



O'level

Week 15

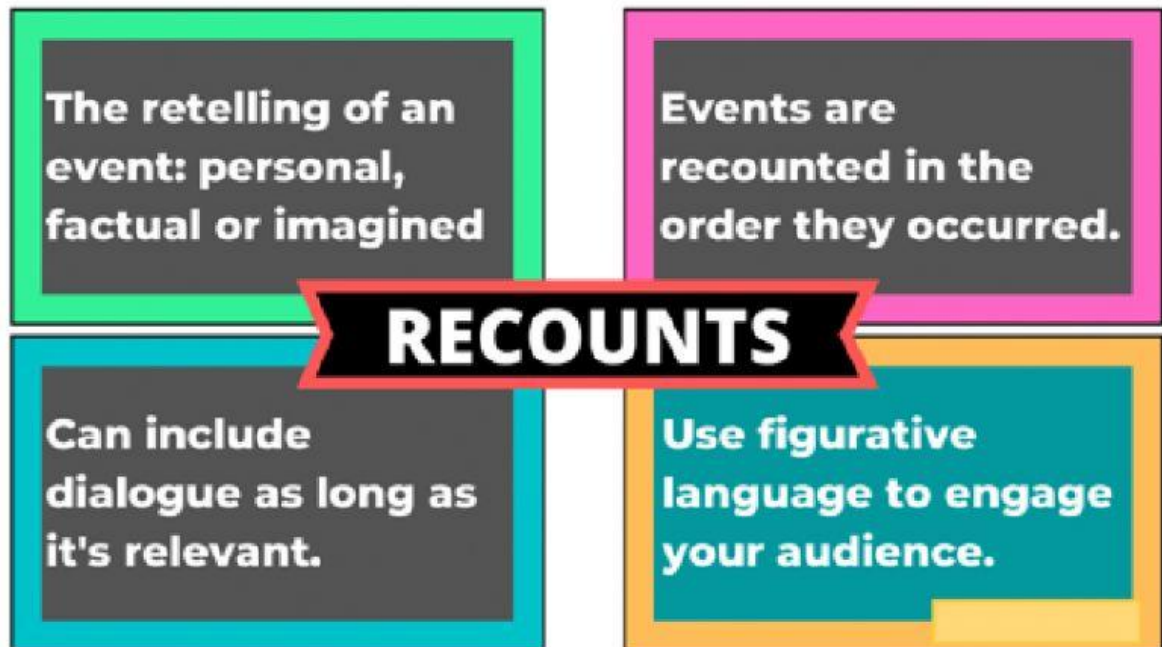
The Write Tribe

PERSONAL RECOUNT



PERSONAL RECOUNT

Retells an activity the writer has been personally involved in and may be used to build the relationship between the writer and the reader e.g. anecdote, diary journal, personal letter. These usually retell an event that the writer was personally involved in.



PERSONAL RECOUNT

STRUCTURE

ORIENTATION

Explain the who, what, when, where of the experience in your introduction.

CHRONOLOGY

Events are described in the sequence in which they occurred.

INSIGHT

Include personal comments, opinions or interpretations of the recounted experience or event.

FOCUS

Only significant events are included

ORGANIZATION

Relevant information is grouped in paragraphs

FEATURES

TENSE

First and third person are used most frequently and recall is always written in past tense. Present tense can be used for analysis and opinion.

NOUNS

Use proper nouns to refer to specific people, places times and events

CONNECTIVES

Use conjunctions and connectives to link events and indicate time sequence

VOICE

Both active and passive voice are used in recounts



Writing a recount is a deeply reflective process. As such you will want to spend the largest part of recount writing time refining the details, language and narration of the event you are recounting.

POINTS TO CONSIDER BEFORE WRITING

- What are you going to tell your audience? What are you recounting?
- What information will the audience need early in the text?
- What are the important events or parts of the recount you want to describe? And what order will they occur in?
- How will you let your readers know the order of events? And what language will we use to link them?
- What other information may be useful to include?
- How will you conclude your recount?



POINTS TO CONSIDER BEFORE WRITING

At this point consider some of the questions your audience might ask whilst reading your recount such as.

- What occurred?
- Where did it take place?
- When did it occur?
- Who were the main characters / people involved?
- Why did certain things happen?
- How did things happen?
- What were some of the reactions to the events that occurred in your recount?
- What are the concluding thoughts or ideas you want to leave with your readers?



WRITING ORGANIZER - Recount

Orientation: - *Introduction – Setting the scene.*

Gives details of:

- **Who**
- **What**
- **When**
- **Where**
- **Why**

Events: - *What happened – in chronological order.*

What happened?

- **First...**
- **Next...**
- **Soon...**
- **During...**
- **After...**
- **Later...**
- **Eventually...**
- **Finally...**

Conclusion: - *Personal Comment (Optional)*

What did you think, feel or decide about the events that happened.

Recounts are always written in past tense so be conscious to stay in this tense right throughout. Everything has already happened so ensure your vocabulary reflects this.

