

## How to Write ... – A Practical Guide to English Writing Comprehension – Ein Materialpaket für die Klassen 10–13

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V

### M 1 How to write an informal letter/email

When writing an informal letter, you do not have to stick to fixed rules but rather follow the conventions of personal letter/email writing.

**Task:** Complete the conventions of informal letter/email writing with the words given in the box.

*greeting – forgotten – indentations – reply – friendly – "Dear..." – date – "Take care, [your name]" – comma – message – important*

#### Conventions of informal letter/email writing are:

1. You include **address and date**. Although you probably know the addressee of your letter very well, it is \_\_\_\_\_ to include your address to make it easier for the addressee to reply to your letter. (In informal emails, however, the address is usually left out.) After that you add the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You need a **personal salutation**. In a personal letter (e.g. to a friend), the most common greeting is \_\_\_\_\_ plus the name of the addressee. Do not forget to add a \_\_\_\_\_ after the name.
3. Structure your letter or email by **creating paragraphs**. This makes it easier to follow your thoughts. To indicate a paragraph, you can (but do not have to) use \_\_\_\_\_.
4. You use **informal language**. Your first paragraph should include a personal introduction and of course a \_\_\_\_\_. Since you are writing to a relative or friend, try to use \_\_\_\_\_ words. You should also ask some questions which your addressee can answer in his/her \_\_\_\_\_.
5. You **close your letter** with a friendly phrase, e.g. \_\_\_\_\_. You could also use phrases such as *Love, Best wishes, Yours, Miss you so much* etc. Remember to put a comma after your closing phrase.
6. You might want to include a **P.S.** (Post Script). Using P.S. you can add a short \_\_\_\_\_ at the end of your letter or email. In case you have \_\_\_\_\_ something in your main text, you can add it here.



#### A note on punctuation and spelling

Language mistakes tend to distract the reader, so do not neglect them even though you know your friend will understand.

The quality of your letter also speaks volumes about the kind of person you are, so all the more reason to be careful!

If you use contractions (short forms), make sure that you put the apostrophe in the right place.


## M 10 How to write a blog entry


In the digital age, blog entries are becoming more and more popular. Basically, blogs are personal online diaries that are constantly updated by the writer himself or herself. You can share your experiences, interests and opinions on an on-going basis with everybody who is willing to read your entries.


**Task:** Complete the Dos and Don'ts for blog writing with the correct catch phrases from the box.

... include pictures. – ... respond to blog comments. – ... use personal language.  
 – ... make language mistakes. – ... fix a general focus. – ... make it personal. –  
 ... be too negative. – ... add links to your entries. – ... write lengthy texts.


### When writing a blog do ...


 \_\_\_\_\_ This is important to catch your readers' interest. For instance, if you write a travel blog, your readers will expect travel reports rather than beauty tips.

 \_\_\_\_\_ Your readers want to know what YOU think and experience.


 \_\_\_\_\_ Include links to other blogs or webpages that are concerned with similar topics. Readers will follow those and like to find additional information.


 \_\_\_\_\_ Images help to visualise your thoughts and let your experiences appear more vivid.


 \_\_\_\_\_ Reacting to comments keeps your blog interactive. Although not all of the comments need a response, you should make sure that you reply to at least some of them.

 \_\_\_\_\_ Since most of the blogs are "private" blogs, you may use your individual (informal) style of language.

### When writing a blog don't ...

 \_\_\_\_\_ Should you notice some, correct them immediately. Incorrect grammar, lexis and/or spelling distract your readers and do not make a good impression.

 \_\_\_\_\_ Discussing private concerns in public online blogs can be exhausting for your readers (unless discussing private problems is the actual theme of your blog).

 \_\_\_\_\_ Paragraphs that are too long can also be tiresome for your readers. Try to divide your text into shorter sections so that readers can follow your thoughts more easily.

#### **A note on blogs**

Blog is a short form for the word *weblog* and the two words are used interchangeably.

In the beginning blogs were usually published by single writers and revolved around a specific subject or theme.

