

WRITING A STORY

Tips for writing a good story

Plan

Introduction

Para 1: start the story (who, when, where, what)

Main Body

Para 2-3: develop the story (events before the main event, the main event itself)

Conclusion:

Para 4: end the story (what happened in the end, how people felt)



Top Tips for writing

1. Your story should have a clear beginning, middle and end.
2. Use clear paragraphs.
3. Use a variety of narrative tenses.
4. Use direct speech or indirect speech when the characters talk.

Circle True or False for these sentences.

1. You should divide your story into clear paragraphs. True False
2. In English, we normally write stories using present tenses. True False
3. It's a good idea to use direct speech ('Go away!') to make your story more interesting. True False
4. When characters in the story speak, you should use inverted commas ('.....'). True False
5. You shouldn't use humour in a story. True False
6. The reader of your story will enjoy a surprising or funny ending. True False

EXAM QUESTION

Write a story with the title 'The English Exam'. You should use a variety of tenses and your story must be between 180 and 220 words.

The English Exam

Dimitri woke up at 7:00 a.m. He had been chatting with a friend on the computer until nearly midnight the previous night so he was feeling quite tired but also rather nervous because this was the day of an important English exam at school. Dimitri had been studying very hard for this exam for the previous two weeks so he thought he had a good chance of passing it.

While Dimitri was travelling to school on the bus, he remembered that he had forgotten to take his wallet with him so he didn't have any money to buy lunch. Just after this, his friend Lucas got on the bus.

'Can I borrow some money, Lucas?' asked Dimitri.

'Sure, no problem,' replied Lucas. 'Here you go.'

The two boys did the English exam. While they were having lunch, Dimitri asked Lucas if he thought the exam had been difficult. Lucas smiled and picked up the slice of chocolate cake that he was eating.

'It was so easy! It was a piece of cake!' said Lucas, smiling.

1. Check your understanding: multiple choice

Circle the best word to complete these sentences.

1. When Dimitri woke up he felt *annoyed with his friend* / *tired and a bit anxious* .
2. He thought he was *unprepared* / *well prepared for the exam* .
3. Dimitri realised he didn't have his wallet when he was *on the bus* / *in the exam* .
4. His friend Lucas *lent him some money* / *bought him lunch* .
5. Lucas thought the exam was *easy* / *difficult* .
6. If you want to say something is easy in English, you can say it is 'a piece of *cake* / *bread* ' .

2. Check your writing: matching – tenses

Match the example sentence with the purpose (and tense)

Example sentences

1. **C** The sun was shining and the birds were singing.
2. **E** I was having a shower when she called.
3. **D** I saw that film last week.
4. **B** I had been waiting for nearly an hour when he finally arrived.
5. **A** She had seen that boy somewhere before.

Purposes and tenses

- a. a completed action before a time in the past (Past perfect)
- b. something that started and continued until a time in the past (Past perfect continuous)
- c. setting the scene (Past continuous)
- d. a finished action at a specific time in the past (Past simple)
- e. an action that was in progress when there was an interruption (Past continuous and past simple)

3. Check your writing: gap fill – tenses

Complete the sentences with the correct tense of the verb in brackets.
Write one, two or three words

1. We decided to stop and rest our legs as we **were walking** (*walk*) all day.
2. After breakfast, Tim **went** (*go*) down to the garden to get some fresh air.
3. I tried to open the door but someone **had locked** (*lock*) it from the inside.
4. I **was traveling** (*travel*) in Italy when I first met her.
5. It **had been raining** (*rain*) softly and people were starting to put up their umbrellas.
6. He looked again at the open door and the old, half-broken steps. His mother **had warned** (*warn*) him not to go near that house, but it fascinated him.
7. 'Come in out of the rain!' Dad said. While we **were getting** (*get*) dry and chatting about the evening's events, Dad made hot chocolate.
8. She was really excited about the race. She **had been training** (*train*) for weeks, and she knew she was ready.

- http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org/sites/teens/files/a_report_-_exercises.pdf
- <http://english-topics.ucoz.ru/index/0-330>