



**Writing A Letter**

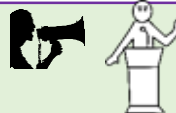
You may be asked to write a formal or informal letter. You should include:

- addresses
- a date
- a formal salutation / mode of address as required e.g. Dear Sir/Madam or a named recipient
- effectively/fluently sequenced paragraphs
- an appropriate mode of signing off: Yours sincerely/faithfully.

**Writing A Speech**

For a successful speech, you need:

- a clear address to an audience
- effective/fluently linked sections to indicate sequence
- rhetorical indicators that an audience is being addressed throughout
- Emphatic points with facts / statistics / an expert voice
- a clear sign off e.g. 'Thank you for listening'



**Writing A Review**

You may be asked to write a review of a book, a film, a favourite piece of music and so on.

You must explain to the reader what are the advantages and disadvantages of the thing you are reviewing and provide your own opinions on it. Use some facts and statistics and even a quotation from a review by someone else. You must include a star rating.

- *Flows from one idea or argument to the next*
- *Engaging opening to the writing.*
- *Powerful finish to the writing.*
- *A carefully chosen and crafted order of ideas including within paragraphs and sentences.*
- *Use of discourse markers/connectives to link complex ideas.*

Structure

- *Complex, detailed ideas with specific examples used to develop them and make them relevant for the reader.*
- *Wide-ranging ideas that cover multiple areas within an argument and avoids repetition.*

Ideas

- *Your argument is clear and makes sense.*
- *You sound confident in the way you write*
- *The writing is engaging and genuinely interesting for the reader.*
- *The writing has a distinctive voice that flows.*

Communication

Paragraphs

- *Paragraphs are linked together and in an order that engages the reader and makes their argument easy to follow.*
- *Paragraphs allow the structure of the piece to come through to the reader easily.*

Vocabulary

- *Really impressive vocabulary choices chosen for effect*
- *The choice of vocabulary makes the writing interesting and engaging for the reader.*

Tone, style, register

- *The tone (sound of writing) is confident and changes dependent on the point being made.*
- *The writing is appropriately formal or informal (register).*
- *The pace (speed) of the writing changes depending on the point being made.*

- ToPTiPs New paragraph for:**
- 1) **New Topic:** Whenever you start a new topic.
  - 2) **New Person:** Whenever you talk about a new person.
  - 3) **New Time:** Whenever you change the time in your writing (so back to the past or move forwards to the future).
  - 4) **New Place:** Whenever you switch places.

Remember that you can use paragraphs for emphasis and effect as well. If you put a one sentence paragraph in the middle of your writing, how will that affect the reader? If you put a long paragraph at the start and shorter action-packed sentences afterwards, how will that make the reader feel? Why? Experiment with your paragraphing.

**Varying Sentence Openers:**

There are many ways of opening sentences besides just repeating 'I' or 'The'. The acronym 'iSpaced' will get all of these sentence openers into your head:

- **ing sentence openers**  
Considering his future, he went to the Careers Advisor  
During the evening, it snowed heavily.  
Shouting, she ran away from the ghost.
- **Simile sentence openers**  
As fast as a cheetah, he made his escape.  
Like a fish in the sea, she swam across the

water.

- **Preposition sentence openers**  
At the end of the evening, they returned home.  
Through the streets of Birmingham, there are thousands of shops.  
Inside the cupboard, it was dark and scary.
- **Adverbial sentence openers**  
Quickly, he packed his bag for school.  
Silently, she read the book in the Library.  
Surprisingly, no one was in the classroom.
- **Connective sentence openers**  
Although you worked hard today, it wasn't

quite enough for a merit.  
However, I will say well done for your effort.  
Despite his disappointment, the student kept smiling.  
- **ed sentence openers**  
Disguised in her costume, she was a hit at Halloween  
Shocked by the score, the football team gave up.  
Challenged to a staring contest, the student reluctantly agreed.

