

Writing the six text types

A lesson for **First Language English**

Paper 1 – Question 3

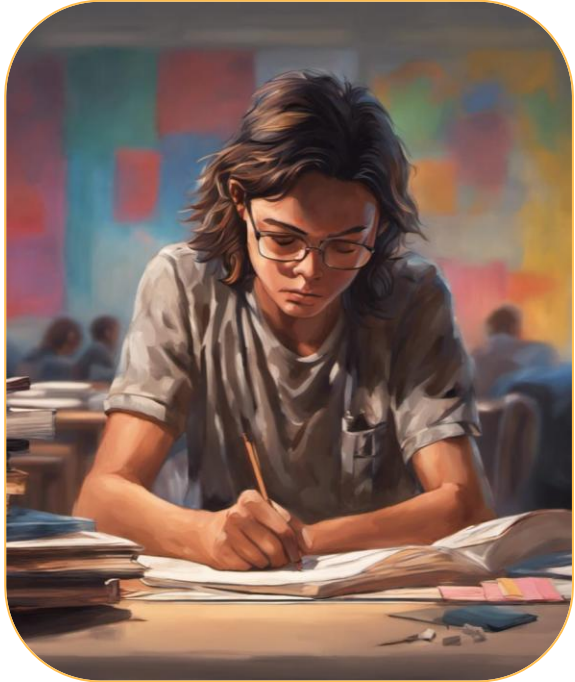
The Extended Response

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Overview of question 3

Extended Response



Question 3 is called the **Extended Response**

You will write about 2-4 pages, responding to a text you have read using one of the following text types:

- Letter
- Newspaper report
- Journal
- Speech
- Interview
- Magazine article

Reading – 15 Marks

Question 3 tests the following reading assessment objectives:

- R1 demonstrate understanding of explicit meanings
- R2 demonstrate understanding of implicit meanings and attitudes
- R3 analyse, evaluate and develop facts, ideas and opinions, using appropriate support from the text.

Writing – 10 Marks

Question 3 tests the following writing assessment objectives:

- W1 articulate experience and express what is thought, felt and imagined
- W2 organise and structure ideas and opinions for deliberate effect
- W3 use a range of vocabulary and sentence structures appropriate to context
- W4 use register appropriate to context
- W5 make accurate use of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Writing advice

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VARPF

What do you guess that these words might mean for Cambridge FLE?

- **V**oice
- **A**udience
- **R**egister
- **P**urpose
- **F**ormat

VARPF

- **V**oice – who are you writing as? Whose voice are you assuming?
- **A**udience – who are you writing to?
- **R**egister – how formal or informal should your language be?
- **P**urpose – why are you writing? To discuss, persuade, argue, inform, entertain, describe, narrate, analyse?
- **F**ormat – what type of text have you been asked to write? A letter, magazine or a speech?

This is a method of helping you to decide on what **writing style** will work best for the task you are given.

Structure

Introduction

Bullet 1

Bullet 2

Bullet 3

Conclusion

- **Write about the bullet points equally**
- No introduction needed for interview
- Last bullet point is often more implicit
- Aim to have around 4-6 individual points in each paragraph
- Don't copy directly from the text – always paraphrase
- Vary your vocabulary, punctuation and sentencing
- Check SPAG carefully
- Details – who, what, where, how
- Development – why, feelings, reactions

Our story



All of the text types will be based on the following idea:

- School teacher, Samantha Salmon, purposely set off the school fire alarm to avoid teaching her Year 11 English class. Ms Salmon had been struggling to control the behaviour in her classes and was going to be observed that lesson.
- The fire alarm caused chaos in the school and the fire brigade arrived only to realise that it was a hoax.
- The headteacher initially wrongfully accused a Year 9 boy, Mark Jiang, before Ms Salmon stepped forward to admit her guilt then publicly resigning from her job.

Newspaper reports

Newspaper report prompt



Imagine you are a local journalist. Recent events have prompted you to write a newspaper report about the need to improve working conditions for teachers.

Write the newspaper report.

What is your VARPF?

Newspaper headlines

Newspaper headlines:

- Be brief
- Be neutral and avoid bias
- No need to use articles like “the” or “a”

Examples:

- Space Exploration Mission Reaches New Frontier
- Climate Change Crisis Sparks Global Call to Action
- World Leaders Gather for Historic Peace Summit

Daily Mail
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15, 1927
8d. / CHANGING

ELVIS, KING OF ROCK, DIES AT 42

his work accounts of a few
Franklin were published in
one of the three sections
of the *Washington Post* —
the *Washington Post* —

Pressure

The Washington Post

Obama Makes History

U.S. DECISIVELY ELECTS FIRST BLACK PRESIDENT



President-elect Barack Obama, with wife Michelle and daughters Sasha, 7, and Malia, 10, greets more than 100,000 people celebrating his victory in Grant Park, in his home town of Chicago.

