

# WRITING FOCUS

## Useful linkers and phrases for writing

Expressing reasons and causes	Because/as/since/Due to the fact that + clause Participle clauses Because of/Due to/Owing to/As a result of/Thanks to	I had no problems <b>because/as/since</b> I understood French. <b>Having learnt French</b> , I had no problems. <b>Because of</b> the war, many people left the country.
Adding ideas	and, moreover, in addition, furthermore, besides, as well as, neither...nor, either...or	Jane is the perfect host <b>as well as</b> a great cook. <b>Neither</b> Kim <b>nor</b> Alice knew how to cook. <b>Either</b> Tom <b>or</b> Shelly will meet you at the station.
Expressing concession	Although/Even though + clause In spite of/Despite + noun/ing	<b>Although</b> meat is cheaper, I prefer fish. <b>In spite of</b> being poor, he was able to travel abroad.
Expressing purpose	To/in order to/so as to + verb So that + clause	I arrived early <b>so as to</b> appear keen. I took the job <b>so that</b> I could get some experience.
Expressing causes and results	Such + that clause So + adjective + the clause	It was <b>such</b> a horrible situation that I started to cry. My bags were <b>so</b> heavy that I took a taxi.
Expressing consequences	As a consequence/As a result/Consequently	<b>Consequently</b> , many people were able to get their money back.
Expressing contrast	While/whereas On the one hand...on the other hand however/only/nevertheless/that said/despite this	<b>While/Whereas</b> some people believe red meat is bad, others disagree. It was a fantastic idea, <b>only/however</b> it didn't work in practice!
Expressing condition or hypothesis	Unless/In case/If/Provided/Providing Supposing/Assuming	<b>Unless</b> the government spends more money, there won't be any improvement. Stand by the door <b>in case</b> she decides to arrive early. <b>Supposing</b> he doesn't like option A, what will we do then?
Expressing points in time	Before: beforehand, earlier, Later: later on, shortly after, long after At the same time: As/Just as/Then	I had checked the website <b>beforehand</b> . <b>Shortly after</b> , they announced they were going to get married. <b>Just as</b> I walked in through the door, I realised I had made a mistake.
Sequencing events in time	First of all/To begin with Secondly, Thirdly, Finally/Last, but not least	<b>To begin</b> with I would like to discuss the impact on the environment this project would have. <b>Last, but not least</b> , we have to consider the cost of the project.
Conclusions	all in all, all things considered, on balance, to sum up, in conclusion, to conclude	<b>All in all</b> we can see that there are far more benefits than drawbacks. <b>In conclusion</b> , the government needs to take urgent action now in order to prevent further coastal erosion.

# Useful phrases and expressions for writing

## Apologising

### Informal phrases

I'm really sorry (that) ...  
Sorry for bothering you.  
Sorry to bother you.  
Sorry for any trouble.  
Sorry I didn't write earlier, but I ...  
Sorry I haven't written for so long./Sorry for not writing for so long.  
I'm writing to tell you how sorry I am to ... (about) ...  
It will never happen again.

### Neutral phrases

I apologise for ...  
Please accept my apology ...

## Thanking

### Informal phrases

I'm writing to thank you for ...  
Thank you so much.  
It was so/really/very kind of you to ...

### Neutral phrases

I really appreciate your help.  
Thank you for sending it back to me.  
I am really grateful for your help.  
It's very kind of you.  
I hope it's not too much trouble for you.  
Thank you for doing me a favour.

## For-and-against / Opinion essay

### Introduction – for-and-against

What are the arguments for and against this idea?  
What are the benefits and drawbacks of such a solution?  
What are the advantages and disadvantages of ...?  
This idea can be said to have both advantages and disadvantages.

Let us consider the advantages and disadvantages of ...

### Introduction – opinion

Personally, I believe (that) ...  
In my opinion, / To my mind, ...  
In this essay I am going to argue that ...  
(Today) Many people believe that ...  
Let me explain why I agree with this view.

### Introducing various points of view

The first (dis)advantage for (the young adult) is ...  
From the (teachers') point of view ...

