...*
- *When I first...*
- *At the beginning...*
- *It was a hot/cold summer/winter day.*

Time phrases

- *After that*
- *A little later*
- *_____ minutes later*
- *Later (that morning/afternoon/day/night...)*
- *As soon as*
- *Just then*
- *Finally*
- *In the end*

Creating suspense

- *Suddenly*
- *All of a sudden*
- *Without warning*
- *Just at that moment*
- *Unexpectedly*

Alternatives to The verb "say"

- Shout
- Whisper
- Exclaim
- Ask
- Suggest
- Warn
- Offer
- Promise

People's feelings

- Enthusiastic
- Nervous
- Optimistic
- Puzzled
- Relieved
- Determined

Adverbs

- Fortunately
- Luckily
- Thankfully
- Unfortunately
- Sadly
- Unexpectedly

Interesting

- Fascinating
- Captivating