By **ROBERT BARNES**
and **MICHAEL D. SUGAR**
Washington Post Staff Writers

Obama, 47, the son of a Kenyan father and a white mother from Kansas, led a series of Democratic victories across the nation in last year's congressional elections, including defeating Republican Sen. John McCain in Arizona, a 26-year veteran of Washington. Obama could not overcome his connections to President Bush's increasingly unpopular administration.

Standing before a crowd of more than 100,000 who had waited for hours at Coney Island's Grant Park, Obama acknowledged his own accomplishment and the dreams of his supporters.

"If there is anyone out there who doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer," he said just before midnight Eastern time.

"The road ahead will be long. Our work will be steep. We may not get there in your or even one term, but America—I have never been more hopeful than I am today that we will get there. I promise you—that a people will get there."

Democrats will use their new legal muscle to advance an economic and foreign policy agenda that Bush has largely blundered for eight years. Even when the party is

THE AGENDA

Hard Choices And Challenge Follow Triumph

By Dan Banz
Washington Post Staff Writer



It's back!
Barney Ronay
on the Premier
League's return

Sport

Maya Jama I was determined to prove everyone wrong 🟡62

The Guardian

Rashford forces PM into U-turn on free meals

Heather Stewart
Rajeev Syal
Helen Field

Koris Johnson has been forced into a humiliating 60-run over providing food vouchers for some of the UK's poorest families after a campaign launched by the footballer Marcus Rashford threatened to rebel against the government, Downing Street retreated and announced a new £200m 'cost of living food fund' for 3.1m people in another crisis.

'Great to see ManUtd's number 10 changing policy at No. 10. Extraordinary campaign and win'

Steroid helps prevent coronavirus deaths

Sarah Bowdley
Health editor

A cheap steroid has become the first life-saving treatment for Covid-19, but scientists have described it as “breakthrough” that raising survival of thousands.

Dexamethasone is available from any pharmacy, and easily obtained anywhere in the world. Investigators said the drug was responsible for the survival of one in eight of the sickest patients – those on ventilators – in the Recovery trial, the biggest randomised controlled trial of coronavirus treatments in the world.

Dismay over merger of DfID and Foreign Office

Heather Stewart
Patrick Winter

Born Johnson was accused of jeopardizing the U.S. standing in the world yesterday as he announced that the Department for International Development would be folded back into the

Newspaper report

- Tone should be formal, unemotional and factual
- Introduction should be a 5W paragraph: who, what, where, when, why?
- You can quote witnesses if needed, but make sure to keep it short and relevant to the question. Any quotes should be made up by you – never copy from the text.
- Don't use first person 'I'. Use passive voice or quote sources instead.
- More similar to a broadsheet newspaper

Useful newspaper phrases

- According to sources
- In light of recent events
- The latest developments
- It has come to light that
- In a surprising turn of events
- The current state of affairs
- In the wake of [event]
- It is worth noting that
- This comes as no surprise, given that
- A growing concern/problem
- Experts believe that
- An unprecedented situation
- The public's response to [event]
- With mounting pressure
- The looming threat of [issue/problem]
- The pressing need for [action]

Use a 5W paragraph as your introduction

First paragraph should be a 5W paragraph: who, what, where, when and why?

When

Who

What

Where

Yesterday a local high school teacher, **Jared Rigsby** (32), was **found dead** on **school grounds**. Local police have confirmed that the cause of his death is now believed to be **murder**.

Why

Name (age)

- When you refer to people in your article, you should give their full name and their age in brackets.
- If the text doesn't say, you can make this up (be sensible)

Examples:

- Local teenager, **Daniel Wang (16)**, stated: 'I saw the whole thing myself! The bear ripped his whole head off!'
- **Octavia Feng (16)** recently won an Academy Award for best director.

Quoting others

- In a newspaper, you can quote what witnesses said about the events.
- Don't do this too often; 2-3 times in a longer article is enough.
- For CAIE, make sure you don't copy any words from the exam paper when you do this. Always use your own words.

Example:

Local teenager, Daniel Wang (16), stated: 'I saw the whole thing myself! The bear ripped his whole head off!'

Newspaper report exemplar (1/3)

Elmwood High Teacher Pulls Fire Alarm, Resigns

Yesterday afternoon at Elmwood High School, the fire brigade was called to attend to a fire, yet when they arrived, it became clear that the emergency call triggered by an activated fire alarm was a hoax. Sources report that it was one of the school's teachers, Samantha Salmon (34), who pulled the fire alarm with the sole purpose of avoiding an observation. The incident caused disruptions throughout the school and prompted a public resignation from Salmon.

Newspaper report exemplar (2/3)

Contrary to conventional fire drills prompted by technical malfunctions or safety exercises, this particular evacuation bore the hallmarks of a deliberate hoax, with the fire alarm activation attributed to the actions of an unexpected perpetrator – the school's English teacher, Salmon. Sources have indicated that the teacher, reportedly facing classroom management challenges with her Year 11 English class, executed a deliberate fire alarm activation as a diversionary tactic, allegedly to evade an impending classroom observation by the school's governor.

