Writing - Review

Unit 4

PART 2

TRAINING

THE REVIEW TASK IN PART 2 TESTS YOUR ABILITY TO DESCRIBE SOMETHING YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED (E.G. A TV PROGRAMME OR A PRODUCT) AND GIVE YOUR OPINION OF IT, WITH A RECOMMENDATION TO THE READER.

- YOU READ A DESCRIPTION OF A SITUATION AND THEN WRITE A REVIEW OF IT IN 120-150 WORDS. YOU SHOULD ALLOW ABOUT 40 MINUTES FOR THIS TASK, INCLUDING TIME AT THE END TO CHECK YOUR WORK.
- THE INSTRUCTIONS ALSO TELL YOU WHERE YOUR REVIEW WILL BE PUBLISHED (E.G. IN A STUDENT NEWSLETTER). YOU THEREFORE HAVE TO WRITE IN AN APPROPRIATE STYLE.
- YOU NEED TO ORGANISE YOUR TEXT INTO PARAGRAPHS.
- YOU SHOULD WRITE FULL SENTENCES AND TRY TO USE CORRECT GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING AND A GOOD RANGE OF LANGUAGE.

USEFUL LANGUAGE: REVIEW

A. Match the headings in the box with groups of expressions 1-4.

Criticising	Advising not to do something	Recommending	Praising

1. ..... I was pleased to see that ... ... was even better than we had expected It was a nice surprise to find that ... The ... was absolutely perfect, and ... We had (a pleasant/an enjoyable/a marvellous, etc.) time at ... It was one of the best ... I have ever ...	2. ..... If you get the chance to ... (see it/buy one/go there, etc.), ... I would advise ... Don't miss the opportunity to ... Anyone who likes ... will really enjoy ... I'm sure everyone will find ... worth (listening to/visiting/trying, etc.).
3. ..... We were (rather) disappointed to find that ... There should have been ... The advertisement said that ... but in fact ... There wasn't any ... at all I thought there was going to be ... but there was only ... There weren't enough ... to ... / it was too ... to ...	4. ..... I (would) suggest finding a better ... than this, such as ... My advice is to avoid this ... and ... instead. I (would strongly) advise against (watching/reading/eating, etc.) this ...

B. Complete the sentences with contrast links. Use each word once.

however - spite - although - even - despite

1. ..... the concert started on time, it finished early.
2. It rained every day. ..... this, we all enjoyed our holiday.
3. The theme park has some excellent rides. ..... , the queues were very long.
4. It's a good film, in ..... of the poor acting at times.
5. I would certainly read this book again, ... though it is 800 pages long.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

C. Rewrite 1-5 so that the second sentence means the same as the first.

1. It was late at night, but the club was still empty.
   The club was still empty, even .....
2. The traffic was heavy, but we arrived on time.
   In spite .....
3. We asked twice for coffee, but the waiter didn't bring it.
   Although .....
4. We were a long way from the stage, but I could hear every word they said.
   Even ..... .
5. The bed was too short, but I would still recommend this hotel.
   Despite ..... .

UNDERSTANDING INSTRUCTIONS

D. Study the exam instructions below and underline the key words.

1. What situation do you have to think about?
2. Who are you going to write a review for? What style of writing is suitable?
3. What two things do the instructions say you must do?
4. What else should you add?

Reviews wanted!

What did you think of the last holiday home you stayed in? Write a review of a house or apartment anywhere in the world for our popular website for travellers and tourists. Describe the holiday home and say why you did or did not enjoy your stay there.

Interesting reviews will appear on our site within 24 hours.

E. Quickly read the model review below. Did the writer enjoy staying in the apartment?

F. Study the text and the notes more carefully.

1. What reasons does the writer give for enjoying being there? What advice does s/he give?
2. What adjectives (words and phrases) describe the apartment and the building?
3. Which contrast links are used? Which other linking expressions can you find?
4. Which expressions similar to those in Useful language on page 12 does the writer use (e.g. spent a pleasant fortnight at ...)?

Model review

Apartment in Playa Blanca

Last April my family and I spent a pleasant fortnight at a three-bedroom apartment in Playa Blanca, near Villanueva. The apartment, on the second floor of an attractive building, had recently been decorated and had beautiful furniture. The kitchen and bathrooms were well equipped, and the bedrooms were spacious with cosy twin beds in each.