The challenge in writing a good recount is to provide the audience with the story as it happened but to leave out incidental and boring information.

Set the scene for the audience in terms of characters, setting and context. We refer to this as our orientation and it will provide the reader with all the key ingredients of the recount in the introduction by addressing the who, what, when and where.

Keep everything in chronological order in a recount and use a variety of time transitional terms and phrases so as to keep your audience engaged throughout.

- Use a range of adjectives, try and avoid "And then, and then , and then."
- Each new section will require a paragraph.
- Use the correct language and terms relevant to your recount. Consider your audience, and the language they will connect with.
- If you are writing from a specific point of view use the relevant language to match the perspective. Most commonly in a recount you will be recounting in the first person.



PERSONAL ACCOUNT:

Write about an unforgettable experience in your life.

In every individual's life, there comes a point in time when an unforgettable incident will occur. Whether it is positive or negative, it may vary on the situation, but it something that will be remembered forever. For me, it happened in the year 1986. I was nineteen years old. It was two days before Chinese new year. The month of February was surprisingly cruel that year. The sun had been beating down on us and it was hot like the Sahara desert. Grandmother was literally painting the town red with an assortment of Chinese new year decorations. The woman was a wrinkled prune with hair white as snow and a body that was deteriorating with age. Despite all that, she was full of beans. "Lou promised he will come this year. Don't be couch potatoes and get moving!" she commanded playfully. With a big smile on her face, I could see she was happy as a lark. I had never seen her so full of beans except on Chinese New Year. It was as if she got a new lease of life, She was always over the moon during Chinese New Year. Uncle Lou always promises he will come for Chinese New Year. Nine years had passed since he had been at war, he never came. Instead every year a letter would arrive with the message that he couldn't make it. Apparently, he settled overseas with a local woman. Despite the constant letdown, Grandmother was cool and would always look forward to seeing him again. As the house buzzed with excitement, little did I know this Chinese New Year would be a life-changing experience for me. I have a vague memory of Uncle Lou. He looks exactly like my father. They are as alike as twos peas in a pod. However, their characters were opposites. They were as different as chalk and cheese. My father always stayed close to family however Uncle Lou was more adventurous and had big ambitions. I helped Grandmother with the



chores even though it was boring. However, Grandmother's cookies were to die for. As she decorated the cookies meticulously, she kept on talking about how much Uncle Lou loves her food. "You can't get such delicacies overseas. When he comes, I bet he will be as hungry as a wolf and gobble all the cookies in mere seconds." she chuckled. We were interrupted by my father. "I need you for a chore," he said. "Another chore!" I grumbled and went to assist my father. He handed me an envelope and said, "I need you to put this in our mailbox." With that he left. The letter was sealed and had an overseas stamp and address. I was burning with curiosity. Why was he asking me to place it in the mailbox? Why would we deliver a letter to ourselves?

Curious as a cat, I secretly decided to open the letter and see what was in it.

It was a letter from Uncle Lou. The message was the same as any other year. He couldn't make it. Still, my mind raced. Why place it in our mailbox? Did Dad accidentally pick the letter and didn't want to deliver the bad news himself. With burning questions, I went to his room to ask him.

My father wasn't there but his cupboard was open. He usually doesn't leave it open. However, I had questions that needed answers. I started rummaging through it. That was when I saw something I wish I didn't see.

Everything became crystal clear to me. It was a yellowed certificate. A death certificate. Uncle Lou had died in war 9 years ago.

"What are you doing?" My dad's voice demanded. Seeing the certificate in my hand, he knew it was too late. "Why have you all been lying to Grandma all this while?" my voice croaked from the sorrow brimming in me. "I'm sorry son. Uncle Lou was a brave man. He did great service to our country. He lived as a warrior and died as one." my dad solemnly said. I could see he thought highly of Uncle Lou. He was as proud as a peacock of his



brother's valor. I learnt Uncle Lou had died in a bomb blast. There was nothing left of his body. My dad couldn't bring himself to tell Grandma. She would be devastated and the news may even kill her. She was already 87 years old. "Let her be happy for whatever remaining years she has with us. Why ruin her happiness?" my dad added.

I knew what I had to do even though it broke my heart.

As quick as lightning, I ran to grandmother, letter in hand. "What is it?" grandmother asked.

"A letter from Uncle Lou! Woohoo!" I feigned excitement. With shaky hands, she tore it open hastily. The big smile on her face turned upside down. "He can't make it." she stated. Tears filled her eyes. Seeing her disappointment, I couldn't hold my emotions. Noticing my tears, she quickly brightened up. "Never mind boy, we have much work to do. It's Chinese New Year. Brighten up. If not this year, he will come the next!" she chirped.

As I watched her energetically make enough cookies to feed the town, I gave a thumbs up to my Dad. Dad did the right thing. Every cloud has a silver lining.

Though this makes us sad, the lie gives happiness Grandma's life. I learnt that there's always something positive even in the most awful experiences.

At least, every Chinese New Year my grandmother has something to look forward to.