The school's subsequent tumult was plain to see as fire trucks roared onto the scene and students lined up at the fire assembly point, missing crucial class time. The gravity of the situation was further amplified by the initial suspicion cast upon a student, Mark Jiang (15). Despite Jiang's clean record, the allegations appeared to be misguided. Elmwood has since released a statement clearing Jiang of all suspicion.

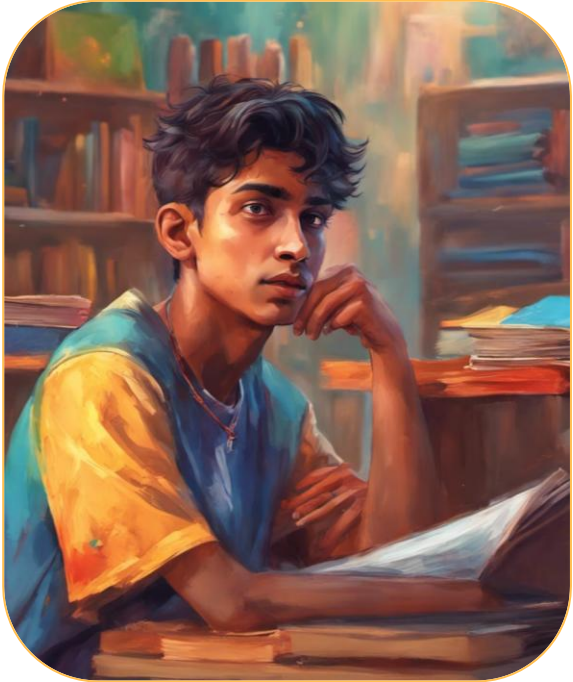
Newspaper report exemplar (3/3)

Under the eyes of teachers, students and fire personnel alike, Salmon openly admitted her guilt in the fire alarm activation. Her swift resignation followed this unprecedented act, making this event all the more compelling to concerned citizens. While the circumstances surrounding Salmon's departure from Elmwood High School remain undisclosed, it is evident that the incident has raised into question the school's working practices and workload for teachers. Indeed, Elmwood is one of many schools in the local area currently facing a shortage of teachers. Salmon is now quickly becoming hailed by online teaching communities as a figurehead for teacher burnout.

As Elmwood High School navigates the aftermath of this unanticipated sequence of events, the broader education community reflects upon the complexities in ensuring that schools serve both students and staff alike. The incident serves as a thought-provoking testament to the increasingly turbulent educational landscape, in which some teachers would rather pull a fire alarm than enter their classrooms.

Magazine articles

Magazine article prompt



Imagine you are a student at a nearby school. Recent events have prompted you to write a magazine article for your school magazine about the need to improve working conditions for teachers.

Write the magazine article.

What is your VARPF?

Magazine headlines

Magazine headlines:

- Depending on the VARPF, magazines tend to be more casual than newspapers, often taking a chatty and humorous tone **or** an emotive and dramatic tone
- Use alliteration
- Use puns
- Use emotive language
- Depending on the audience, use collective pronouns: we, us, our

Can you turn these newspaper headlines into magazine headlines?

Change these into magazine headlines:

- Space Exploration Mission Reaches New Frontier
- Climate Change Crisis Sparks Global Call to Action
- World Leaders Gather for Historic Peace Summit

You can use either an **emotive** tone or a **humorous** tone... your choice.

Magazine headlines

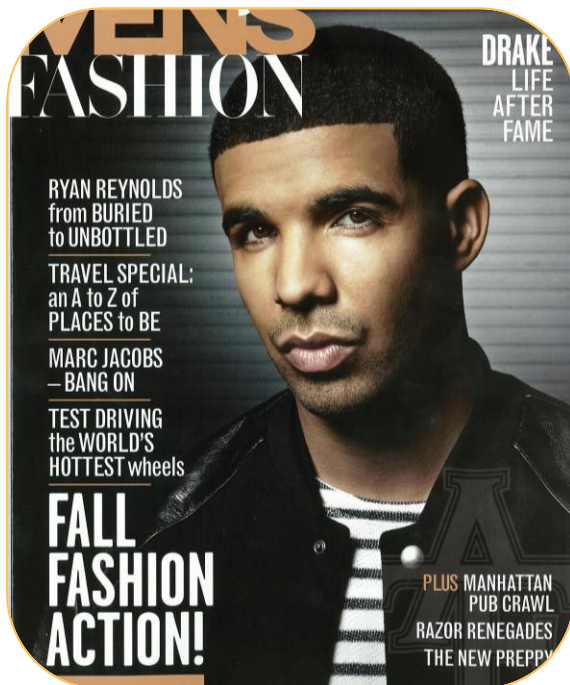
Funny:

- Zooming to the Stars: The Epic Space Odyssey that Conquered the Final Frontier!
- Hot Mess Planet: How Climate Change is Giving Earth a Major Makeover
- A-Listers Unite! The Ultimate Peace Party You Don't Wanna Miss!

