

# WRITING – FORMATS

## 1. Biographical sketch

### Biographical Sketch

How to Write an Interesting Biography?

A biography is a written account of the series of events that make up a person's life. The first information you should gather in your research will include biographical details and facts. You must use a trustworthy resource to ensure that your information is accurate. However, each biography will include the basic details.

### Basic details include:

- Date and place of birth and death
- Family information
- Lifetime accomplishments
- Major events of life
- Effects/impact on society, historical significance

*Write the body of your biography with the material that gives insight to your subject's personality.*

### Questions to consider in your biography:

- *Was there something in your 'subject's' childhood that shaped his/her personality?*
- *Was there a personality trait that drove him/her to succeed or impeded his progress?*
- *What adjectives would you use to describe him/her?*
- *What were some turning points in his/her life?*
- *What was his/her impact on society?*

### TIPS FOR WRITING:

- *Remember to use 'linking words' (connectors) appropriately.*
- *Do not use or add any extra information.*
- *Use all the given notes / details pertaining to the subject.*

## 2. Notice Writing

*A notice provides information regarding an important event that is about to happen or that has already happened. It is the information displayed for publicity for others to know and follow. One should learn how to write a notice to inform people about an event that is about to take place.*

### Format

*Name of issuing Authority/Organization*

### Notice

*Date*

*Subject of Notice*

*Body of notice*

- ⊙ *It contains the message with all essential details.*
- ⊙ *Date, time, venue to be stated.*
- ⊙ *Extra information, if any, to be conveyed.*
- ⊙ *Signature/name of person issuing the notice.*
- ⊙ *Designation.*

### Important points

- ⊙ *Notice must be placed in a box.*
- ⊙ *Remember to keep the word limit within 50 words.*
- ⊙ *Use capital letters for name of issuing authority*
- ⊙ *The notice is to be written largely in future tense (if the event is about to happen).*

***Sample Exercise:** The students' council of Our Own High School, Al Warqa'a, Dubai has decided to organize a trip to Thailand for the students of grades IX - XI during the third week of November. Being the head boy of the school, draft a notice for the school notice board giving all essential details like duration, cost, last date for payment of money and authorization letter signed by the parents. Do not exceed 50 words. Put the notice in a box.*

## **OUR OWN HIGH SCHOOL**

**02-02-2011**

**Notice**

### **Excursion to Thailand**

The school has decided to take the students of grades VIII-XI on an excursion to Thailand in the third week of March. The duration of the trip is five days. The total cost is AED5000 and the last date for payment is the 25<sup>th</sup> February. An authorization letter signed by the parents has to be submitted to the headmaster along with the amount. For further information contact the head boy.

**Rahul Ray**  
**Head boy**

### 3. Message Writing

#### Guidelines for writing messages

- *Mention the date & time of giving message*
- *Mention recipient. Give brief salutation.*
- *Include only important points*
- *Always write the message in reported speech. Be clear and accurate.*
- *Put your name/signature at the end of the message.*
- *Stick to the prescribed word limit.*

#### Avoid the following:

- *Address of receiver /writer*
- *Extra information*
- *Crossing the word limit*

## **Format of a message**

MESSAGE	
Date	Time
Salutation	
Content.....(caller).....	
.....(reason/purpose).....	
.....(proposal/time/condition).....	
.....(instructions/requirement).....	
Signatory	

## **4. Article Writing**

### Writing an Article

#### Introduction and Objectives

- There are certain guidelines one must follow on how to submit your article. The article should look professional. There are no rigid rules, however, on the submission process.
- A perfect article without spelling or grammatical errors, presented on white A4 paper, will look good.

#### REMEMBER!

1. Your article should be easy to read, clear, direct and smooth. It is a good idea to write the article and read it objectively. Here are some guidelines for editing your article:
2. Does it meet the required word length? (usually, 120-150 words) It is likely to be much too long and you will probably have to 'cut' it.
3. Read it aloud. Note how it reads. Can you understand it? Does it read smoothly?
4. Check for any grammatical and spelling errors.
5. Notice any unnecessary phrases or adjectives. There may even be unnecessary Sentences.
6. Does each paragraph deal with one topic? Does each sentence express one idea?
7. Is the transition between paragraphs clear?
8. Are there any long words which are difficult to understand? Cut these.
9. Are the sentences varied? A mixture of long and short sentences makes articles easier to read.
10. Finally, try to use active verbs, rather than passive.