### Giving arguments

First and foremost,  
One (dis)advantage is that ...  
It is also often hoped that (the event) will ...  
It is also important/vital to consider ...  
Another benefit/drawback is that ...

Another downside is the ...

### Expressing your own opinion

In my opinion, / To my mind, / In my view, (the advantages outweigh the disadvantages).

As far as I am concerned,

### Conclusion

In conclusion, / To conclude, / To sum up, / All in all, / On balance, / On the whole,  
All things considered, / Taking everything into account, ...  
For all these reasons, I am convinced that ...

## Article

### Introduction

Did you know that ...?  
Have you ever wondered why/how ...?  
What would you do if ...?

### Introducing opinions

It seems/appears that ...  
It would seem/appear that ...  
It is believed/recognised that ...  
There is little/no doubt that ...  
There is some doubt ...  
People often believe that ... Some people say that ...

### Cause and result

In such countries financial difficulties are common, so people have fewer children.  
People spend most of their time online today. As a result / Consequently, many people are losing the ability to tell fantasy from reality.  
Before the era of antibiotics, more soldiers died due to/ because of diseases than were killed in action.

### Introducing opposing opinion

On the one hand, the park is extremely popular with elderly people, but on the other (hand) they are not the ones who buy tickets.  
Some people feel it is wrong for advertising to be aimed specifically at children, while/whereas others do not share this view.

Mark was not an exceptionally talented man nevertheless/ nonetheless he applied for the job and, to everyone's surprise, was offered the post in the IT department.  
However, many people say that action should be taken straight away.  
Even though/Although many residents support the mayor and his policy, he also has many enemies.  
In spite of/Despite winning in the local election, his real ambition was to work for one of the EU institutions.  
But all this may be about to change.

### Ending

What will the future of ... be?  
What are (Mark's) plans?  
Let's hope (they succeed).  
Hopefully, ...  
For those reasons, I am with those who think ...  
Perhaps in the future ...

# Useful phrases and expressions for writing

## Speculating about people

Based on ..., I'd say he's/she's/it's ...  
Judging by ..., I (don't) think ...  
It looks/seems as if/as though ...  
He/She/It appears/doesn't appear to be ...  
The chances are (that) he's/she's/it's ...

## Showing certainty

Clearly, (there's a problem/something is wrong.)  
It's obvious/clear (from the expression on his/her face) that ...  
He/She/It is definitely/certainly (not) ...

## Showing uncertainty

It's hard to be sure (whether/if ...)  
It's not easy to say (whether/if ...)  
I can't really tell (whether/if ...)

## Speculating about the situation

He/She could/might have ('ve) just + Past Participle (recent past)  
He/She could/might be + -ing (present)  
He/She could/might be about to + infinitive (near future)

## Introducing the anecdote

(Right, so) I'm going to tell you about (a great day out ...)  
(OK, so) this is a story about (a day I'll never forget.)  
This took place about (a month ago ...)

## Sequencing events in the anecdote

As soon as/When/Just after (we got there, the sun came out.)  
Initially/To begin with, (we were the only people there ...)  
As/While (we were sitting there ...)  
Suddenly/All of a sudden, (the weather changed.)

## Describing events vividly

Predictably/As expected, (other people soon started ...)  
Unexpectedly/Out of the blue, (it started pouring with rain.)  
Luckily/Fortunately, (after it stopped raining, the sun came out again.)

## Finishing the anecdote

Without a doubt, it was (one of the best days I've had in ages.)  
When I look back (on that day) now, I feel ...  
It turned out to be (an unforgettable day out.)  
Strangely/Funnily enough, (the best days are often the ones you don't really plan.)

## Suggesting a course of action

What do you think about ... (+ -ing)?  
Maybe we ought to (just) ...  
What would you say if we ... (+ Past Simple)?  
Given the choice, I'd rather ..., and you?

## Objecting

No way!/Absolutely not!/You must be joking! (informal)  
Fair? I think it's completely unfair.  
(Well yeah, but) Wouldn't it be better to ...?  
I know/see what you mean/what you're saying, but ...  
I'm not convinced (we'll be able to afford it/that's a good idea/that'll work.)