Emotive:

- Humanity's Bold Venture into the Vast Unknown of Space Exploration!
- The Urgent Global Call to Protect Our Precious Planet from Climate Change
- Embracing Peace: World Leaders Unite for a Historic Summit to Heal Our War-Torn World

Example magazine articles



Magazine article



- Semi-formal; think how a forty-year-old maths teacher with a cheesy sense of humour would write
- Can be funny/witty depending on the topic: use alliteration, puns, and a chatty tone with your reader
- Can also be emotional if the topic is more serious: use emotive and dramatic language
- More similar to a British tabloid

Useful magazine phrases

- In a surprising turn of events...
- With growing interest...
- As it turns out...
- As reported by...
- It's worth noting that...
- The numbers speak for themselves...
- Taking a closer look...
- As the story unfolds...
- As we delve into the details...
- As many are aware...
- In a dramatic twist...
- What's fascinating is...
- Digging deeper...
- Upon closer examination...
- This raises the question...
- A trend that's on the rise...
- It's no surprise that...
- As history has shown...
- What's remarkable about this is...
- What's striking is...
- In a significant development...
- An essential factor to remember...
- As it was anticipated...
- What becomes evident is...
- In a notable departure from...
- As many may recall...
- What's becoming increasingly clear is...

Magazine article exemplar (1/3)

Teacher's Blazing Exit Leaves Elmwood in Shock

At Knightsbridge High, we are blessed with fantastic facilities, a record-breaking football team and professional teachers - but our rivals over at Elmwood High School aren't so lucky. Picture this: a typical day, a regular classroom, and then chaos ensues! A fire alarm goes off, sending students scurrying outside like startled ants. The cause? Not a faulty toaster in the staff room nor a Bunsen burner gone awry. This wasn't your average fire drill: it was a master plan by none other than their English teacher, Ms Salmon!

Rumour has it that Ms Salmon was facing a classroom battleground, struggling to tame the wild spirits of her Year 11 English class. And with Ms Salmon due to be observed that very afternoon, in a desperate attempt to dodge the scrutiny, she pulled off the ultimate escape – pulling the fire alarm lever. Now I know our Year 11s are lively, but I doubt Ms Jones would ever get the fire brigade out to avoid teaching Shakespeare!

Magazine article exemplar (2/3)

At Elmwood, the school was in an uproar that afternoon – fire trucks blaring, students spilling out like they were running for gold. The plot thickened as suspicion fell on innocent Mark Jiang, who incidentally attended Knightsbridge when he was in Year 7. Doubtless, none of you will remember him as he could barely speak without stuttering, yet our peers over at Elmwood deemed Jiang a criminal extraordinaire. Sources say Jiang looked as bewildered as we did when we discovered this wild turn of events.

Magazine article exemplar (3/3)

But here's where it gets interesting: Ms Salmon herself stepped up in front of the whole student body, confessing to her fiery caper and then dropping a resignation bomb. Talk about an exit strategy! Rumour has it that she handed in her resignation letter that day and hasn't been seen at Elmwood since.

While Ms Salmon may have set off some alarms (literally), one thing's for sure – she just gave everyone something to talk about for weeks. From classroom antics to fiery exits, Elmwood High School has officially won the award for "Most Unpredictable Day Ever." So, remember, dear readers, while we're stuck in our school routines, wild tales like these are unfolding just a street away!

Speeches



Speech prompt



Imagine you are Ms Salmon. After quitting teaching, you give a speech at a teachers' conference about your experience and the need to improve working conditions for teachers.

Write the words of the speech.

What is your VARPF?

Do you recognise these famous speeches?



Speeches

- Cambridge won't ask you to write a political speech
- Usually it is more like a “talk”
- The purpose is more to inform than to persuade

Create a sense of audience



- A speech is given in spoken form to a live audience... so talk to them!
- You can open your speech with these phrases:
 - Ladies and gentleman, thank you for gathering here today...
 - Hello everyone and welcome to my talk about...
 - I'm so pleased to see such bright and smiling faces here to learn more about...

Pronouns



- You should use collective and personal pronouns to speak directly to your audience and be more persuasive.
- Collective pronouns – we, our, us
- Personal pronouns – you, your, yours

Rhetorical questions

- A rhetorical question is a question that doesn't require an answer
- They are a persuasive technique to make the audience think or to suggest the answer to your question is so obvious it doesn't need a response

Examples:

- Do you think it's right to watch our children starve while the rich grow fatter in their mansions?
- What will you do to help your community? What will you tell your children in years to come?

Repetition

- Repeat words or phrases for emphasis
- Remember a speech is meant to be read aloud; repetition sounds great!

Example – Martin Luther King:

I have a dream that one day all people will be equal. I have a dream that one day our society can heal itself. And my dream, our dream? We can only achieve this dream if we dream together as one, strive together as one united force.

Emotive language

- You should use emotional and powerful language
- Think about your vocabulary choices

Example:

Do you think it's right to watch our children starve while the rich grow fatter in their mansions? Should we watch as innocents wither and die, their mouths empty, their souls abandoned by this very society that was charged to protect them?