Nowadays, so-called "multi-author" blogs are also common. This means that blog entries are created as well as constantly edited by a small (or even larger) groups of writers.

**M 11 Text: A travel blog**

Below you find a blog entry of a student backpacker.

Reply to this

No: 1 Msg. #14561

Posted: 1 year ago, 15 August 2015



Holly667  
B Posts: 16

**Blog from a land of paradoxes**

Hey guys! I hope my travel blog will inspire you and maybe even encourage you to take a trip on your own and explore one of the countries I will tell you about. For a start, let me tell you about my first day in the land of paradoxes ... India.

From the Himalayas to the backwaters of Kerala, the slums of New Delhi or the townships of Mumbai to the beaches of Goa ... India will amaze, fascinate and shock. Amazing with its cultural diversity, fascinating with its multiple cultures, its horrible smells, its intensity of life, its many Gods, its people, food, and traditions. India will shock you with its manual scavenging, poverty, noise, filth, scams and touts. It's incredible.

India is not only a land of paradoxes but also a country of extremes where you will see the truth played out before your eyes: unvarnished, uncut and uncensored. All in the first day I saw dead people, sick people, people washing clothes in the dirtiest river I've ever seen, people giving birth to babies and even people squatting down for a bowel movement in front of a group of tourists.

This country has a history dating back an incredibly long time, a religion that encloses hundreds to thousands of Gods, and a population that will soon overtake China. India is the mother of the Asian tiger, the Taj Mahal, Gandhi, chess, and the number zero, and I guess, the world would be a very different place without those five things. ☺

If you want to meet real Indian families, I suggest Kerala. What I personally love about Kerala (where I'm staying tonight) is its homestay possibilities. There are plenty of opportunities to stay with Keralian families and really experience traditional village life. Keralian people are incredibly laid-back, friendly and welcoming. And if you ask me, Nothing beats some of the finest home-cooked food in India (fresh vegetables, exotic fruit and locally-grown aromatic spices!) and the chance to meet the locals.

There is probably no country as extreme and diverse as India. At least I've never been to one. If you got the guts, fasten your seat belt and get ready for a travelling roller coaster experience around this amazing sub-continent. You will love it or hate it, but you'll not forget it – for sure.

slightly adapted from <https://www.travelblog.org/Asia/India/>

4 **backwater:** here: an interconnecting system of rivers, canals and lagoons – 4 **township:** here: poor district in big Indian cities – 8 **manual scavenging:** removal of human waste from dry toilets – 8 **filth:** dirt – 8 **scam:** fraud – 8 **tout:** someone who buys e.g. tickets to an event in order to resell them at a profit – 19 **laid-back:** relaxed

Checklist	Tick the boxes. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
<i>informal language</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>personal experiences</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>personal opinion</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>clear focus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>links</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>positive tone</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>images</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
		<i>short paragraphs</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Tasks**

1. Check the blog entry for blog writing conventions. Fill in the checklist.
2. **Now you:** Choose one of the tasks:
  - a) Reply to this blog entry. You can comment, criticise, state your opinion or ask questions. What is interesting? What would you like to experience yourself? What do you think about home stays in India etc.?
  - b) Write your own travel blog entry. This could be one from your last trip or an imaginary one.

## V

**M 14 How to write a film review**

Like a book review, a film review describes, analyses and evaluates. The review should consist of an **introductory part**, a **main body** and a **conclusion**. Make sure it conveys an opinion, supported by evidence from the film.

**Task:** Study the possible structure for a film review below and highlight the most important bits.

1. Give it a **title**. You can use the title of the film but a nice pun or allusion might be more entertaining and eye-catching.
2. Start with an **introduction**.

For instance, you can begin your review with a catchy phrase or anecdote (taken from the film). Anything that catches your readers' attention will cause them to read on. You should also include your expectations as well as information on the production or the director if possible.

