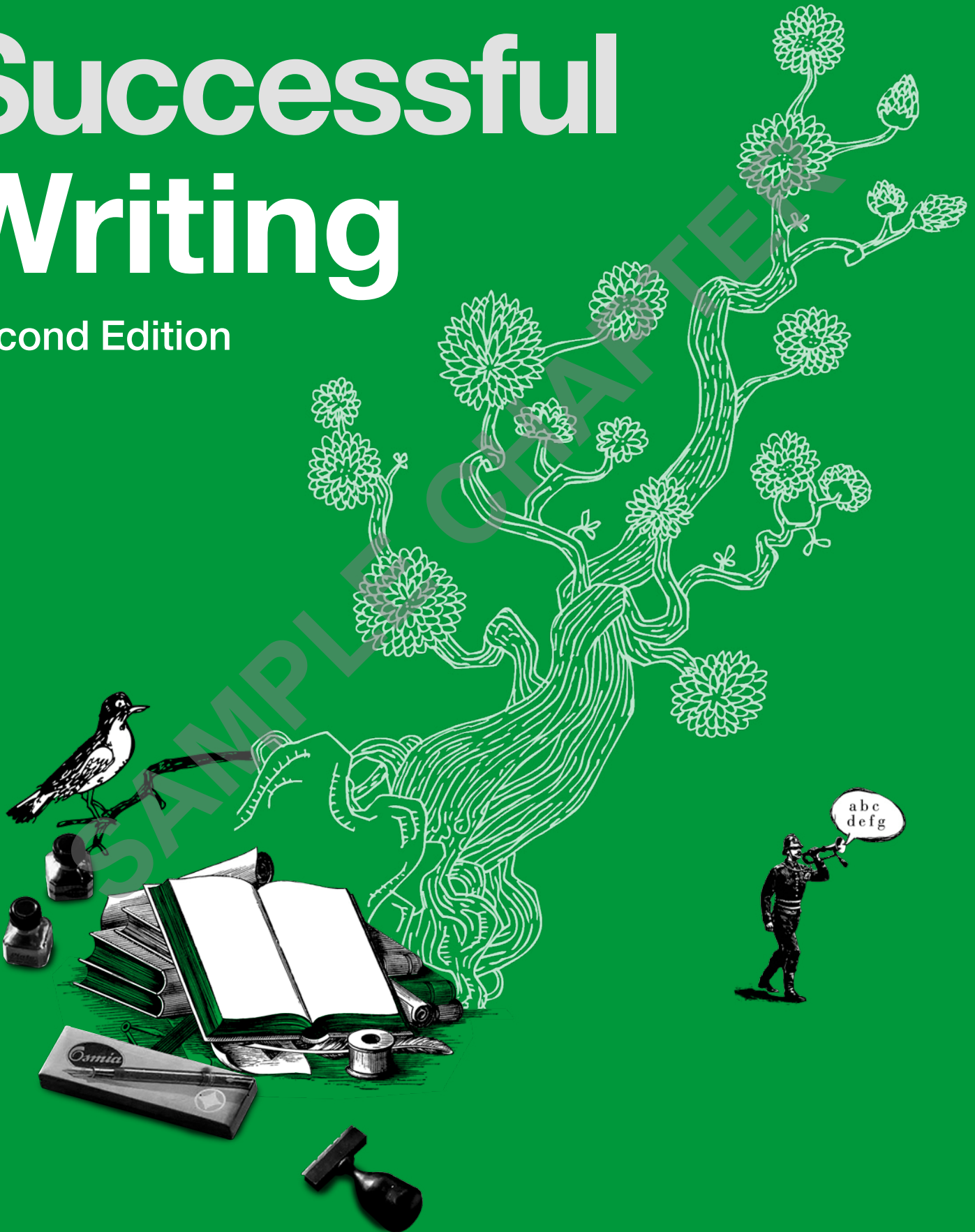


Amanda Ford  
Elizabeth Haywood

OXFORD

# Successful Writing

Second Edition



**SAMPLE CHAPTER**

Amanda Ford  
Elizabeth Haywood

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SAMPLE CHAPTER



# OXFORD

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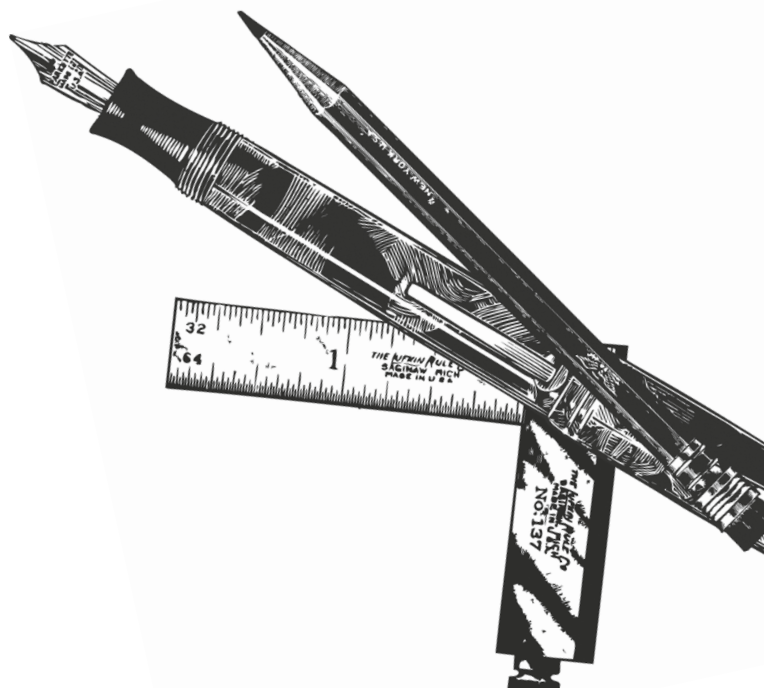
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# Preface

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*Successful Writing* is a companion volume to other titles in the *Successful* series. It is aimed at students in the first three years of secondary school.