## Beginnings

How a writer begins and finishes a text is incredibly important. How does a writer engage you right from the start and what kind of thoughts or feelings do they want you to have at the end of the article, letter, speech or review? Know these different beginnings and endings so you can use these techniques in your own writing.

**A puzzle!** Hook your reader / listener in with something that isn't clear at the beginning, perhaps something unusual has happened?



**Direct address.** Talk directly to your reader / listener as a way of engaging them and getting rapport.



**Visual hook.** Use a powerful image or description to engage the reader at the start.



**Amusing hook.** Use a joke to establish a comedic tone at the beginning of your text. It's a great way to make a reader/ listener feel at ease and lure them into a difficult or controversial topic.



**Subtle hook.** Hint at what is going to happen in the rest of the text.



**Atmospheric hook.** Use your descriptive language to build up a particular tone and atmosphere right at the very beginning. It be using a particular example to engage the reader with the topic of the text.



### Adding connectives, to add to your initial ideas:

Moreover  
Furthermore  
In addition  
Additionally  
Similarly  
As well as this



### Contrasting connectives, to show a different perspective or idea:

However  
On the other hand  
Alternatively  
Despite this  
In contrast  
Conversely / In spite of this

## Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar



Unfortunately there isn't a quick fix for SPAG – it's something you work on over years and years. However, you need to spend time reflecting on SPAG and making sure that you have **proof read** your work having written it.

As for punctuation, you want to show off all the different types of punctuation you know about – not just commas and full stops but semicolons, dashes, hyphens, speech punctuation and so on. If you know how to use them... use them!

There are a few different types here; punctuation can be used – for effect. Don't fall into the trap of adding in 45 semicolons;

Use high level punctuation occasionally but to have an impact, not just for the sake of it.

## Endings

**Cyclical ending:** where the ending returns back to the beginning of the text, often using to emphasise the original point.



**Twist:** a complete change in direction from where the text was going.



**Summing up:** The writer reflects back on all the topics covered in their text to provide the reader with a summary.



**Short sentence:** Making your final sentence very, very short can leave the readers with one final 'punch' or impactful idea to take away from the whole text.



**A final question:** Asking the readers a rhetorical question or question at the end of a text means the responsibility or onus is on the reader to make up their own minds.



**Repeating examples:** A writer could refer back to a specific example they made during their text. For instance, if they spoke about a particular person or place earlier on in the text to provide evidence for their argument, they made decide to repeat that example again for further emphasis: **Maybe if we change our ways, people like Bob would no longer have to suffer.**



### Bias



Think carefully about **bias** when you are writing. If you are 'writing to argue' or 'writing to persuade' then you really need to choose one side or the other and show why your viewpoint is correct.

Don't fall into the trap of showing you favour neither one or the other. This is a good thing to do for 'writing to explain', however!

**Negative adjectives:** disgusting, sickening, repulsive, abominable, awful, distasteful, gruesome, horrific, loathsome, nasty, objectionable, obnoxious, odious, outrageous, repugnant, scandalous, shocking, vile, vulgar, foul, gross, nauseating, revolting, stinking, detestable, frightful, ghastly, hideous, horrid, lousy, monstrous, offensive, repellent



**Positive adjectives:** amazing, incredible, marvellous, stunning, surprising, unbelievable, wonderful, delightful, fantastic, peaceful, pleasant, thrilling, joyful, alluring, appealing, charming, dazzling, elegant, exquisite, gorgeous, graceful, grand, handsome, magnificent, pleasing, splendid, superb, breath-taking, outstanding, sublime, admirable, exceptional



### Vocabulary

Essentially, any piece of non-fiction writing is more convincing and engaging when a wider range of words is used. When we talk to friends we're not really reflecting on our choice of words and we'll throw in adjectives and nouns like "good", "bad", "stuff", "things" and so on. In writing, you want to show off any impressive words you know, but you don't want to fall into the trap of using words that you've tried to learn for the exam and you're not entirely sure what they mean. Instead, what you can do to really boost your vocabulary is learn **synonyms**. Instead of using basic adjectives like "good" and "bad", look at the synonyms above.