3. Write the **main body**.

- ☞ Start with a brief plot summary to provide orientation for your readers.
- ☞ Name actors and actresses in major roles and say something about their performance, e.g. if you find them credible or not. Note that sometimes characters in supporting roles can be interesting too.
- ☞ In a film review, readers are interested in your opinion. What do you like about the film? Are there any strengths and weaknesses (acting, camera movement, sounds and music etc.)? Supporting your statements with evidence from the film will make your review even stronger.
- ☞ Pointing out connections to other examples of its genre (horror, thriller, drama, comedy, chick flick etc.) will help readers to form an opinion about the film reviewed.
- ☞ You can (should) also include a comment on its cultural context and the director's intention. Is there anything he/she wants to bring across to the viewer?

4. Finish with a **conclusion**.

In your conclusion, you should either recommend the film or not. You might want to suggest a target audience the film is suitable for. Take care that your final judgement is logically developed from what you have written before.



### A note on film reviews

#### Top tips for writing a film review

- ✓ Use vocabulary specifically related to films.
- ✓ Use a variety of descriptive adjectives.
- ✓ Say what happens in the film without giving away the ending.
- ✓ Talk about different aspects of the film.
- ✓ Do not forget your recommendation (and give reasons for it) at the end.

### Kompetenzen

- Schreibkompetenz: Verfassen von Sach- und Gebrauchstexten unter der Beachtung von Textsortenmerkmalen (genrespezifisches Schreiben); Realisierung vielfältiger Mitteilungsabsichten; Erfolgreiche Gestaltung von Texten durch den Einsatz eines angemessenen Stils und Registers sowie durch die differenzierte Planung von Inhalt, Sprache und Form
- Sprechkompetenz: Monologisches und dialogisches Sprechen zur Präsentation der Ergebnisse und Begründung des eigenen Standpunktes
- Lesekompetenz: Trainieren des Leseverstehens durch Erkennen und Benennen der zentralen Ideen und Aussagen aus Sachtexten
- Soziale Kompetenz: Arbeitsteilige Zusammenarbeit und Ergebnispräsentation innerhalb einer Gruppe oder in Partnerarbeit

### Dauer

Pro Modul („How to write ...“ + Textarbeit) ca. 1–2 Unterrichtsstunden.

### Niveau

11–13 (G9) bzw. 10–12 (G8)

### Einbettung

Die Materialien sind so aufgebaut, dass sie sich zur Schreibförderung in die gängigen Themen des Englischunterrichts in der Qualifikationsphase der gymnasialen Oberstufe leicht integrieren lassen. Mögliche Themen sind hier u. a.:

- Alltagswirklichkeiten und Zukunftsperspektiven junger Erwachsener – *Studying and working abroad*
- Medien in ihrer Bedeutung für den Einzelnen und die Gesellschaft – *The impact of Shakespearean drama on young audiences today – Romeo and Juliet, The authorship argument*
- Postkolonialismus – Lebenswirklichkeiten in einem weiteren anglophonen Kulturraum: *India – faces of a rising nation*
- Fortschritt und Ethik in der modernen Gesellschaft: *Visions of the future: ethical issues of scientific and technological progress/ utopia and dystopia*

### Hinweise

Die Materialien können von der **Einführungsphase bis zur Qualifikationsphase** (in Grund- und Leistungskurs) übergreifend eingesetzt werden, da sie der Schulung und Festigung von **Schreibkompetenz** dienen. Alle Materialien sind so aufgebaut, dass sie sowohl als Einzelmaterial als auch als Aufgabenfolge eingesetzt werden können. Entsprechend adaptiert ist auch ein Einsatz in der Sekundarstufe I möglich. Alle hier vorgestellten Textformen sind ein wichtiger Bestandteil der **Aufgabenformate im Zentralabitur** und sollten von daher so früh wie möglich und kontinuierlich eingeübt werden. Zur Bewältigung der Aufgaben sollten die Schülerinnen und Schüler<sup>1</sup> bereits mit dem gängigen Fachvokabular der Sprachanalyse sowie verschiedenen Sprachregistern vertraut sein, sodass sie ein formelles von einem informellen Register unterscheiden können.

<sup>1</sup> Im weiteren Verlauf wird aus Gründen der besseren Lesbarkeit nur „Schüler“ verwendet.