*Successful Writing* exposes students to a variety of:

- *writing techniques*, such as point of view, narrative structure, vocabulary building and literary conventions
- *fiction and non-fiction writing*, including informative, narrative, descriptive, instructional, persuasive and personal
- *text types*, such as biography, reports, newspaper writing, résumés, myths and fables, and science fiction.

The emphasis is on providing students with different techniques and genres of writing in order to give them the opportunity to build their vocabulary, improve their written expression and develop writing skills specific to particular genres.

We have provided students with interesting and relevant models of writing and other stimuli which will lead to enhanced writing skills in the context of enjoyable contemporary material.

The units are designed to be used for classwork or homework and are suitable for a wide range of abilities.

Each unit consists of a model of writing or a graphic stimulus, an explanation of the technique or characteristic of the text type/genre, and space for student responses. Student responses will consist of both short answers and more sustained pieces of writing. Writing to be completed off the page is indicated by the  icon.

Answers can be found at [oup.com.au/SucWri](http://oup.com.au/SucWri) and these will reduce the burden of correction. The website also contains a series of NAPLAN-style assessment resources.

We hope you will find *Successful Writing* a practical addition to classroom work.

**Amanda Ford**  
**Elizabeth Haywood**

# Acknowledgements

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# Unit 1

## Paragraphs and topic sentences

You can improve your writing by being aware of the importance of **paragraphs** and **topic sentences**. The correct use of these devices will give your writing structure and, hopefully, prevent you from ‘rambling on’.

### Sentences

A **sentence** is a group of words that makes complete sense.

- A sentence may be short, for example:

I'm going.

- Or it may be longer, for example:

I need to go to the bank now.

### Paragraphs

A **paragraph** is a group of sentences about the same idea or incident. Each paragraph begins on a new line.

### Topic sentences

Each paragraph should have a **topic sentence**. This is the sentence that tells the reader the main point in the paragraph. All the other sentences help develop the idea of the topic sentence.

The topic sentence is often, but not always, at the start of the paragraph. In the following example, the topic sentence is at the start and the following sentences go on to give more details about the film:

*Last week I saw Finding Nemo.* I really enjoyed the film, and it made me realise how clever clown fish are. It was funny, too. I really enjoyed the fact that it was set in Australia—on the Great Barrier Reef.

In the next example, the topic sentence is at the end of the paragraph:

While I was watching *Finding Nemo*, I found myself wondering if kids would want a fish like Nemo for a pet. This would be cruel, as clown fish only survive in tropical waters and it is difficult to keep them in a tank. They require very special treatment. *The film made me very sad.*

### 1 Divide the following passage into paragraphs by indicating where each new paragraph should begin:

Joshua had always wanted a motorbike. He had been nagging his mother for one ever since he was little. She had always told him to wait until he was older. She was afraid that he would hurt himself if he was too young. Joshua found a way around his problem. He made friends with an older boy, Tim, who had his own motorbike. Tim let Joshua ride his bike in the bush sometimes, as long as no one found out. Unfortunately, Joshua's mum found out the hard way. She received a phone call from the local hospital one Sunday, telling her to come and see her son, who was suffering from a broken leg and cuts and bruises. He had come to grief on a muddy corner and had run into a tree. However, it did not stop him from wanting his own bike as soon as he had recovered!

### 2 Highlight the topic sentence in each of the following paragraphs.

- As the players ran onto the field it started to rain heavily. The spectators ran for shelter and wished they had stayed home. The players, however, looked forward to an exciting game in the mud. They hoped it wouldn't hail, though—that would be painful!
- Nathan felt a sharp pain in his head. He realised he had been hit from behind. When he turned around, there was no one there and he felt so dizzy he had to sit down. He would find out who did it later.

### 3 Write a paragraph of about five sentences in total using each of the topic sentences on the next page as your starting point. Remember, the paragraph must go on to give more details about the topic sentence.





a Melissa had lost her job at the local store. \_\_\_\_\_

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b I watched, horrified, as the enormous wave hurtled towards the toddlers on the beach.

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c We were really excited about going camping.

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**4 Write three paragraphs about one of the following topics:**

- My holiday from hell
- My mum found out what I had done
- A pet story
- A disastrous netball or football game



**Note the following:**

- Each paragraph must have a topic sentence, which you should highlight.
- The first paragraph should introduce the topic.
- The second paragraph should contain a problem of some kind.
- The third paragraph should resolve the problem.

**5 Find examples of topic sentences in a book you have read. Note where they have been placed in the paragraph. Is there any pattern?**



# Unit 2

## Linking sentences and paragraphs

Once you have developed your topic sentences and paragraphs, you can make your writing more interesting (and easier to follow) if you connect the sentences and paragraphs with words that **link** them.