Useful speech phrases

- Ladies and gentlemen, I'd like to share...
- Let's take a moment to...
- Fellow [professionals/enthusiasts/citizens], I'm here to discuss...
- I want to talk to you about...
- Each of you plays a crucial role in...
- Everyone in this room knows the importance of...
- I'm speaking to you today because...
- Think about this...
- Let's consider how this affects each and every one of us...
- As individuals who care deeply about...
- I know many of you may have experienced...
- For those of you who've been through...
- To the future leaders and innovators in this room...
- In your daily lives, you might have encountered...
- As we gather here, I want you to reflect on...
- Now, let me ask you...
- I'm sure you can relate to...
- It's a privilege to be speaking to such an attentive group...
- Remember that together we can...

Speech exemplar (1/3)

Ladies and gentlemen, educators of the UK, and esteemed colleagues, thank you for allowing me to address you today. I stand before you not as a cautionary tale but as a fellow educator, sharing a pivotal moment that changed the course of my career. On one fateful day at Elmwood High School, I found myself at a crossroads where the challenges I faced in my Year 11 English class seemed insurmountable. An impending classroom observation weighed heavily on my shoulders, and the lack of control over challenging classes had me feeling like a captain steering a ship caught in a storm.

In my quest to create an environment of learning and growth, I made a choice that, in hindsight, I recognise as both desperate and misguided. I'm sure many of you here today know the heart-pounding dread that accompanies an observation, but that day I think I transcended "heart-pounding" and skipped straight to beautiful madness. I walked out of my classroom and set off the fire alarm.

Speech exemplar (2/3)

Now, please do not mistake me. At that moment, I didn't want either chaos or a simple escape. I just wanted one moment of peace - and that would have been enough. That might tell you something about what my mental state was. Because you see - it wasn't this one observation or this one class. No, as educators, you all know the stresses of teaching can not be quantified in single measures. The stress, workload, and pressure were unrelenting: six periods a day, five days a week, plus meetings, plus duties, plus extracurricular activities, plus trips, plus parents' evenings, plus open evenings, plus attempting to improve my teaching enough to get a promotion - because I certainly couldn't afford a decent house on a teacher's salary, so I'd have to climb the greasy pole. No, at that moment, I just needed ten seconds with a wailing fire alarm bell to allow myself to breathe for the first time in twelve months.

Speech exemplar (3/3)

My dear colleagues, this experience has taught me the invaluable lesson that we are people first, educators second. It's about recognising when we need help and recognising when our jobs become untenable. I loved my students. I loved teaching. But somewhere in that classroom, I forgot how to breathe and the great irony is that many would describe what I did as a "false alarm". True, in terms of fires, but in terms of my mental health, it was anything but. I needed that moment to be honest with myself that my time as a teacher had to end.

And so I quit. (Don't worry, don't worry, I owned up first. My apologies to Mark Jiang, who initially got the blame for my actions.) But yes, I handed in my resignation on that same day. Now, I work as a mental health advocate for those in the education sector, trying to find ways to keep passionate teachers in the classroom and reassuring those on the verge of setting off the alarm that it's okay to say when enough is enough.

Thank you for being a fantastic audience. Take care of yourselves!

Interviews



Interview prompt



Imagine you are a presenter at a local radio station. You interview the headmaster of Elmwood High about the events of that day. Write the words of the interview.

What is your VARPF?

Usually radio or TV interview

- Interviews for Cambridge don't mean job interviews!
- It tends to be a radio interview or TV interview with a character in the text you've been given
- Think of a podcast tone – a talk between two people on a given topic
- Formality will depend on the text, the characters and the topic you have been given, but often because it's spoken, interviews tend to be semi-formal

Only use the three questions

- Cambridge will tell you the three questions your interviewer should ask the interviewee
- For interviews, those three questions are your bullet points
- Copy down those questions exactly – don't change them!
- Don't add in your own questions
- Your interviewee should do 95% of the talking

Use script format

Layout your interview like a script:

Andy: So, Kayla, tell me why do you love English so much?

Kayla: Well, because of Ms O'Rourke, of course!

You can use stage directions in brackets too (laughs) (nods) (claps)

Interview's tone

- ... it depends!
- Which character have you been asked to write as? What type of personality do they have? Who is the audience of their interview?
- Most often the tone is semi-formal since it is using spoken language

Use spoken language

You can use filler words and thinking words such as:

- Well,
- I guess...
- Huh, I hadn't thought about that before...

Don't do this too much or it will sound weird!

Punctuation

Use a variety of punctuation to make your writing sound more spoken:

- Use ellipses (...) for a pause
- Use a dash (–) to show the speaker has changed the direction of their sentence
- Use an exclamation mark (!) to place emphasis or show excitement

Again, don't do this too much or it'll sound weird.

Use personal pronouns

- Make it sound like a real conversation by using you, your, yours.
- Have your interviewee speak to the interviewer directly.

Examples:

- You really can't imagine
- Don't look so surprised!