Although the flat was advertised as being 'five minutes walk from the beach', we were disappointed to discover that it often took ten minutes when the main road between the two was busy. In addition, there was a building site right next door; making it far too noisy to sleep after about 8 in the morning.

In spite of this, we had an enjoyable stay at the apartment as it was comfortable and close to amenities such as bus stops, shops and cafés. We were also pleased to find it was spotlessly clean when we arrived. If you have the opportunity to stay there, I would advise taking it - but I would check first that next door's building work has finished.

Title

Describes apartment

Criticises negative features

Says whether they enjoyed

Praises positive features

Makes recommendation

LIVEWORKSHEETS

EXAM TIP

- READ THE INSTRUCTIONS AND TRY TO THINK OF SOMETHING RELEVANT THAT YOU HAVE SEEN, HEARD OR READ TO REVIEW. OR JUST USE YOUR IMAGINATION.
- THINK ABOUT WHO THE READERS OF YOUR REVIEW WILL BE AND WHAT THEY WILL WANT TO KNOW.
- NOTE DOWN SOME POINTS TO MENTION, AND SPEND A FEW MINUTES MAKING A PLAN THAT INCLUDES DESCRIPTION, EXPLANATION AND RECOMMENDATION. DECIDE HOW MANY PARAGRAPHS YOU WILL USE.
- GIVE YOUR REVIEW A TITLE THAT TELLS READERS WHAT IT IS ABOUT.
- WRITE YOUR TEXT IN A STYLE THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR THE PUBLICATION AND THE READERS.
- USE SOME OF THE EXPRESSIONS FROM USEFUL LANGUAGE ON PAGE 12 TO PRAISE OR TO CRITICISE.
- USE SOME OF THE CONTRAST LINKS IN EXERCISES 2 AND 3 ON PAGE 12 TO DESCRIBE UNEXPECTED THINGS, OR TO MAKE BOTH POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE POINTS.
- FINISH BY RECOMMENDING OR ADVISING READERS AGAINST THE SUBJECT OF YOUR REVIEW (E.G. IT WOULD MAKE THE PERFECT DAY OUT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE).

EXAM TASK

G. Read the exam task below.

1. Who is your review for?
2. What three things do you have to do?

You recently saw this notice in an English-language magazine.

Reviews wanted!

Our magazine is going to include a new section called 'Popular music sites' If there is an internet music site that you visit often, why not write a review of it? In your review, describe the site, say what you think of it and whether you would recommend it to other people.

The three best reviews will be published in our new music section next week.

Write your **review.**

H. Study the exam question and write your answer in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

You recently saw this notice in Internet Today magazine.

A website that compares computer games is looking for reviews with the following title:
The last computer game I played.

You decide to write a review for the magazine. Describe the game and give your opinion of it. Would you recommend other people play it?

Write your **review**.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Writing – Essay

Unit 5

PART 1

TRAINING

- IN PART 1 THERE MAY BE A QUESTION ASKING YOU TO WRITE AN ESSAY, WHICH IS USUALLY FOR YOUR TEACHER.
- IN AN ESSAY YOU GIVE YOUR OPINION ON A CERTAIN TOPIC AND REASONS FOR THOSE OPINIONS.
- YOU WRITE BETWEEN 120 AND 180 WORDS.

A. There are a number of useful linking words and introductory phrases. There are some in the box below.

what's more – so – for instance – although – but – on the other hand – in addition – and – many people – all in all - personally

Which ones are used to:

1. introduce a general statement about what people think? _____
2. introduce your own opinion? _____
3. add a similar piece of information? _____
4. add a contrasting piece of information? _____
5. introduce the reason for something? _____
6. introduce an example of something? _____
7. summarise what's been said? _____

B. Complete the sentences with words and phrases from the box in Exercise A. Sometimes more than one answer is possible.

1. _____ I like living by the sea. I prefer the city.
2. The beach can be very crowded in summer. _____ it's still a great place to go.
3. _____ I'd rather live in a city centre than by the sea.
4. I love swimming. _____ I go to the beach as often as I can.
5. You can lie in the sun at the beach. _____ you can go for a long walk.
6. You often come across great attractions at seaside resorts, there's usually a funfair, _____.