### Linking sentences

Look at the following example:

I am going to try out for the team. I don't expect to be selected.

The above two sentences sound rather simple. They could be made into one sentence by using a linking, or joining, word. The following sentence is better:

I am going to try out for the team, *although* I don't expect to be selected.

In the above example, *although* connects the two ideas in the sentence.

### Linking paragraphs

You can improve your writing by linking your **paragraphs** as well as your sentences. There are many words that can lead the reader from one paragraph to the next. Here are some of them:

actually	as a result	consequently	earlier	furthermore	in contrast
in fact	later on	unfortunately	on the other hand		

1 Choose a word from this list to join each of the pairs of sentences that follow: *however, unfortunately, consequently, because, besides*.

- a The soundtrack was impossible to hear. People wanted their money refunded. \_\_\_\_\_
- b I didn't go to the match. I didn't feel well. \_\_\_\_\_
- c I stayed home because I don't like football. I had too much homework. \_\_\_\_\_
- d Zoe decided to email Sarah. Sarah's computer wasn't working. \_\_\_\_\_
- e Hiroshi slipped over on the ice. He broke his ankle. \_\_\_\_\_

2 Insert the most suitable word or phrase from the box above:

- a \_\_\_\_\_ of her injuries, Melissa was unable to play tennis for six weeks.
- b \_\_\_\_\_, she had spoken to the doctor, but he was definite about it.
- c \_\_\_\_\_, after the weekend, she left for a holiday.
- d \_\_\_\_\_, Bela was lucky enough to play in the finals.
- e \_\_\_\_\_, Melissa didn't care that much about it.
- f \_\_\_\_\_ she was quite relieved.
- g \_\_\_\_\_, her mother was angry about her carelessness.
- h \_\_\_\_\_, she lost her place on the team for the rest of the year.
- i \_\_\_\_\_, she lived to regret her haste.
- j \_\_\_\_\_, she was never able to play with that team again.



3 Write a short piece entitled 'My first day at school' that is structured in three paragraphs, as in Activity 4 of Unit 1. Make sure you include linking words—try to introduce the second and third paragraphs with a linking word. You may also be able to use a linking word in some of your sentences. Highlight all the linking words.

Here is an example:

*Paragraph 1—introduces the topic*

I was starting at a new school that day. I felt nervous yet excited, as I packed my bag and set off for the bus. I had moved to a new suburb and consequently I was forced to change schools. I hoped that the new one would be all right.

*Paragraph 2—a problem*

Naturally my dog Jess was sorry to see me walk out the gate because she felt strange in the new house as well. I was afraid she would try to follow me and get lost or, even worse, run over. Although I shut the gate firmly, I could see there was a gap underneath where a small dog could wriggle through and escape.

*Paragraph 3—the solution*

As a result of my worries about Jess, I missed the bus. I returned to the house just in time to find her running down the footpath in the direction I had taken. Fortunately, she had come to no harm. I asked Mum to keep her inside the house that day and began my walk to school.

Now it's your turn:

*Paragraph 1—introduces the topic*

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*Paragraph 2—a problem*

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*Paragraph 3—the solution*

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4 Find at least six linking words in a book you have read recently. \_\_\_\_\_

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# Unit 3

## Introductions

Your **opening sentences** are vital to making your writing interesting. They must be eye-catching and intriguing—the reader must want to read on.

There are many ways to start. Set out below are some examples from well-known writers.

### Example 1: from *The Witches* by Roald Dahl

In fairy-tales, witches always wear silly black hats and black cloaks, and they ride on broomsticks. But this is not a fairy-tale. This is about REAL WITCHES.

The reader is left wanting to know what real witches are, and why this is not a fairy-tale. The description of fairy-tale witches is vivid, too.

### Example 2: from the story ' Mousetrap' in *Uncanny* by Paul Jennings

'You're not taking that dung beetle with you,' said Mum.

'But Mum, Uncle Sid likes dung beetles. He won't mind.'

'Aunt Scotch will. She doesn't even like boys.'

This introduction sets up a scene that encourages the reader to continue:

- A dung beetle is an interesting pet.
- Why does Aunt Scotch not like boys and how will this affect the story?
- Why is the boy going to stay with his aunt and uncle?

In addition, the use of *direct speech* (the actual words spoken) makes the opening more lively and immediate.

### Example 3: From *Tomorrow, When the War Began* by John Marsden

It's only half an hour since someone—Robyn, I think—said we should write everything down, and it's only twenty-nine minutes since I got chosen.

Again, the reader is left wanting to find out what is going on:

- What needs to be written down?
- Who has chosen the writer? The writer obviously feels apprehensive about it.
- Who is Robyn? Is she the leader?

**1** Which sentence from each of the following pairs would make the more interesting opening for a piece of writing? Explain your choice in each case. Why do you think the opening you have chosen is better than the other?

- a** I woke up at six o'clock and had breakfast.      'You're going to miss the bus!' screamed Belinda from the kitchen.

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- b** The green slime oozed slowly under the door.      Once upon a time there was some green slime.

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c I was born in Sydney.

Mum said I was the tiniest baby in the hospital.

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d Sally nagged her mother until she agreed to let her go to the dance.

