45 Taste and smell

A Food and restaurant reviews

Look at these descriptions of smells and tastes in travel review articles.

Everywhere you go, the **fragrant perfume** of Caranza Island's wild flowers follows you. And in the village of Jarca, the **distinctive aroma**[1] of the local dishes and the **smell** of fresh coffee **wafting**[2] across the square from the small cafés is simply wonderful.

For many people, octopus is **an acquired taste**[3], but it's a must on the south coast, and the **subtle**[4] **flavour** of the local vegetable, *quingat*, provides a perfect accompaniment. The **fresh scent** of herbs is everywhere in the local markets.

[1] a slightly literary word used to refer to pleasant smells (often of food and drink, e.g. coffee); often used with adjectives such as *distinctive*, *rich*, *strong*, *sweet*, *appetising*

[2] moving gently through the air

[3] something you dislike at first but start to like after trying it several times

[4] not noticeable or obvious

B Negative collocations connected with smells and tastes

I can't drink **bitter coffee**. I'll have to put some sugar in this.

There was nothing in the fridge except an old carton of **milk** which had **gone sour**.

The lovely beach was completely spoilt by the **acrid**[1] smoke and **noxious**[2] **fumes** from a **foul-smelling chemical factory** nearby. [[1]strong smelling, causing a burning feeling in your throat [2]poisonous]

Body odour can be extremely unpleasant and embarrassing. [an unpleasant smell on a person's body that is caused by sweat]

C More taste and smell collocations

Mateo: Quinn, do you think this cheese is bad? It has a **strong smell**. **Have a taste**, tell me what you think.

Quinn: Hmm. Let me **have a smell** … mm … When did you buy it? It **smells off**[1] to me.

[1] no longer fresh or good to eat because of being too old

Julia: There was an **overpowering stink** coming from the river today as I drove over the bridge. It always **gives off a smell** in the hot weather but this was dreadful.

Austin: Yes, I passed there the other day. It's a **revolting stench**[2]. The pollution is getting worse and worse.

[2] *Stench* is a stronger, more extreme word than *stink*. *Revolting* means extremely unpleasant, disgusting.

Chris: Do I detect a **whiff**[3] **of perfume**? Are you meeting someone special tonight?

Lillian: It's none of your business!

[3] slight smell

D Smell and taste: metaphorical collocations

Her cruel remarks **left a bad/unpleasant taste in our mouths**. [left an unpleasant memory]

I **tasted freedom** when I gave up my job and travelled for a year. Now I can't go back to normal life.

Hudson and I **share the same taste in** music; we often buy the same CDs.

She has **developed a taste for** fast cars. She's just bought a bright red Ferrari.

We **smelt danger** and decided not to enter the city. It was a wise choice.

I didn't hear every word, but I **got the flavour of** what he was saying and I didn't like it.

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Exercises

45.1 **Look at A. Match the beginning of each sentence with its ending.**

1 I think caviar must be an acquired	**a.** fumes from the factory behind it.
2 The delicious aroma of fresh coffee	**b.** is just too bitter for my taste.
3 The park was spoilt by the noxious	**c.** wafted in from the kitchen.
4 We just loved the fragrant	**d.** smoke from the bonfire.
5 I particularly enjoy the subtle	**e.** taste – I don't like it very much.
6 Smell the bottle and tell me if the milk	**f.** perfume of the blossom on the trees.
7 I usually love coffee but this coffee	**g.** is sour or OK to drink still.
8 It must be the wet wood causing such acrid	**h.** flavours that herbs give to food.

45.2 **Divide the collocations in the box into those that have a positive meaning and those that have negative connotations.**

acrid smoke	appetising aroma	foul-smelling chemicals	fragrant perfume
noxious fumes	overpowering stink	revolting stench	fresh scent

positive	negative

45.3 **Read the sentences and answer the questions about them.**

1 *Evan has developed a taste for visiting old churches.*
How frequently do you think Evan visits old churches?
2 *Skylar always leaves a whiff of perfume behind her.*
Does Skylar leave a strong smell or a light one?
Is it a pleasant or an unpleasant smell?
3 *As I entered the train carriage I couldn't help noticing the body odour.*
Does the speaker notice the smell of sweat or the smell of cosmetics?
4 *Jim asked his girlfriend to have a taste of the sauce he was preparing.*
Does the girlfriend probably take a lot or a little of the sauce?
5 *Some fish were rotting in a bucket and were giving off an overpowering stink.*
Did the speaker like the smell?
If the speaker had said *revolting stench* instead of *overpowering stink*, would this have made the smell seem better or worse?
6 *If you just read the introduction to the article, you can get the flavour of it.*
How could you say *get the flavour* in a different way?
7 *The argument has left an unpleasant taste in my mouth.*
Is the speaker upset by something he has eaten or something that has happened?
8 *Eleanor and I get on so well together because we share the same taste in lots of things.*
Do Eleanor and the speaker only like the same kinds of food or other things too?

Over to you

Look up the words *taste*, *flavour*, *aroma*, *smell*, *perfume*, *scent* and *odour* in a good learner's dictionary. Make a note of what kinds of things they collocate with.

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II Reading

HERE ARE OUR EIGHT TOP TIPS FOR WRITING IN ENGLISH.

Writing is one of the most difficult skills in any language. It's a complex process which involves word selection, summarising, planning and organising. Unlike speaking, writing needs to be perfect. Worse still, it's a formal record of your efforts. So, what can you do to improve your writing? Here are our top tips.