Useful interview phrases

- For those tuning in, I want you to consider...
- Listeners, keep this in mind as we discuss...
- To all of you out there, I encourage you to think about...
- If you're listening right now, I want you to imagine...
- To everyone joining us, I'm sure you'll find this interesting...
- I'm sure many of you can relate to...
- As you're listening, you might be wondering...
- I want to share a perspective that could resonate with some of you...
- You might be surprised to learn that...
- Consider this a takeaway for each and every one of you...
- That's an excellent question, and here's my take on it...
- To answer your question, let me explain...
- Your question touches on something I'm really passionate about...
- Funny you should ask, because the idea actually came to me when...

Interview exemplar (1/3)

Interviewer: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen! We have a rather intriguing story for you today, fresh from the halls of Elmwood High School. Joining us is the school's headteacher, Mr. Reginald Wellington. Welcome, Mr. Wellington.

Mr. Wellington: Thank you, thank you, my dear. It's always a pleasure to share my wisdom and insights with the public.

Interviewer: Mr. Wellington, the incident that unfolded at your school has everyone talking. Could you shed some light on the events that transpired during the fire alarm incident?

Mr. Wellington: Ah, yes, the "fiery escape" as they're calling it. You see, my dear, it all started with our darling Ms. Salmon, a teacher who seemed to have lost her way in the labyrinth of classroom management. She was facing a rather daunting observation and, well, I suppose she thought pulling the fire alarm was the best way to avoid the impending scrutiny. Quite the audacious move, I must say!

Interview exemplar (2/3)

Interviewer: It certainly was a dramatic turn of events. Speaking of which, the blame initially fell on a Year 9 student, Mark Jiang. How did that happen, and what does this incident tell us about the school's disciplinary measures?

Mr. Wellington: Ah, Mark Jiang, poor lad. It was a classic case of misunderstanding, I assure you. In the chaos that ensued, the poor boy found himself in the spotlight, not for his own doing, mind you. It's a reminder that we must always be thorough in our investigations, a lesson we shall take to heart in our ongoing efforts to maintain discipline and order within our beloved institution.

Interviewer: Of course, of course. And who was it that accused Mark then?

Mr. Wellington: Never mind that now. All water under the bridge, as they say.

Interview exemplar (3/3)

Interviewer: And finally, Mr. Wellington, the resignation of Ms. Salmon was a surprising development. How do you see this incident affecting the future of Elmwood High School?

Mr. Wellington: Well, my dear, I believe every cloud has a silver lining, and Ms. Salmon's resignation, while abrupt, may offer an opportunity for fresh ideas and a renewed sense of dedication within our staff. It's crucial that we strive for excellence, and this incident has certainly provided us with a moment for reflection. The future of Elmwood High School, rest assured, will continue to shine brighter than ever before.

Interviewer: Thank you, Mr. Wellington, for your insights into this fascinating tale from Elmwood High School. It seems the dramatic world of education always keeps us on our toes!

Letters

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Letter prompt



Imagine you are Ms Salmon. Recent events have prompted you to write a letter to your mother to tell her what happened and what you plan to do next.

Write the letter.

What is your VARPF?

Greetings

- Begin a letter with 'Dear [name],' and then begin a new line.
- If the text doesn't give you a friend's name, you can make one up.
 - Dear Mr Jiang,
 - Dear Noel,
 - Hi Noel,

Voice – create a character

- You need to carefully consider the character of the person you're writing as: are they serious? Chatty? Immature? Thoughtful? Intelligent?
- How will you show those characteristics through your writing?

Create an audience



- Even more important is you need to consider who you're writing to and what your character's relationship is to that person.
- This will affect your language choice and tone.
- Have your characters ever met before?

Friends or family

If you're close friends or family, then you want to show a close relationship by referring to things that person already knows about you or shared memories:

- You know I've always been passionate about...
- I wish you could have seen it yourself - I know you would've laughed yourself silly!
- Remember when we went to Australia? Well, it was ten times hotter than even then!

Formal audience

And if you're writing to someone less close, like a boss or company director, you can use phrases such as these:

- I'm writing to you today concerning the matter of [bla bla]
- As a loyal team member, our business' reputation is of the utmost importance to me...
- I hope you will consider my thoughts above and we can work together to find a resolution to this matter...

Sign off

- You should always sign off your letter with your name
- You can make up a forename/surname for your character
 - Yours sincerely, Mr Jiang
 - Best wishes, Noel
 - Lots of love, Noel

Useful letter phrases: formal

- Dear [Recipient's Name],
- To Whom It May Concern, (when writing to a broader audience)
- I would like to inform you that...
- I am reaching out with regard to...
- Your prompt attention to this matter is appreciated.
- I kindly request that you...
- I would appreciate it if you could...
- I hope you will consider my proposal.
- I am looking forward to [specific action or response].
- Thank you for your attention to this matter.
- I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.
- Sincerely,
- Yours faithfully,
- Yours sincerely,