'Mum, if you let me go I promise to clean my room every week.'

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e Crack! The old oak tree split in two.

It was a dark and stormy night.

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**2 Make up an opening sentence for each of the following topics. You should be aiming for lively and intriguing sentences that make the reader want to continue reading.**

a You discover that your mobile phone has been stolen \_\_\_\_\_

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b A strange message appears on your computer screen \_\_\_\_\_

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c The grand final (any sport) \_\_\_\_\_

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d I nearly drowned \_\_\_\_\_

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e The day I crashed my bike \_\_\_\_\_

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**3 Find several examples of interesting openings to stories or films. Discuss their effectiveness in class. Which work best? Why do these work better than others?**



# Unit 4

## Conclusions

There are many ways to **finish** a piece of writing. You need to leave an impression on the reader. You might use a surprise ending, or you could link the ending back to the start. Whatever you choose, you should try not to resort to a common, well-known sentence (a *cliché*) such as, ‘They all lived happily ever after.’

Look at the ways these writers finish their stories. (The openings can all be found in Unit 3.)

### Example 1: from *The Witches* by Roald Dahl

‘You can say that again!’ my grandmother cried, giving me another kiss. ‘I can’t wait to get started!’

Roald Dahl has used direct speech to finish this book—we feel involved because we hear what the boy’s grandmother actually says. We are also left wondering what they are going to do.

### Example 2: from the story ‘Mousetrap’ in *Uncanny* by Paul Jennings

In my letter back I told him the little dung beetle was doing well. I still keep it in the matchbox. But at lunch time I let it out and give it as many chocolate freckles as it wants.

We learn that the boy has survived his trip and that the dung beetle has been rewarded for something. The description of the chocolates makes the reward seem special—particularly if you like chocolate freckles yourself! There is a link back to the opening of the story, as the boy’s mother had said that the boy should not take the dung beetle with him.

### Example 3: From *Tomorrow, When the War Began* by John Marsden

Humans do such terrible things to each other that sometimes my brain cells tell me they must be evil. But my heart still isn’t convinced.

I just hope we can survive.

The use of the first person (‘I’) encourages the reader to identify with the narrator of the story. We learn that terrible things have happened but the narrator is still optimistic that they can survive. This ending leaves the way open for a sequel—how do they survive?

## 1 Which sentence from each of the following pairs would make the more interesting ending for a piece of writing? Explain your choice in each case. Why do you think the ending you have chosen is better than the other?

a We went home and went to sleep.

‘Let’s go. There’s nothing else we can do to help now,’ said Mike.

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b Just as we were turning back we heard a distant roar.

On the way back we heard a noise.

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**c** We left the circus grounds at five o'clock and went home.

I will never see a circus again without thinking of that fateful day.

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**2** Make up a conclusion for each of the following topics. You should be aiming for lively and original conclusions that somehow refer back to events in the story. Consider using short sentences or direct speech.

**a** Your brother has broken your favourite game \_\_\_\_\_

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**b** You are not allowed to go to the game, but you sneak out anyway \_\_\_\_\_

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**c** My dog ran away \_\_\_\_\_

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**d** My trip to Queensland \_\_\_\_\_

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**e** The worst birthday ever \_\_\_\_\_

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**3** Using one of the topics from Exercise 2, make up an opening that would fit with and provide a link to the conclusion you have suggested.

• Topic from Exercise 2: \_\_\_\_\_

• Your suggested opening: \_\_\_\_\_

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**4** Find several examples of interesting endings to stories or films. Discuss their effectiveness in class. Which work best? Why do these work better than others?



# Unit 5

## Different ways of planning

In this unit and the one that follows, we will be looking at some of the main ways in which writers **plan** their work.

Let's assume that your teacher has given you one or more specific topics to write about. Here are three ways in which you could approach this task:

### Brainstorming the topic

Think of anything connected with the topic and write it down. This is a good exercise to do with your classmates, as you will get more ideas from pooling your thoughts.

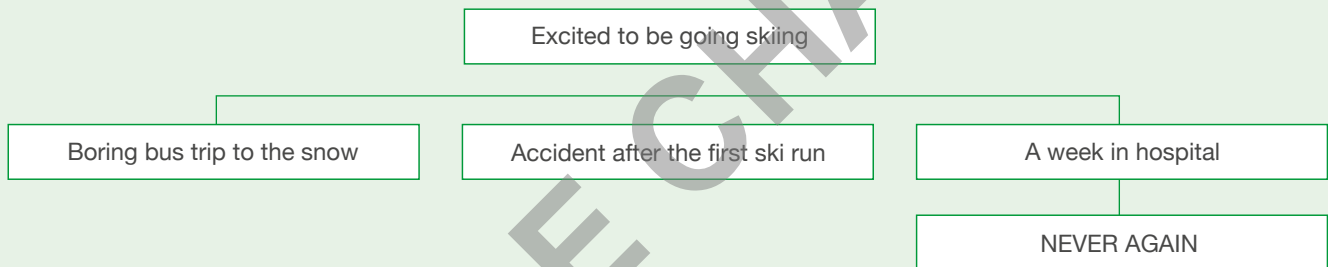
### Approaching the topic logically

Some people prefer to tell the whole story in order from the start. You could write down a list of events in order and then expand them into paragraphs.