1. READ!

More reading leads to better writing, and that's a fact. Reading improves and reinforces vocabulary development, exposes you to lots of different text types, and gives you examples of standard English. As you read, you see how the language fits together. Later, you can apply this knowledge to your writing.

2. THINK GENRE!

Before writing, think what type of text it is you want to produce. There are lots of different text types in English and each one has its own particular language conventions. For example, a formal letter of complaint is very different from an informal text message to a friend. What are you writing? Is it an e-mail to a business colleague, a greeting card to a member of your family, a poem, a song, a speech, an article for a newspaper, a short story, a brochure, a menu, a wedding invitation, a film review, a scientific report?

3. ANALYSE THE GENRE!

Once you've decided what type of text it is that you're going to write, read lots of examples of this type of writing and make a note of any style points and typical expressions. Identify the essential elements and then transfer this knowledge to your own writing. You can find examples of your genre online.

4. THIK IN ENGLISH!

When you start writing, avoid translating. Many expressions and grammar rules can't be translated directly... and if they are, it'll make your text sound unnatural. Of course, there may be a word or two you'd like to look up and translate, but in general you should try to use the English you know.

5. USE YOUR INTUITION!

You probably know a lot more English than you realise. So, just write and let the words flow out - you'll be surprised at all those key phrases and useful expressions that you've got stored in your brain.

6. WRITE QUICKLY!

Don't spend too much time on your writing. Do it fairly quickly. Then, leave it for a day or two. Later, you can go over it, checking to see whether it makes sense, sounds good and flows smoothly, and whether the ideas are linked logically.

7. PRACTISE!

Practise writing whenever you can. Find examples of texts that you like in the genre you're focussing on and read them carefully. Then, try to reproduce them. Literally, read a short text or paragraph, then cover it and try to write it out again. Finally, check your version against the original. How good is it?

8. CHECK!

When you're happy with the text you've produced, you need to check over it carefully. Look out for any typos (accidental errors made when typing), grammar mistakes and any spelling or punctuation errors. Also, show it to friends, your teacher and colleagues. They may notice something that you hadn't seen.

True or false

1. Writing is an easy skill in any language. T / F
2. Reading can help improve your writing. T / F
3. Reading does not contribute to vocabulary development. T / F
4. It's not necessary to think about the genre before starting to write. T / F
5. Translating expressions and grammar rules directly from your native language is recommended when writing in English. T / F
6. Spending a lot of time on your writing is essential to produce a good text. T / F
7. It is not necessary to practice writing regularly. T / F
8. Getting feedback from others, such as friends, teachers, or colleagues, can be beneficial for improving your writing. T / F

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IV Use of English

HERE ARE OUR EIGHT TOP TIPS FOR WRITING IN ENGLISH.

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More reading (3) ___ to better writing, and that's a fact. Reading improves and reinforces vocabulary development, exposes you to lots of different text types, and gives you examples of standard English. As you read, you see how the language fits together. Later, you can apply this knowledge to your writing.

2. THINK GENRE!

Before writing, think what type of text it is you want to produce. There are lots of different text types in English and each one has its own particular language conventions. For example, a formal letter of complaint is very different (4) ___ an informal text message (5) ___ a friend. What are you writing? Is it an e-mail to a business colleague, a greeting card to a member of your family, a poem, a song, a speech, an article for a newspaper, a short story, a brochure, a menu, a wedding invitation, a film review, a scientific report?

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Once you've decided what type of text it is that you're going to write, read lots (6) ___ examples of this type of writing and (7) ___ a note of any style points and typical expressions. Identify the essential elements and then transfer this knowledge (8) ___ your own writing. You can find examples of your genre online.

4. THIK IN ENGLISH!

When you start writing, avoid translating. Many expressions and grammar rules can't be translated directly... and if they are, it'll make your text sound unnatural. Of course, there may be a word or two you'd like to look up and translate, but in general you should try to use the English you know.

1. A) more difficult	B) most difficult	C) difficult	D) difficultest
2. A) to being	B) being	C) be	D) to be
3. A) is lead	B) is leading	C) leads	D) lead
4. A) in	B) from	C) of	D) -
5. A) from	B) -	C) for	D) to
6.A) -	B) of	C) from	D) in
7. A) make	B) do	C) makes	D) does
8. A) in	B) to	C) for	D) -

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Guess the meaning of the idioms in bold. In what situations would you use these idioms? Form sentences to illustrate their use.

IDIOMS

1. I'm going to book an appointment to see the doctor because I've been feeling **out of sorts** all week.
2. After scoring the winning goal in the cup final, I was **on top of the world**.
3. My sister has had her friends around the house all day and they have been **driving me up the wall** with their screaming.
4. When I'm **feeling blue**, I try to think of all the good things I have in my life, and that cheers me up.
5. I know the exams are coming up, but I just wish my parents would chill out a little and stop **giving me a hard time**.
6. I **had mixed feelings** about being made the class president. I was immensely proud, but also nervous about whether I would do a good job.
7. My mum **jumped for joy** when she heard that I had been offered a place at Manchester University.

Idioms Ідіоми

be on top of the world бути в піднесеному настрої
be out of sorts почуватися недобре, бути в поганому настрої
drive sb up the wall вивести когось із рівноваги
feel blue бути в поганому настрої
give sb a hard time додавати причин для хвилювання, критикувати
have mixed feelings мати, переживати змішані почуття
jumping for joy стрибати від радощів

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