## Compromising

If you agree to (pay more), I'll (take the smaller room).  
We could (split the cost/go halves/share).  
Why don't we compromise/meet halfway  
(and agree that ...)?  
I guess so./I suppose that could work.  
OK, that seems like a fair compromise.

## Agreeing

True./Right./Absolutely./Totally.  
I fully/completely agree.  
You are absolutely right.  
OK, that's settled then.

## Comparing and contrasting

X/Going to the market is ... but Y/shopping online is ...  
X is the only one/option that ...  
When you compare the two/X and Y ...  
It is (much) more likely that ...  
X is definitely the cheaper/better/more suitable choice.

## Choosing an option and justifying the choice

That's why I'd opt for X.  
... and therefore, it's probably/clearly the best choice..  
The main/Another reason (that X would be my choice) is that ...  
I prefer X mainly/simply because ...  
This option is (clearly) the most/least + adjective ... because ...

## Explaining reasons for rejecting other options

X might (require less effort), but I wouldn't choose it because ...  
X isn't the best choice if you consider ...  
The reason I wouldn't go for/pick/choose X is because ...

# Useful phrases and expressions for writing

## Talking about a problem

What's wrong/the matter?  
What's up (with it)?  
I seem/appear to have lost/forgotten/broken ...  
I haven't (got) a clue. / I've no idea. / I wish I knew.  
Every time I try to ..., it ...  
Perhaps there's something wrong/a problem with the ...

## Talking about a solution

Have you tried ... + -ing?  
It's worth a try/a go, I suppose.  
I doubt that'll work, but let's see.  
Problem solved!  
No, that doesn't/didn't make any difference.

## Expressing annoyance

What are we supposed to do now?  
Why on earth did/didn't you ...?  
How should I know?  
You should've checked/asked first.  
We should've thought about that earlier.

## Beginning your answer

I firmly believe/I'm not convinced they do, because ...  
One obvious/clear advantage/disadvantage is that ...  
I think I'd emphasise/explain that/how ...  
It's absolutely vital/quite important I think, because ...  
As well as (avoiding fur products), other (things that can help) include ...  
I think the main/one/a significant reason is that ...

## Expressing opinions tentatively

It could be argued that ...  
I don't feel particularly strongly about ...  
I don't have a strong opinion about ...  
I suppose you could say that ...

## Signalling confusion

Sorry, I'm not with you.  
I'm not sure I follow (you).  
I'm afraid you've lost me there.  
I don't know what you mean by ...

## Checking your understanding

So, in other words...  
Are you saying ...?  
If I understand correctly, you mean ..., right?  
Yes, (that's) pretty much (it).  
No, that's not (quite) what I meant.  
What I meant was ...

## Giving a presentation

### Introduction

Have you ever thought about/considered/wondered how/why/what, etc. ...?  
During my/this presentation, I plan to tell you about ...  
You may be wondering why I've chosen to talk about ...  
today. Well, let me explain ...

### Introducing familiar information

You are (probably) all familiar with ...  
You may be aware that ...  
You may already know that ...  
Perhaps you have heard of/about ...

### Introducing surprising information

Most people aren't aware/don't realise ...  
... but did you know that ...?  
You might not know that ...

### Finishing your presentation

OK, that's all from me.  
Thank you for listening.  
I hope you found the presentation interesting.  
If anyone has any questions, please feel free to ask now.

## Starting an email/a letter

### Informal phrases

Dear Margaret  
Hi Anne

### Neutral/Formal phrases

Dear Mr and Mrs Edwards  
Dear Miss/Ms Brennan  
Dear Mr Brennan  
Dear Sir or Madam  
Dear Editor

## Introduction

### Informal phrases

It was good to hear from you.  
I hope you're doing well/you're fine/you're OK.  
How are you (doing)?  
I'm writing to tell you ...  
Thanks for your letter.  
I wonder if you remember/have heard ...  
I wanted to tell you about ...