### Organise your ideas in graphic form

There are many ways of using diagrams and drawings to plan your writing and this method appeals to people who work visually. You could use pieces of paper or cardboard with ideas or points you want to make and arrange them on the table with arrows connecting them, to show the connections. Here is an example:

#### MY DISASTROUS FIRST ATTEMPT AT SKIING



1 **Brainstorm some ideas for each of the following topics. Ask your classmates for ideas. You should end up with at least four different ways of using each topic.**

a The day my aunt came to live with us \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b My favourite television show \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

c I felt my bike skidding in the gravel ... \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_





d Why I love my pet \_\_\_\_\_

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e Don't go in there! \_\_\_\_\_

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2 List four possible points (in order) that could be expanded into paragraphs for the following topics.

a My day at the snow

i \_\_\_\_\_

ii \_\_\_\_\_

iii \_\_\_\_\_

iv \_\_\_\_\_

b I was left alone in the deserted shopping centre

i \_\_\_\_\_

ii \_\_\_\_\_

iii \_\_\_\_\_

iv \_\_\_\_\_

c Alien invasion

i \_\_\_\_\_

ii \_\_\_\_\_

iii \_\_\_\_\_

iv \_\_\_\_\_

3 Draw a diagram to help you plan a piece of writing about a funny experience that you have had.



4 Ask some of your friends how they get ideas for writing and how they plan their work. You may be surprised at the different methods people use to get under way.



# Unit 6

## Finding your own ideas for writing

Sometimes you will be asked to think of your **own ideas for writing**. Writers have many ways of collecting ideas. Here are some of them:

### Events from your life

Your life is what you know best. You could write about a birth or a death, a special holiday or your relatives, for example.

### Something you have read about or seen on television

You could turn an episode of *The Simpsons* into a story about your life. Or you might have read about a tragedy in the newspaper and you could imagine what it would have been like to be there.

### Eavesdropping

You might overhear a conversation on the train or at the shopping centre and use these words as the starting point for a story of your own, for example:

'I couldn't believe she had bought the same shoes as me!'

This could be a story about two friends who have a fight over some shoes. Do they become friends again, or are they enemies forever?

### A special place

You could describe a place that is special for you—such as your favourite beach or even your bedroom—and try to explain why you like it so much. It could be connected with a special event in your life.

### A photograph

You might decide to tell the story behind a photograph, or you could use it as the starting point for an imaginary story.

### Your imagination

Some people have very vivid imaginations and can make up stories that sound exciting and interesting (a good example is the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy). You might have some ideas for a fantasy story that you could discuss with your friends or your teacher.

The units that follow describe many different forms of writing, giving you the tools to develop your ideas in a variety of ways. At a later date, you could look back at these planning units to help you develop the ideas you have thought of into finished pieces of writing.

#### 1 List three important events from your life that you could write about:

- a \_\_\_\_\_
- b \_\_\_\_\_
- c \_\_\_\_\_

#### 2 List three incidents, characters or storylines that you have read about or seen on television that you could use for a story of your own

- a \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**3 What sort of story could emerge from the following snippets of conversation?**

**a** 'Look out! He's coming this way. Don't let him see you.' \_\_\_\_\_

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**b** 'Mum said I'm not allowed to go to the movies. I'll show her ...' \_\_\_\_\_

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**c** 'I saw the bike I'm going to get when I turn 14. I just need to find the money.' \_\_\_\_\_

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**4 List three special places that you think you could write about.**

**a** \_\_\_\_\_

**b** \_\_\_\_\_

**c** \_\_\_\_\_

**5 Describe a photograph that you might use as the starting point for a piece of writing.** \_\_\_\_\_

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**6 List two ideas that could be expanded into a fantasy story.**

**a** \_\_\_\_\_

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**b** \_\_\_\_\_

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**7 Think about your favourite stories. Where do you think the authors got their ideas from?**



# Unit 7

## Practical construction

Writing that tells the reader how to make something is called **instructional writing**.

When you are writing instructions on how to make something, you need to plan your work very carefully—the instructions must be in logical order, otherwise they will be confusing.

Think carefully about the way you make the object. You may find it easier to use *point form*, which is quite an acceptable way to write instructions. If you need to use *technical terms*, make sure you explain what they mean. You may decide to use *diagrams* to make your instructions clearer.

An example of an instructional piece of writing follows:

### How to make earrings

#### MATERIALS

head pins (long soft pins for threading the beads onto)  
hooks (there are various sizes available in silver, gold or nickel)  
beads of various sizes and colours  
small round-nosed pliers

#### METHOD

- 1 Select the beads you will be using.
- 2 Select the smaller beads you will be using on each side of the larger beads, making sure that all beads match in colour and size.
- 3 Decide whether you will be using gold or silver hooks and fittings.
- 4 Thread the beads onto the head pin in your chosen order.
- 5 Using the small round-nosed pliers, bend the end of the head pin into a circle, leaving a gap for the hook to be attached.
- 6 Attach the hook to the circle.
- 7 Close the gap around the hook.

1 The following instructions for making potato chips are jumbled up. Write the instructions in the correct, logical order below.

- Fry the chips in hot oil.
- Wash the potatoes before you peel them.
- Dry the newly cut chips on a paper towel to make them easier to fry.
- Peel the potatoes.
- Cut the potatoes into chips about 5 cm long.
- Heat the oil before you make the chips.