### MARKING SCHEME

Marking is in accordance with the writing criteria i.e.

1. CONTENT
2. FLUENCY
3. ACCURACY

## **5. Speech Writing**

### FORMAT FOR SPEECH WRITING

#### *I paragraph*

- a. *Greeting the audience – Respected Principal, Supervisor, Teachers and my dear friends. Today, I'm going to speak about...*
- b. *Addressing the audience*
- c. *Self introduction, Topic introduction*

#### *II paragraph*

- a. *Begin your speech with suitable quotation*
- b. *Brief description of the topic conveying ideas in a coherent manner.*

#### *III paragraph*

- a. *Conclude the speech with relevant examples and a valuable message or a thought (if required only) – Here by, I conclude my speech by saying that...*

*Thank the audience for their attentive listening*

How to Write a Speech: Step One: Begin with the most important idea/point on your outline. Consider HOW you can explain to your audience in the most effective way. A good speech is never written from the speaker's point of view.

How to Write a Speech: Step Two: Write down what you'd say as if you were talking directly to them. Remember to explain or illustrate your point with examples from your research.

How to Write a Speech: Step Three: 'Linking or Transitions of ideas'. Between each of your main ideas you need to provide a pathway. This links them for your listeners. The clearer the path, the easier it is to make the transition from one idea to the next.

How to Write a Speech: Step Four: 'The Ending or Conclusion' The ideal ending is highly memorable. You surely want 'it' to live on in the minds of your listeners. Often it combines a call to action with a summary of major points.

## **6. Data Interpretation**

### **Characteristics of a well-written Data Interpretation**

- 1. A proper heading / title**
- 2. Relevant content**
  - *content should include all the given points*
  - *Important points of data should be highlighted*
  - *Comparison/ contrasts should be properly focused.*
- 3. Accurate Expression**
- 4. Fluency of the language**

### **GUIDELINES:**

**Proper interpretation of data is essential. Only then we can analyse and appreciate the importance and relevance of the problem or the issue.**

**In the task based exercises, you will be asked to transcode the information from a diagram, map, table, chart or illustration into a paragraph of about 120 words. You will be provided some visual stimulus as data and expected to interpret the same.**

### **IMPORTANT TIPS:**

- 1. Data Interpretation aims at transcoding information from a diagram, map, table, chart or illustration into a short paragraph.**
- 2. It aims at assessing a student's skill of expressing ideas in clear and grammatically correct English.**

## **7. E mail Writing / Formal and informal letter Writing**

### **Characteristics of Good E-mail Messages**

- 1. Conciseness – Your e-mail shouldn't contain any unnecessary information**
- 2. Accuracy – Make sure that your e-mail leaves no room for any ambiguity. Correct structure should be followed.**
- 3. Clarity – Your e-mail should be simple and clear. Sentences shouldn't be too long and easily comprehensible.**
- 4. Conversational tone: Always better to use a tone which gives a personal touch.**

*An E-mail includes the following:*

- 1. Heading**
- 2. Salutation**
- 3. Body**
- 4. Closing**
- 5. Signature**

*The heading segment of an e-mail includes the following:*

- Date**
- From**
- To**

### **Format of an E-mail**

**From: abubacker15@gmail.com**

**To: [jerryhope@yahoo.com](mailto:jerryhope@yahoo.com)**

**Sub: \_\_\_\_\_**

**Body of the e-mail  
(Matter – write in 2 paragraphs)**

**Regards,  
Name \_\_\_\_\_**

## *Format of a Formal Letter*

### **PARTS OF A FORMAL LETTER**

#### **1. The Heading:**

- (a) The Sender's Address
- (b) The Date of Writing

#### **2. Receiver's Designation and Address:**

#### **3. Salutation or Greeting:**

- to Businessmen : Dear Sir/Sirs
- to Officers : Sir or Madam
- to Principal/Teacher : Respected Sir/Madam