Useful letter phrases: semi-formal

- Dear [name],
- Hey [name/nickname],
- It's been a while since we last caught up.
- I wanted to write and share some exciting news.
- I hope everything is going well on your end.
- I thought you'd be interested to know that...
- Guess what happened recently?
- Is everything going smoothly on your end?
- I've been wondering what's new in your life.
- Your support has meant a lot to me.
- I'm thrilled to share that...
- I couldn't wait to tell you about...
- I'm excited to hear your thoughts on this.
- We should definitely catch up soon!
- It would be wonderful to hear your thoughts on...
- Maybe we can meet up for [activity]?
- Take care and talk to you soon.
- Stay in touch.
- Until we chat again.
- Love,
- Best wishes,
- Yours truly,

Letter exemplar (1/3)

Hi mum,

I hope this letter finds you well, being your fabulous self. I wanted to share something that happened at school recently and let me warn you upfront that you might not be too proud of my actions, but I hope you'll be proud of what I plan to do next. You know how my Year 11 English class has been giving me a hard time, right? Well, it reached a boiling point, and I did something out of character, but I wanted to tell you all about it because I value your advice and perspective.

So, I was due to be observed with my nightmare Year 11s, and the students were, well, let's say not making it easy. They're a tough bunch, and I was feeling the pressure. In the middle of that chaos, I felt like I was having an out-of-body experience and before I knew it, I'd left my classroom. I just couldn't face the observation and, honestly, the thought of attempting to teach that lot for one more second decided for me: I pulled the fire alarm. I know, I know, it was a stupid thing to do, but I was desperate for an escape from the situation.

Letter exemplar (2/3)

Here's the worst bit, mum: they blamed Mark Jiang, this Year 9 kid who's the least likely suspect ever. The poor guy looked bewildered, and I couldn't let him take the blame for something he didn't do. So, I did the right thing (eventually), or at least I hope it was the right thing – I stepped up and admitted that it was me who pulled the alarm. And you know what? I've decided to resign from my teaching position at Elmwood High. Maybe from teaching altogether. This could be a chance for me to regroup and maybe find a new path where I can still make a difference... but with less stress and fewer sixteen-year-olds.

Letter exemplar (3/3)

I know it might sound ridiculous, but I believe this is what's best. I need time to figure things out, rekindle that passion for teaching, and maybe explore new avenues. Your support has always meant the world to me, and I just wanted you to know what's been going on. I promise to keep you in the loop as I navigate this unexpected journey. Maybe I could even come stay for a little bit while I get myself sorted? Promise I'll do the dishes!

Thanks for being the best mum an ex-teacher could ask for.

Lots of love,

Sammy x

Diaries

A thick, solid orange horizontal bar that spans the width of the page, positioned below the word "Diaries".

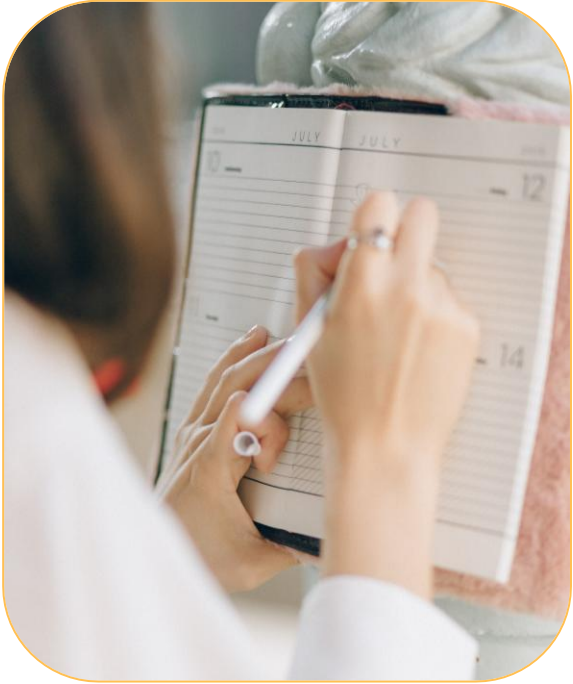
Diary prompt



Imagine you are Mark Jiang, the student unfairly accused of setting off the fire alarm. Recent events have prompted you to write diary entry about what happened that day **and** your reaction to Ms Salmon's confession. Write the diary entry.

What is your VARPF?

Diary versus journal

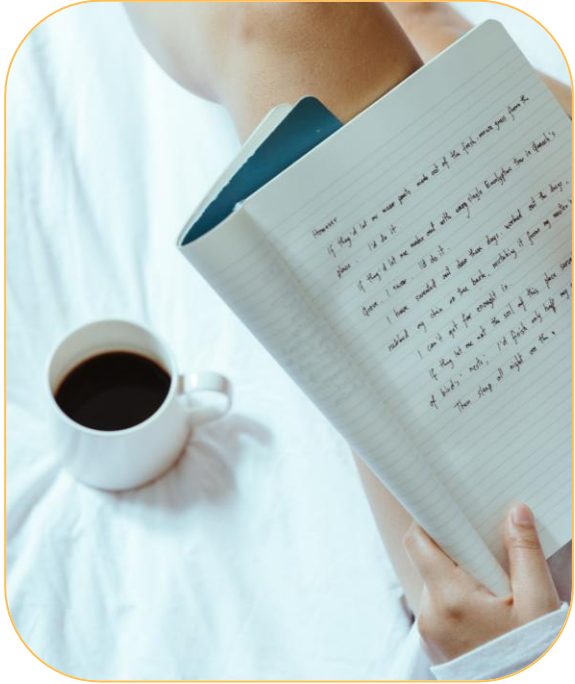


- Diaries and journals are the same thing!
- If Cambridge ask you to write a journal, they mean a diary