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_



2 Write a set of instructions for one of the following. Don't forget, you can use diagrams if it makes your instructions clearer. (If you choose to use diagrams, please complete this activity off the page.)

- How to wash a car (or dog)
- How to build and light a fire
- How to make pancakes

How to: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Method:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

3 Write a set of instructions for something that you know how to make. (Again, if you choose to use diagrams, please complete this activity off the page.)

How to: \_\_\_\_\_

Materials: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Method:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE CHAPTER

# Unit 8

## How to perform an activity

Writing that tells the reader how to perform an activity is also called **instructional writing**.

When you are writing instructions on how to perform an activity, you need to plan your work very carefully—the instructions must be in logical order, otherwise they will be confusing.

Think carefully about the way you will describe the activity. You may find it easier to use *point form*, which is quite an acceptable way to write instructions. If you need to use *technical terms*, make sure you explain what they mean. You may decide to use *diagrams* to make your instructions clearer.

An example of an instructional piece of writing that describes how to perform an activity follows:

### How to mount a horse

#### BASIC REQUIREMENTS

one quiet horse  
saddle and bridle  
a hard hat and suitable riding boots  
someone to hold the horse while you learn to mount it

#### METHOD

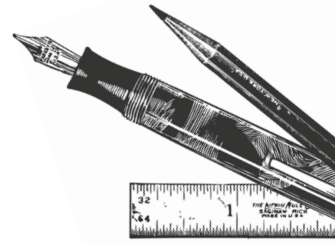
- 1 Stand on the left-hand side of the horse (known as the 'near side'), facing the horse's tail.
- 2 Hold the reins firmly in your left hand.
- 3 Place your left foot in the stirrup, making sure that someone is holding the horse to prevent it moving away while you try to get on.
- 4 Carefully swing your right leg over the saddle and place your right foot into the right stirrup.
- 5 Once you feel balanced and you have a good grip on the reins, squeeze your legs on the horse's side to encourage it to move forward.

It is also possible to write instructions in *sentences and paragraphs* rather than in point form. Here is a brief example:

### How to train your budgie to talk

You need to obtain a young male bird and keep it in the house, where it can become one of the family. Every day, you need to repeat the same simple words to the bird (for example, 'Who's a pretty boy?'), making sure that it has no distractions. It must concentrate fully on your words. The bird should learn to talk fairly quickly, as long as you remember to repeat the same words as often as possible and make sure the bird does not have the distraction of other birds.

- 1 Write a set of instructions in point form for one of the following. Don't forget, you can use diagrams if it makes your instructions clearer. (If you choose to use diagrams, please complete this activity off the page.)
  - How to ride a mountain bike
  - How to play netball
  - How to ride a motorbike



How to: \_\_\_\_\_

Basic requirements: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Method:

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Write the instructions for one of the following in sentences. (Again, if you choose to use diagrams, please complete this activity off the page.)**

- How to train your dog to sit
- How to change the ring tone on your mobile phone

How to: \_\_\_\_\_

Method: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3 Write the instructions for an activity that you know how to perform. It may be a sport, hobby or other skill that you have learnt. You may choose whether to write the instructions in point form or in sentence form, and whether or not to use diagrams.**



# Unit 9

## News report

A **news report** must include certain information about an event or incident. It is useful to ask these questions about the incident:

- What happened?
- When and where did it happen?
- Who was involved?
- Why and how did it happen?
- What was the result?

A simple news report does not include the opinion of the writer—when opinions are given, the piece becomes *persuasive* or *opinionative*.

Here is an example of a simple news report.

*Headline that outlines the story* → **School bus over the edge**

**Jason Frenkel**  
*Herald Sun*

*What happened?* → The Smithtown College school bus ran off the road and overturned in a gully this morning on Beacon Hill. on the steep hill and failed to take a corner.

*When and where?* →

*Who was involved?* → Seventeen students from Smithtown College were on the bus at the time. Luckily it came to rest on a large tree, which prevented it from rolling all the way to the bottom of the ravine. Several of the students suffered minor injuries.

*Why and how?* → The bus apparently suffered brake failure. The bus driver is being treated for shock.

*What was the result?* ←

1 **Make up headlines to accompany the following stories for your local newspaper. Bear in mind the role of headlines: they should give some hint about the content of the report and encourage the reader to read the whole article.**

a A cyclone is heading for a major city. \_\_\_\_\_

b Thousands of battery hens are released from their cages at night by animal liberationists. \_\_\_\_\_

c A local youth has his mobile phone stolen as he waits for the train. \_\_\_\_\_

d The local football team wins the grand final. \_\_\_\_\_





**2 Write a news report based on the following story under the headings provided:**

A family of ducks disrupts morning traffic as it crosses the road.

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

What happened? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

When and where? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was involved? \_\_\_\_\_

Why and how? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What was the result? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**3 Now write a news report without the assistance of the questions. Make up your own details about the following story:**

A lost child is found safe and well after an all-night search in the bush.