**4. Subject:** Mention the subject in one line in the center. It will ensure speedy answer.

**5. Body of the Letter:** Divide the body of the letter into three parts. Be formal, polite and to the point.

- (a) Introductory
- (b) Main Content
- (c) Concluding part

#### **6. Subscription:**

- for Businessmen/Officers/Strangers: Yours faithfully
- for Editors of newspapers: Yours truly or Yours
- for Principals/Teachers : Yours Obediently

**Note:** Do not use comma(,) after the subscription.

There is no apostrophe ( ' ) in Yours. E.g. Your's – X  
Yours - √

**7. Signature:** Writer's signature with name in capital letters in brackets.

## LAYOUT OF A FORMAL LETTER

V.K.Kumar 689, Nakheel Building Mankhool Road Dubai, U.A.E.	—————→	(1) Address of the Sender
September 22, 2010	—————→	(2) Date
The Sales Manager Landmark Barakhamba Road New Delhi – 110001	—————→	(3) Receiver's Designation and Address
Sir	—————→	(4) Salutation
Sub : Order for School Textbooks	—————→	(5) Subject
Body of the Letter	—————→	(6) Body of the Letter (3 paragraphs)
Yours Yours sincerely Yours obediently	}—————→	(7) Subscription
V.K.Kumar	—————→	(8) Signature (9) Full name in Capital letters

### ***POINTS TO REMEMBER***

- 1. Use proper layout*
- 2. Write the address, date, salutation and subscription near the left hand margin.*
- 3. Avoid punctuation marks.*
- 4. Divide the Content (body of the letter) into three paragraphs*
  - (a) introduction – beginning*
  - (b) Content – main points*
  - (c) End – Conclusion*
- 5. Be accurate, specific and concise.*
- 6. Use relevant ideas*
- 7. Have fluency in presentation of ideas. Express them in a coherent manner.*

### **Format of an Informal Letter**

- 1. Sender's address*
- 2. Date*
- 3. Salutation (Dear...)*
- 4. Body of the letter*
- 5. Yours lovingly / yours faithfully*
- 6. Signature*



## **8. Paragraph Writing**

- *Writing the Introduction (Topic Sentence)*
- *Writing the Body (Supporting Details)*
- *Writing the Conclusion (Closing Sentence)*

*A paragraph is a collection of related sentences dealing with a single topic. A good paragraph always takes several tips for success into consideration.*

*General guidelines:*

*A paragraph has to be:*

- *united – focused on a single thing;*
- *coherent - easily understandable to a reader;*
- *adequately developed;*
- *Neatly structured.*

### **1. Topic Sentence**

*-The topic sentence is the first sentence in a paragraph. It introduces the main idea of the paragraph.*

### **2. Supporting Details**

- *They come after the topic sentence, making up the body of a paragraph.*
- *They give details to develop and support the main idea of the paragraph.*
- *You should give supporting facts, details, and examples.*

### **3. Closing Sentence**

*-Summarize the main idea of your paragraph. Indicate to the reader what your paragraph will be about.*

- *The closing sentence is the last sentence in a paragraph.*
- *It restates the main idea of your paragraph.*
- *Restate the main idea of the paragraph using different words.*

### **MIND MAPPING**

#### **Prewriting Steps:**

- 1. Think carefully about what you are going to write*
- 2. Collect facts related to your paragraph or essay topic.*
- 3. Write down your own ideas.*
- 4. Find the main idea of your paragraph or essay*
- 5. Organize your facts and ideas in a way that develops your main idea*

***Remember to use linkers (connecting words) in Paragraph Writing!***

***Take a look at the list of some linkers***

# CONNECTORS / LINKERS

cause and effect  
neutral & frequent  
so / so that  
then  
because of this  
bring on  
cause  
affect  
produce

more formal  
as a result (of this)  
as a consequence  
consequently  
accordingly  
for this reason  
therefore  
thereby

Showing certainty  
neutral & frequent  
at least  
even so  
surely  
certainly  
no doubt  
conceivably  
perhaps  
probably  
more formal  
at the same time  
after all  
apparently  
possibly  
undoubtedly  
conclusively  
doubtless  
evidently  
presumably  
the truth be told

explaining reasons  
neutral & frequent  
certainly  
actually  
really  
for example  
in fact  
as a matter of fact  
for that matter  
that is  
of course  
because  
since  
basically speaking  
more formal  
for instance  
indeed  
admittedly