C. Look at the words and phrases below that can be used when describing a place. Some are from the sample answer. Decide if they are usually positive or negative and put them in the correct box. If they could be either, depending on the situation, or your point of view, then put them in the *it depends* box.

freezing cold – bright lights – ancient – stunning – within walking distance – sunny – peaceful – polluted – healthy – crowded – popular – picturesque – superb – remote – wild – mild – vast – lively – modern - stormy

Positive	It depends	Negative

LIVEWORKSHEETS

D. Use the words and phrases you have learnt to describe the following. Talk with a partner.

1. Summer's day on the beach
2. A busy day in the city centre
3. A winter's day on the beach

E. Study the next exam question and write your answer in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

You have recently had a discussion in your English class about places to live. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay, giving your opinions on the following statement:

City centres are the best places for teenagers to live.

Write your **essay.**

F. Study the next exam question and write your answer in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

You have had a discussion in your English class about how people spend their free time. Now your English teacher has asked you to write an essay, giving your opinion on the following statement:

Teenagers should spend their free time studying, rather than waste it doing sports or other leisure activities.

Write your **essay.**

G. Study the next exam question and write your answer in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

You have been discussing the characters in this story in class. Your teacher has now asked you to write an essay on this topic:

The most interesting character in the story.

Write your **essay.**

H. Study the next exam question and write your answer in 120-180 words in an appropriate style.

You have been discussing the topic of the media in class. Your teacher has now asked you to write an essay discussing the following statement:

There are plenty of TV programmes and magazines for children and for adults, but there are not enough programmes or magazines which address the needs and interests of teenagers.

Write your **essay.**

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Writing – Letter or Email

Unit 6

PART 2

TRAINING

PART 2 TESTS YOUR ABILITY TO WRITE A LETTER OR EMAIL.

- YOU ARE GIVEN A LETTER OR EMAIL WITH NOTES ON IT. IN YOUR REPLY OF 120–180 WORDS YOU MUST INCLUDE ALL THE INFORMATION IT ASKS FOR.
- YOU HAVE ABOUT 40 MINUTES FOR THIS TASK, INCLUDING TIME AT THE END TO CHECK YOUR WORK.
- YOU HAVE TO ORGANISE YOUR TEXT INTO PARAGRAPHS, WITH A SUITABLE BEGINNING AND ENDING.
- YOU MUST WRITE IN AN APPROPRIATE STYLE, FORMAL OR INFORMAL, DEPENDING ON WHO YOUR TEXT IS FOR.

YOU NEED TO WRITE FULL, GRAMMATICALLY CORRECT SENTENCES WITH CORRECT PUNCTUATION AND SPELLING, AND USE A GOOD RANGE OF LANGUAGE.

USEFUL LANGUAGE: FORMAL AND INFORMAL EXPRESSIONS

A. Decide whether A or B is more common in formal or informal writing.

1 A. a friendly, personal tone	informal
B. a distant, impersonal tone	formal
2 A. long words: communicate	_____
B. short words: chat	_____
3 A. common words: secret	_____
B. less common words: confidential	_____
4 A. active verb forms: we gave	_____
B. passive verb forms: we were given	_____
5 A. phrasal verbs: go on	_____
B. single-word verbs: continue	_____
6 A. full forms: does not	_____
B. contracted forms: doesn't	_____
7 A. textbook expressions: a limited quantity	_____
B. conversational expressions: a bit	_____
8 A. full forms of words: especially	_____
B. abbreviations: esp.	_____
9 A. complete sentences: I was extremely surprised.	_____
B. incomplete sentences: Quite a shock.	_____
10 A. use of exclamation marks: I'm really happy!	_____
B. no exclamation marks: I am extremely pleased.	_____

B. Decide whether each of these expressions is formal or informal and whether it usually goes at the beginning or the end of a letter.

Example: Give my love to everyone. informal / end

Thanks (very much) for your letter. I apologise for the delay in replying. Don't forget to write soon.	Yours sincerely,	~~Give my love to everyone~~.
I look forward to hearing from you.	Dear Sir/Madam,	This is just a quick note to say ...
Hi Abbie	Best wishes,	It was great to get your email.
I have received your letter dated May 23.	Lots of love,	Well, that's all for now.
	Dear Ben,	Sorry to be so slow getting back to you.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

C. Match the headings with groups of expressions 1-6. In each group there is one expression that is too formal for writing to a friend. Which is it?