Headline: \_\_\_\_\_

Report: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**4 Find a news report and read it carefully. Does it answer the key questions: *What? When? Where? Who? Why? How?***

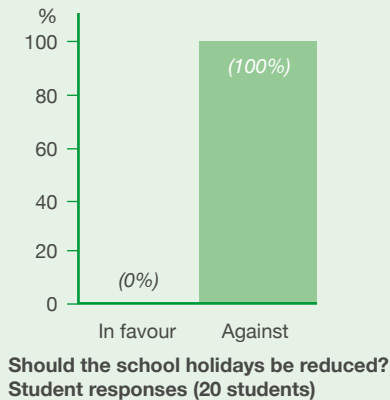


# Unit 10

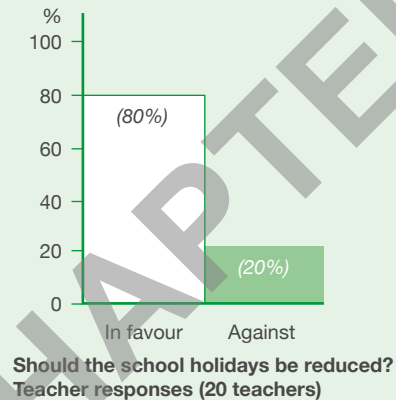
## Using simple column graphs

Sometimes you will need to write up the results of research you have done, and one way to show the results of interviews or questionnaires is to plot them on a **graph** or **chart**. There are several ways of doing this, and your computer will offer some options, but the simplest way is to use a **column graph**.

If, for example, you asked twenty school students what they thought about reducing the school holidays, the results could look like this:



If, however, you asked twenty teachers the same question, you might get a different response:



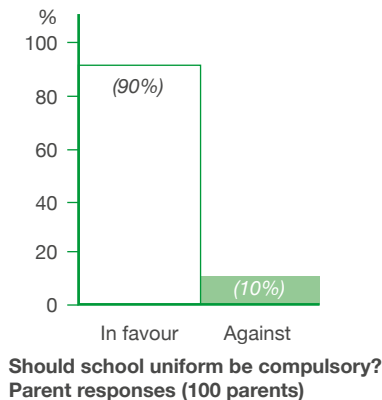
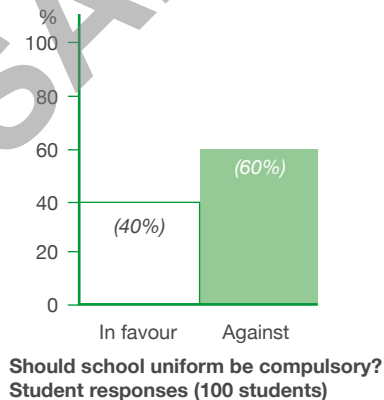
It is usually necessary to *interpret* the results of your research in writing. First, you could write a sentence about each of the graphs above, for example:

One hundred per cent of students were against the proposition that school holidays should be reduced.  
Twenty per cent of teachers were against the proposition and 80 per cent in favour.

Next, you should interpret the results. For example:

As expected, students do not want their holidays cut. However, most teachers (80 per cent) were in favour of the proposal. Although the sample was small (only forty people in total), it seems that teachers feel they need as much class time as possible to get through the curriculum.

### 1 Answer the following questions about the column graphs below:



- a How many students would prefer compulsory school uniform? \_\_\_\_\_
- b How many students would prefer not to have compulsory school uniform? \_\_\_\_\_



- c How many parents would prefer compulsory school uniform? \_\_\_\_\_
- d How many parents would prefer not to have compulsory school uniform? \_\_\_\_\_
- e What do the figures tell us about students' attitudes towards school uniform? \_\_\_\_\_

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- f What do the figures tell us about the parents' attitudes to school uniform? \_\_\_\_\_

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- g Write a few sentences interpreting these results. How would you try to explain them? \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2 Conduct research on one of the following topics:

- School sport should be compulsory: *Yes/No*
- Computer games should be banned during the week: *Yes/No*
- School canteens should sell only healthy food: *Yes/No*

a Ask twenty classmates to respond to your topic, write down your results and then plot them on a simple column graph.

b Write several sentences interpreting the results:

- What could they mean?
- Is the sample (twenty students) big enough to draw wider conclusions?



## 3 Make up your own topic—it should be a question that has a simple *Yes/No* answer—and conduct your research. Ask at least twenty people. Include the following information:

- Your topic
- The results (in writing)
- Your column graph
- Your interpretation of the results.



# Unit 11

## Film review

A **film review** should tell the reader briefly what the film is about (*informative writing*), but it normally includes the writer's opinion of the film as well (*opinionative writing*). Thus the purpose of a film review is twofold—both informative and opinionative.

Here are a few points to remember when you write a film review:

- Do not give too much of the plot away, especially the ending!
- Include some brief information about the director, if possible. You could, for example, mention other films made by this director.
- Include some brief information about the main actors and the characters they play. What other films have the actors been in? How does this one compare?
- Try to explain what is special about this particular film. What makes it special? How does it fit in with other similar films? Is it better than others?
- Give your opinion of the film with reasons and examples of incidents that back up your opinion.
- Give a final recommendation. Who would you recommend this film to? Why?

Here is an example of a plan for a film review.