### **add reasons & info**

also  
then too  
besides  
too  
again  
once again  
add to this  
what's more  
as well  
on top (of this/that)  
in my opinion  
furthermore  
moreover  
in addition  
additionally  
bear in mind

### **take into account**

As we mentioned before  
according to  
Suffice it to say . . .  
In light of the fact that ..  
While speaking:  
I'd like to comment on that .  
Sorry, but . . .  
Can / May I add something?  
Can / May I ask a question?  
Excuse me for interrupting,  
but . . .  
Can I add here that . . .  
I'd like to say something if I  
may

### **concession**

#### **neutral & frequent**

all the same  
obviously  
of course  
at any rate  
in any case  
anyway  
however  
still  
it goes without  
saying that

### **more formal**

to be sure  
granted  
admittedly  
it is true that  
after all  
nevertheless  
in spite of

## **9. Diary Entry**

- *Day, Date*
- *Time*
- *Dear Diary*
- *Body of the Diary using 1<sup>st</sup> person*
- *Signature (of the person mentioned in the question) - optional\**

## 10. Dialogue Writing

*Dialogue Writing - a conversation between two or more characters:*

**It is easy if you follow these guidelines:**

- 1. Don't let any of your characters monopolize the conversation, as if he were giving a public lecture.**
- 2. Dialogue is less formal than other kinds of writing. To make your characters sound natural, you may use short sentences and contractions in dialogue.**
- 3. The dialogue should begin in an interesting way. Special attention should be paid to the opening sentences and the conclusion.**
- 4. Write your dialogue as natural, interesting and realistic as possible. The whole conversation should be brief, and the questions and replies as concise as possible.**
- 5. Be careful not to use the word "said" too often. Use other livelier verbs, such as "whispered," "yelled," "mumbled," "cried," and "confessed."**

**Sample Exercise**

**A dialogue between two boys discussing their hobbies:**

- John:** You know Winston! My uncle has just sent me a letter from Japan with some Japanese stamps. He knows I collect them and often sends me foreign stamps from the places he visits.
- Winston:** They look rather nice. Are you going to paste them in your album?
- John:** Yes, here it is. I have got quite a good collection now.
- Winston:** What a lot! You seem to have some from almost every country. But what is the use of collecting stamps?
- John:** Oh! Well, it's a hobby. And it teaches you some geography and sometimes brings money. Why don't you go in for stamp collecting?
- Winston:** I like something more active. My hobby is collecting ferns and wild flowers. It's quite an adventure when you find a rare plant or fern in some wild place.
- John:** What is the good of your hobby?
- Winston:** Well, it teaches me a lot of botany; and takes me into beautiful country; and does me good physically because it means exercise in the open air.

## Things to remember while editing a passage

- Look at the articles
- Look at the tenses
- Look at the sub-verb agreement
- Look at the prepositions
- Look at the conjunctions

### EDITING EXERCISES

**Ex:1.** The following passage has not been edited. There is one error in each line. Write the incorrect word and the correction in your answer sheet. The first correction has been done as an example.

	<u>Incorrect</u>	<u>Correction</u>
Man <u>had</u> always welcomed rain. If there's no rain,	<u>e.g.</u> had	<u>e.g.</u> has
many lands would be barren. Acidification becomes	1.	1.
a major environmental problem. Pollutants above burning	2.	2.
fossil fuels mixes in the air and bring down diluted	3.	3.
sulphuric and nitric acid. Acid rain kill fish and other	4.	4.
water life and was corroding buildings. Industrial regions	5.	5.
in the world suffers much more acidic fallout than before.	6.	6.

**Ex:2.** In the following passage, one word has been omitted in each line. Mark the place where you think a word has been omitted, using ('/') and write the possible word in your answer sheet. The first one has been done as an example.

	<u>Omission</u>	<u>Correct word</u>
Advertisements can extremely useful if they're honest.	<u>e.g.</u> can/extremely	<u>e.g.</u> be
Obviously they can you to decide what to buy.	1.	1.
This help you to choose the best type. However, some	2.	2.
advertisements may harmful as they try to exploit the publ	3.	3.
survey conducted recently revealed that teenagers especial	4.	4.
danger. They tend to buy useless articles simply because t	5.	5.
have on the television.	6.	6.