

writing an article

Typical essay questions:

Write an article for...

your local newspaper / a teen magazine / your school magazine / a travel guide

on the topic of...

adventure holidays / healthy eating / keeping a pet / cycling to school.

As with **any and all** kinds of writing, the examiner will award marks based upon how well you show you have considered the following:

▪ AUDIENCE

What style of language is appropriate for your reader? Does it need to be formal or informal – even chatty? It will certainly need to capture and hold their attention and this means being lively and interesting. The chances are you will need to be quite formal but use a few 'chatty' features carefully chosen and used sparingly.

▪ PURPOSE

What style of writing will achieve the aims of your article? Are you writing to persuade, inform or explain? The Englishbiz pages on these styles will help.

▪ GENRE

What style and form of writing is needed to satisfy your reader's 'genre expectations', i.e. what 'genre conventions' must you follow to satisfy your reader's 'genre expectations'? Think what you would expect to see and read in such an article: catchy or witty headlines – maybe a pun or play on words, sub-headings to aid clarity and reading, use of bullet points, lists, images, tables, etc.

▪ CONTEXT

*Where is it likely to be read? In what situation? What language choices will help here? Often an article is not read 'in depth' and at a time when full concentration is possible. So... a **catchy lively style** which does not demand too much of your reader and which follows **a clear and logical structure** is almost certain to be a good choice for many articles.*

WRITING THE ARTICLE

YOU NEED TO WRITE IN A WAY THAT...

- **Captures your reader's eye and attention**

How can you achieve this? A catchy title or headline? A suitable image or photo?

- **Hooks your reader into the article**

How can you achieve this? Make the opening sentence intriguing, lively, 'catchy'? Give the outline facts immediately – answering: What? Who? Where? When?

- **Is lively and interesting**

How can you achieve this? A short opening sentence? A mix of shorter and longer sentences? Clear succinct paragraphs that always open with a topic sentence that gives, in a nutshell, what the rest of the paragraph will explore in more depth?

- **Gives the most important information first**

How can you achieve this? Work out what is most important and interesting and write about this first? Leave the less important aspects and the finer detail till later?

- **Sounds authentic and gains your reader's trust**

*How can you achieve this? Sound **sincere** – write in a **natural, lively style** that avoids pretending you're someone else; especially someone older and wiser. **Write as the teenager you are.***

- **Sounds authoritative and is believable and persuasive**

*How can you achieve this? Write **confidently**; include made-up interviews with "experts"; use made up statistics and evidence for **authoritative sources** (but keep all this reasonable and believable). Use a **mixture of vocabulary** including a few more complex words and a few technical terms.*

- **Avoids being overly emotional or personal**

You are writing for a wide and unknown audience of strangers – you do not know them and they do not know you. Write in a way you would expect to be written for!

- **As you write, try hard to have the mindset of your potential future reader. Stop after EACH sentence and briefly re-read what you have written – AS YOUR FUTURE READER.**