<b>TITLE OF FILM AND RATING</b>	The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (M)
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Peter Jackson
<b>BRIEF PLOT OUTLINE</b>	Based on the Tolkien fantasy, the film follows Frodo's quest to destroy the Ring with the help of the wizard Gandalf and the rest of the fellowship.
<b>MAIN ACTORS AND THE CHARACTERS THEY PLAY</b>	Frodo (Elijah Wood) and Gandalf (Ian McKellen) play their parts superbly as usual, but it is the digitally-created Gollum who really steals the show.
<b>WHAT IS SPECIAL ABOUT THIS FILM?</b>	Oscar-winning special effects, the spectacular New Zealand landscape and a gripping climax.
<b>COMPARE WITH OTHER FILMS</b>	The best of the trilogy.
<b>YOUR OPINION WITH REASONS</b>	Not to be missed, especially for fans of the first two films. The characters, story, action sequences and landscape all work together to provide the perfect cinema experience.
<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>	Anyone who loved the first two films. Lovers of fantasy and of Tolkien.

- 1 Read the following short review and identify the words that give the information asked for in the questions below.

### THE LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING (M)

Everyone who has loved the previous films in Peter Jackson's fantastic and ambitious adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy will be bowled over by this one. It is without doubt the best film of the three. I give it four stars (excellent). I'll be returning to see it myself!

- a The director's name \_\_\_\_\_
- b The writer of the original story \_\_\_\_\_



- c Two words that give an opinion of the film trilogy \_\_\_\_\_
- d Who would enjoy this film? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e Does the writer think this is the best film of the three? \_\_\_\_\_

**2 Write a short review (about fifty words) of a film you have seen. Your review must include:**

- a brief comment on what the film is about
- some information about the characters
- your opinion
- a recommendation.

**This exercise should encourage you to focus on the most important elements in the film, and prevent a long and unnecessary description of the plot.**

Title of your film: \_\_\_\_\_

What the film is about \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Some information about the characters \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your opinion \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

A recommendation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**3 Write a film review of about 250 words that includes the elements practised in the above exercises. You should be able to describe what makes the film special and give examples of incidents from the film to back up your comments.**



# Unit 12

## Book review

A **book review** contains many of the same elements as a film review (although you will not, of course, be able to comment on the soundtrack or special effects). You should begin with the title of the book and the name of the author and publisher—it is surprising how often students omit these important details. Do not give away too much of the plot, and be careful you do not give away the ending.

A book review should tell the reader what the book is about (*informative writing*) and include the reviewer's opinion of the book (*opinionative writing*).

Here are some points to remember when you write a book review:

- Do not forget to include the title of the book, the author and the publisher.
- Do not give too much of the plot away, especially the ending.
- Include some brief information about the author. Have you read any other books by this author? Is the author famous?
- Outline the plot (what the book is about, the actual storyline).
- Describe the type of book—is it a fantasy novel, a book about relationships, a funny book? You might compare it with other books of a similar type.
- Make some comments on the main characters and how well they are developed. Are they realistic? Are they convincing?
- Try to explain what is special or different about this book.
- Give your opinion of the book, with reasons and examples of incidents that back up your opinion.
- Give a final recommendation. Who would you recommend this book to? Why?

Here is an example of a plan for a book review (note that you should not include the subheadings in your final copy):

### **Title**

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas

### **Author**

John Boyne

### **Publisher and price**

Random House \$29.95

### **Brief plot description**

Bruno is a lonely nine-year-old German boy in 1943 Berlin. He tells the story of his meeting with Schmel, who lives in Out-With, where Bruno's father has been posted. Bruno does not realise the actual horror of the place where Schmel lives, behind barbed wire, until he enters the place himself. The book is a fable, where Bruno's ignorance and naivety are used to reveal the way many people reacted to the concentration camps.

### **Information about author**

This is the first novel John Boyne has written for young people.

### **Type of book—compare with other texts**

There have been many books written about the Holocaust. The most well-known one, a diary written by a teenager hiding from the Nazis, is *The Diary of Anne Frank*. *The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas* has also been made into a film.

### **Characters**

Bruno is an innocent and rather self-centred boy of nine. He has been sheltered from the realities of the war and consequently has no idea of the reality of the camp where his father works. He has a lively imagination. Schmel is a Jewish boy from Poland—he was born on the same day as Bruno. The story is written from Bruno's point of view.

### **Your opinion with reasons and recommendation**

This is an excellent, thought-provoking book for teenagers. It can be read on two levels—the story of the boys' friendship and the fable which reveals the horrors of the war. It will provide the basis for further study of the Holocaust and its effects on prisoners and captors. Highly recommended.



**1 Choose a book that you know well and complete the following. This will help you to develop a plan for writing an actual review of it.**

- a** Title, author and publisher \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b** Type of book \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c** Brief outline of plot, themes and issues \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d** Description of main characters \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- e** What is special or different about this book? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- f** Your opinion of the book \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- g** Reasons for your opinion \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- h** Recommendation. Would you recommend this book? To whom? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2 Now use the points you have made above as a basis for planning your review, paragraph by paragraph. What is the logical order for your review? Which aspects do you want to emphasise? (You may find it useful at this stage to refer back to Units 1–6.) Here is one possible way of organising your review:**

- Paragraph 1: Title, author, publisher, type of book
- Paragraph 2: Brief outline of plot; theme or issues in book
- Paragraphs 3 and 4: Description and comment on main characters
- Paragraph 5: Your opinion of the book (with reasons); why this book is special
- Paragraph 6: Final comments and recommendation

**3 Now write your full-scale book review. It should contain at least five paragraphs and be at least 400 words long.**

