

Narrative Informal Letter/Email

Task

You have recently been travelling in an exotic country. Your friend has written to you because they are thinking about visiting the same place. Write them a letter describing the highlights of your trip, you should also mention any problems you encountered, say whether or not you would recommend the place and give your friend advice for their trip. (220-260 words)

Paragraph Plan

1. Standard informal email opening
2. Describe highlights
3. Mention problems
4. Recommend or not + give advice
5. Sign off

Past narrative tenses

Past simple - finished actions in the past, actions in sequence.

I breathed in deeply and stepped out of the plane into the air.

Past continuous - descriptions/actions in progress interrupted by past simple actions.

The pale winter sun was shining through the leaves of the trees, the birds were singing happily and the wind was whistling past.

As the balloon was rising into the sky I looked down at the people below me.

Past perfect - actions that happened before a specific moment in the past.

I looked out over the landscape, I had never seen such a beautiful sight before.

I took the map out and checked our location. I had marked all the most important places on it the night before.

Past perfect cont. - duration of time for an action that happened before a specific moment in the past.

When we finally reached the summit of the mountain we had been walking for over 6 hours.

I had been dreaming about taking to the skies in a hot air balloon since I was a child.

Sequencing

<p>At first/To start with/In the beginning.....</p> <p>Then/next/after that/.....</p> <p>The next thing that happened was.....</p> <p>The next thing I knew was.....</p> <p>Seconds/Minutes later.....</p> <p>Later on/Some time later.....</p> <p>It wasn't until much later that.....</p> <p>After some time/what seemed like years.....</p> <p>Finally/In the end.....</p> <p>At last,.....</p> <p>I was just about to (infinitive) when.....</p> <p>I was on the point of (gerund) when.....</p>	<p>Sudden/unexpected events.</p> <p>Out of the blue.....</p> <p>Like a bolt from the blue.....</p> <p>Completely unexpectedly.....</p> <p>Just as I was least expecting it.....</p> <p>Looking back</p> <p>In retrospect.....</p> <p>When I think back to that day.....</p> <p>Looking back on that day.....</p>
<p>Rapid events</p> <p>In the blink of an eye.....</p> <p>As quick as a flash.....</p>	<p>Simultaneous events</p> <p>Meanwhile, In the meantime.....</p> <p>While all this was going on.....</p>
<p>Ways to say exciting/excited:</p> <p>exhilarating/exhilarated</p> <p>adrenalin rush</p> <p>thrilling/thrilled</p> <p>Scary/scared</p> <p>petrifying/petrified</p> <p>terrifying/terrified</p> <p>frightening/frightened</p> <p>Nervous</p> <p>on edge</p> <p>I had butterflies in my stomach</p> <p>nerve-racking/nail-biting (to describe the activity)</p> <p>Difficult</p> <p>Tough</p> <p>Hard</p> <p>Challenging</p>	<p>Phrasal verbs:</p> <p>take up a challenge (accept)</p> <p>set off on a journey/adventure (start)</p> <p>freak out (get very scared and nervous)</p> <p>Describing the weather:</p> <p>A scorching summer day</p> <p>A freezing winter day</p> <p>A crisp winter day</p> <p>A howling wind was blowing</p> <p>A light breeze was blowing</p> <p>The sun was beating down on us</p> <p>It was pouring with rain</p> <p>The heavens opened (it started to rain very hard)</p>

Grammatical Range – SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW!

Inversions:

No sooner had I got on the board, **than** I fell off.

Hardly had the plane left the ground **when** I started to feel sick.

Only when/Not until two days later **did I appreciate** how much danger I had been in.

On no account must you leave the car during the safari.

Little did I know that there were man-eating sharks in the water.

At no time did I stop screaming with fear and delight.

Never before had I seen such breath-taking views.

Never before had I felt so alive.

So + adjective/adverb + verb + subject

So clear was the water that you could see right to the bottom.

So delicious was the dessert that we went back for seconds.

Participle clauses:

Being a strong swimmer, I had no problem in the strong currents.

Having studied French at school, I was able to get by speaking to the locals.

Seeing the Lion running towards me, I panicked and got back in the jeep.

Cleft Sentences

I liked the rollercoasters the most.

What I liked most was the rollercoasters.

It was the rollercoasters that I liked the most.

Inverted conditionals

Were I to go again, I'd pack more warm clothes.

Had I known it was going to be so cold, I would have packed warmer clothes.

Had I not seen the warning sign, I would have jumped into the crocodile lake.

Had it not been for + noun

Had it not been for the guide, we would have got completely lost!