Character's tone

- The language used in a diary isn't always the same, since it will depend on the character, the person writing the diary.
- However, it would be strange for a diary to be extremely formal and academically written, unless you were writing as a snobby university professor who takes life too seriously.
- It's more common that you will be asked to write in a semi-formal tone, which means you should write using correct spelling, grammar and punctuation and avoid using too much slang.

Greetings and sign offs



- Begin a diary with 'dear diary'
- Finish the diary with your name
- Like a letter to yourself

Use past tense

- A diary often uses past tense, since you're describing events that have happened to you in the past.
- Current feelings and reflections on those events can use present tense.
 - He **stole** my bag and **ran** away!
 - I think he's a jerk.

Confessional tone

- The tone should be confessional; you should tell secrets or personal emotions that your character might not normally admit.
- This is also great for getting development points.

Examples:

- I would never admit this to anyone but...
- Secretly, I must say that I felt rather...
- I tried my best not to show how [adj] I felt.

Diaries aren't stories



No need for climax, plot, dialogue

Avoid using dialogue

Dialogue is usually used in stories, not diaries, since we can't remember word-for-word what someone said later on.

- “Will you come over here please, Emma? I'd like to talk to you about something,” Mrs Ashford said.
- Mrs Ashford asked me to come over to her since there was something she wanted to talk to me about.



Punctuation

Use exclamation marks or ellipses to show emotion and create a slightly more 'spoken' tone of voice.

- Well, I didn't know what to do in that situation... I never do.
- I couldn't believe my eyes!

Useful diary phrases

- Dear Diary...
- Today was quite an adventure...
- I can't help but feel...
- It's been on my mind lately...
- I'll never forget the moment when...
- I find myself wondering...
- I've been struggling with...
- This day has been full of surprises...
- I can't shake off this feeling of...
- This experience has taught me...
- I've realized that...
- I'm at a crossroads...
- In my heart, I know that...
- It's been a rollercoaster of emotions...
- I wish I could turn back time and...
- I'm proud of myself for...
- Today, I made a promise to myself...
- This little moment made my day...
- There's a certain magic in...
- I'm taking a leap of faith and...
- I'm blessed to have...
- This experience has shown me...
- I'm starting to see the bigger picture...

Diary exemplar (1/3)

Dear Diary,

Today school was unbelievable! It all started in Ms Salmon's Year 11 English class. You know, the one where everyone usually messes around, and she's been trying so hard to keep us in line. I guess the teachers call it "classroom management," but for us, it's just another day of dodging Shakespeare and pretending to care about literature.

Anyway, today was different. The classroom felt like a ticking time bomb, and Miss was on edge. She was supposed to be observed (she'd warned us yesterday with threats of detention), and she was worried about it. We've seen her struggle with our rowdy bunch, and as much as we drive her up the wall, I know she genuinely cares about us. We may not be the best-behaved lot, but we can sense when someone's trying, you know? So, as the class dragged on, I noticed she seemed distracted like she was somewhere else entirely. I even heard her muttering to herself a couple of times.

Diary exemplar (2/3)

Then, out of nowhere, the fire alarm goes off. Chaos erupted, and everyone started rushing out like we were escaping a monster or something. It's unbelievable how fast we all bolted as if our lives depended on it. But the real shocker came when the headteacher accused me - *me!* - of pulling the fire alarm. Honestly, why me? Sure, I've been a part of some pranks, but this was way beyond anything I'd ever done. I felt like a deer caught in headlights; the more innocent I tried to look, the guiltier I felt.

Then, while accusations were thrown at me, Ms Salmon stepped up. I could see it in her eyes, that mix of guilt and relief when her eyes met mine. She gave me this kind of sad smile, and then she confessed to setting off the fire alarm. I thought surely that couldn't be true. She must be taking the fall for something she didn't do to protect me. Her voice quivered as she admitted it, and there was this look on her face like she'd been through the wringer and couldn't handle it anymore. And then, in a blink of an eye, she resigned. Just like that. Then I realised she'd been telling the truth - she really had set off the alarm.

Diary exemplar (3/3)

Of course, the headteacher never apologised to me.

Man, this whole day has me thinking about teachers in a new light. They have it tough and deal with so much more than just teaching. It's like they're our guides in this chaotic maze of teenage drama, trying to help us find our way. I never thought much about it before, but now, I can't help but wonder how many other teachers out there are silently battling their own struggles. Maybe we should cut them some slack and appreciate what they do. Today was a wake-up call, and it's got me rethinking how I act. For sure, I'm not the worst in the class, but that's not the point.

Need to think this through and get some sleep.

Mark

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