Advising Changing the subject Expressing surprise	Apologising Expressing enthusiasm Requesting information
1 ___Apologising___ I would like to apologise for arriving so late. Sorry about forgetting to tell you. Please forgive me for making that mistake. It was silly of me to suggest that.	4 _____ By the way, what's his name? That reminds me, it's her birthday next week. With reference to the accommodation, there are certain changes ... Anyway, how's life in general?
2 _____ Could you let me know what time you'll be here? I would be grateful if you could tell me the cost. I'd like to know if you've got a spare ticket. Can you give me an idea when it'll finish?	5 _____ You'll never believe this, but she's his cousin! I was most surprised to discover that the price has risen. Funnily enough, we were both at the same primary school. Believe it or not, I've just won the lottery!
3 _____ It'd be a good idea to try again. If I were you, I'd tell her now. My advice to you is to consider it most carefully. I really think you should go somewhere else.	6 _____ I'm delighted to hear you won a prize! It's a really exciting place to go with friends! I am extremely enthusiastic about learning Chinese. I think it's great that everyone will be there!

D. Read this letter written by a First Certificate candidate to a penfriend. It is well organised and there are no serious mistakes, but some of the expressions are too formal. Replace 1-8 with expressions from Exercise B and Exercise C.

Dear Lola,
(1) I am writing to you in reply to your letter. I'm very happy that you and your parents will stay in my country for a month.
(2) I believe it is a good idea that you will come to visit my city. I'm sure you will enjoy the holiday because (3) it is an extremely interesting place to visit.
(4) In my opinion, I suggest that you go and hear music in one of the main squares in the city centre. I'm sure you will enjoy it. Moreover there are a lot of cultural places to visit and history museums too.
(5) Next, I believe it would be better to come in the first part of the month, because that is when there are fewer tourists and fewer people visiting the monuments and the museums.
(6) To sum up, (7) I will be pleased to receive another letter from you soon, Lola.
(8) Yours sincerely,
Richard

UNDERSTANDING INSTRUCTIONS; READING THE TEXT AND NOTES

E. Look at these exam instructions.

1. What kind of text has the candidate received?
2. Who wrote it? What was her original plan?
3. What does the candidate have to do?

You have just received an email from your English-speaking friend, Lauren, who was going to meet you at the airport when you arrive in her country. Read Lauren's email and the notes you have made. Then write an email to Lauren, using all your notes.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

F. Read Lauren's email and the notes next to it.

1. What does she apologise for? What reason does she give?
2. What two suggestions does she make in the second paragraph?
3. What two suggestions does she make in the third paragraph?
4. What does she suggest in the fourth paragraph? What does she ask?
5. Has she written her email in a formal or an informal style? What examples can you find?

Email

From: Lauren Andrews
Sent: 12th April
Subject: Airport arrival

Doesn't matter, because

I'm really sorry but I'm afraid it's impossible for me to meet you at the airport on Monday morning. They've just changed the date of my exam and I really have to be there till lunchtime.

I think the best thing for you to do would be to take the train from the airport, and then we can meet in the city centre.

Where and when?

Then, if you like, we can find a nice little café in one of the quieter streets and have something to eat. Afterwards we can get the bus to my house.

No, because

In the evening we can go out somewhere together. Is there anywhere you'd especially like to go?

I'm looking forward to seeing you!
Best wishes,
Lauren

Yes, perhaps we could

EXAM TASK

G. Look at the exam task below.

1. Is Adam's letter written in a formal or an informal style?
2. What does Adam tell you about the bike?
3. What five things does Adam ask you?
4. What two things do you need to ask Adam?
5. How many words must you write?

H. You must answer this question. Write your answer in 120-150 words in an appropriate style.

Your English-speaking friend, Adam, has just bought a mountain bike like yours. Read Adam's letter and the notes you have made. Then write a letter to Adam using all your notes.

Believe it or not, I won a mountain bike on an internet auction site for almost nothing! I've now picked it up from the seller; so shall we go out for a ride together this weekend?

Yes, it's great

I could go either on Saturday or Sunday. Which would suit you better?

Say, which, and why

I think it must be much more fun to ride off-road, so how about going into the countryside?

Ask where, and now far

I really hope we can spend all day out riding. If so, do you think we should take some food with us? What kind would be best?