### Neutral/Formal phrases

I am writing in order to ...  
I am writing to thank you for ...  
I would like to express my ...  
I am writing in connection with ... (the article/editorial/report) ...  
I have just read ... (the article) titled ... in Saturday's paper/last month's edition of ...  
I am writing to ask/enquire about ...  
I read/found your advertisement in ... and would like to ...

# Useful phrases and expressions for writing

## Ending an email/a letter

### Informal phrases

It was good to hear from you.  
Email me soon.  
I'd better get going./ I must go now./ Got to go now./  
I must be going now.

Bye for now.  
Looking forward to your news/to hearing from you again.  
Say hello to ...  
Give my love/my regards to (everyone at home).  
Have a nice (trip).  
See you (soon/in the summer).  
Write soon.  
Keep in touch!

### Neutral phrases

I look forward to hearing from you/your reply.  
I hope to hear from you soon.

### Formal phrases

I look forward to your prompt response reply.  
I wonder what other readers think about ...  
I hope you will publish more articles about this problem.  
I would be grateful if you could publish my letter.

## Closing formulas

### Informal phrases

Bye for now/See you!  
Love,/Take care!/All the best

### Neutral phrases

Best wishes  
Regards

### Formal phrases

(Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms Brennan) Yours sincerely  
(Dear Sir or Madam/Editor) Yours faithfully

## Telling a story

It all happened some time ago.  
It all started when ...  
It was three years ago.  
No sooner had we ... than ...  
While I (was playing)  
Just as I was watching ...  
As soon as  
First  
Then  
Finally  
After a little while  
Suddenly/All of a sudden  
Unfortunately  
Fortunately  
It was the best/worst time ever.  
We had a great/awful time when we were ...  
I'll never forget ...

## Describing a person

The first thing you notice about (him/her) is ...  
(He/She) is special for a number of reasons.  
He/She is the kind of person who ...  
The most unusual/interesting person I've ever met is ...

## Describing appearance

Height: of medium height, tall, fairly short, long-legged  
Build: muscular, well-built, overweight, skinny, slim, thin  
Age in his teens, middle-aged, in her late forties, elderly  
Facial features: round, oval, freckles, dimples, scar, mole,  
wrinkled, almond-shaped eyes, pale, tanned,  
a crooked nose, moustache, beard  
Hair: balding, short, shoulder-length, long, wavy, curly, thick  
She dresses casually/smartly/well/in black/fashionably.  
He always wears scruffy/stylish clothes.

## Describing an object

It is/was  
Size: huge/tiny/35cm×25cm big  
Shape: round/rectangular/square/narrow  
Colour: white/red and brown/light/dark green  
Material: made of leather/plastic/linen  
Age : new/young/old/six years old/modern/ancient  
It has/had (two handles/a leather strap/a blue cover/two  
pockets/short sleeves).

## Review

### Introduction

The film/book tells the story of ...  
The film/story is set in ...  
The book/novel was written by ...  
The film is directed by ...  
It is a comedy/horror film/love story.  
This well-written/informative/fascinating book ...  
It is based on real events/on a true story/on a book.  
It has been made into a film.

### Plot description

The story concerns/begins/is about ...  
The plot is (rather) boring/thrilling.  
The plot has an unexpected twist.  
The plot focuses on ...

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Adding ideas	and, moreover, in addition, furthermore, besides, as well as, neither...nor, either...or	Jane is the perfect host <b>as well as</b> a great cook. <b>Neither</b> Kim <b>nor</b> Alice knew how to cook. <b>Either</b> Tom <b>or</b> Shelly will meet you at the station.
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Expressing causes and results	Such + that clause So + adjective + the clause	It was <b>such</b> a horrible situation that I started to cry. My bags were <b>so</b> heavy that I took a taxi.
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Sequencing events in time	First of all/To begin with Secondly, Thirdly, Finally/Last, but not least	<b>To begin with</b> I would like to discuss the impact on the environment this project would have. <b>Last, but not least</b> , we have to consider the cost of the project.
Conclusions	all in all, all things considered, on balance, to sum up, in conclusion, to conclude	<b>All in all</b> we can see that there are far more benefits than drawbacks. <b>In conclusion</b> , the government needs to take urgent action now in order to prevent further coastal erosion.