

HOW TO WRITE A STORY FOR PRELIMINARY

PARTS OF A STORY

- **Title:** The title should either summarise the whole story (without spoilers!) or have something to do with the main theme.
- **Exposition:** This is the beginning of the story, where the characters and setting are established. It serves as the introduction to the next part, the action, and the so-called conflict of our story.
- **Action:** In this part, the characters deal with conflict and do things to solve it.
- **Resolution:** This is where the conflict is resolved and the story concludes with an ending, normally without any loose ends.

- Your English teacher has asked you to write a story.
- Your story must begin with this sentence:

I felt nervous when the phone rang.

- Write your story on your answer sheet.

Title

THE CALL

Exposition

I felt nervous when the phone rang. It was midnight and I was trying to sleep. Who could it be?

Action

I got up and ran to the phone. However, as I was running, the phone stopped ringing. I was angry, but I decided to go to bed again. But when I was falling asleep, the phone started ringing again. "Oh, my God! This is so annoying!", I thought. This time I picked up the phone quickly and shouted, "Hello?!". Nobody said anything at first, but all of a sudden I heard, "Happy birthday, brother!".

Resolution

I had completely forgotten that it was my birthday. My sister was always the first person to congratulate me.

USEFUL PHRASES

To begin a story

When you start a story, if the first sentence isn't given to you, you can use phrases like these:

- It all began...
- When I first...
- At the beginning...
- It was a hot/cold summer/winter day.

Time phrases

- Then
- After that
- Not long afterwards
- As soon as
- While
- Meanwhile
- As
- Some time later
- A little later
- ____ minutes later
- a moment later
- Later (that morning/afternoon/day/night...)
- Just then

Creating suspense

- Suddenly
- All of a sudden
- Without warning
- Just at that moment
- Unexpectedly
- Out of the blue
- Out of nowhere
- Right away
- Straight away

Direct speech

In every story there are characters and they usually interact with each other, so it is always good if you know how to use direct speech, that is, reproduce the words the characters actually say or think. The tricky bit about this is the punctuation and the verbs to choose, because it's good to use some verbs other than «say». Let's take a look at some examples:

- «I'm coming with you,» she said.
- She said, «I'm coming with you.»
- «Do you like it?» he asked.
- «Don't do it!» he screamed.

Pay close attention at where the comma (,) or other punctuation marks go (? , !). Also, don't forget to use inverted commas («...») to enclose the direct speech. In British English we normally use single inverted commas ('...'), but it's not important so choose the one that suits you best.

Finishing your story

- In the end
- Finally
- When it was all over
- Eventually
- After everything that happened
- Luckily

VERB TENSES