Yes, suggest

Please write back soon!
All the best,
Adam

Write your letter. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

REMEMBER

1. READ THE INSTRUCTIONS, THE TEXT AND THE NOTES BESIDE IT. IS THE TASK A LETTER OR AN EMAIL?
2. WHO DO YOU HAVE TO WRITE TO? WHY? WHICH POINTS MUST YOU INCLUDE? DECIDE WHETHER TO USE FORMAL OR INFORMAL EXPRESSIONS.
3. THINK ABOUT THE TOPIC AND YOUR READER, AND NOTE DOWN IDEAS. HOW MANY PARAGRAPHS WILL YOU NEED?
4. MAKE A PLAN, PUT YOUR BEST IDEAS UNDER SHORT PARAGRAPH HEADINGS. DO THEY COVER ALL THE POINTS IN THE NOTES?
5. NOTE DOWN SOME WORDS OR PHRASES FOR EACH PARAGRAPH, INCLUDING EXPRESSIONS FROM THE USEFUL LANGUAGE ON PAGES 20-21, BUT DON'T TRY TO WRITE A COMPLETE DRAFT.
6. WRITE YOUR TEXT, KEEPING TO THE TOPIC AND TO YOUR PLAN INCLUDE ONE OR TWO SENTENCES ABOUT EACH OF THE NOTES.
7. USE A WIDE RANGE OF VOCABULARY AND GRAMMAR, AND MAKE SURE YOUR HANDWRITING IS EASY TO READ.
8. CHECK YOUR COMPLETED TEXT. HAVE YOU MADE ANY CARELESS MISTAKES? IS IT AT LEAST 120 WORDS? IF NOT, YOU WILL LOSE MARKS.

I. You must answer this question. Write your answer in 120-150 words in an appropriate style.

You have received an email from your English-speaking friend, Kay, who is thinking of buying items over the Internet. Read Kay s email and the notes you have made. Then write an email to Kay, using all your notes.

Email
From: Kay Simmonds
Sent: 9th February
Subject: Online shopping

I know you've had some experience buying things over the Internet and I'm wondering if you still think it's a good idea.

Yes. because

What are the best kinds of thing to buy that way? My friend Mark says it's easy to find good books and CDs online, but I'd be interested to know what you think.

Suggest

Also, I'm not really sure about how I would pay for things. Should I send cash through the post?

No. because

One last thing: if I buy something and it's not what I wanted, or it gets damaged in the post, what can I do?

Explain

Please email me back soon. I want to get started as soon as possible!

Love
Kay

Write your letter. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

J. You must answer this question. Write your answer in 120-150 words in an appropriate style.

You have received this letter from your English-speaking friend, Ronnie. Read Ronnie's letter and the notes you have made. Then write a letter to Ronnie, using all your notes.

I've just been talking to my mum and dad about our summer holidays, and they suggested that this year you could spend a couple of weeks with us! We stay right by the sea, the weather's always beautiful and there's plenty to do in the town. What do you think?

Sounds great!

We'll be there all summer, so if you come, which month would suit you better: July or August?

We have a small spare room in our apartment there and you'd be welcome to use that, or else you could stay at my elder sister's studio next door, as she's away studying in New Zealand. Which would you prefer?

Do you think you'd want to spend a lot of time on the beach? We could do other things too, like sports, or visiting places near there.

Say which, and why

Hope to hear from you soon!

Tell Ronie

Ronnie

No, suggest

Write your letter. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.

K. You must answer this question. Write your answer in 120-150 words in an appropriate style.

You have received an email from your English-speaking friend, Chris, who is planning to visit you. Read Chris's email and the notes you have made. Then write an email to Chris, using all your notes.

Email
From: Chris McFadden
Sent: 16th July
Subject: Visit

Better, actually because

Tell Chris

I know we agreed that I would visit you during the first week in August but would you mind if I came the week after instead?

I'm really looking forward to seeing your country for the first time. What do you think I'll particularly like about it?

August there is quite different from summer in my country, so what clothes do you think I should bring with me?

I'll fly to the main airport, of course, but from there what's the best way to get to where you live?

Give directions

Speak to you again soon,

Chris

Suggest

Write your letter. You must use grammatically correct sentences with accurate spelling and punctuation in a style appropriate for the situation.

LIVEWORKSHEETS