

Uni3: Writing

Third-person Narratives



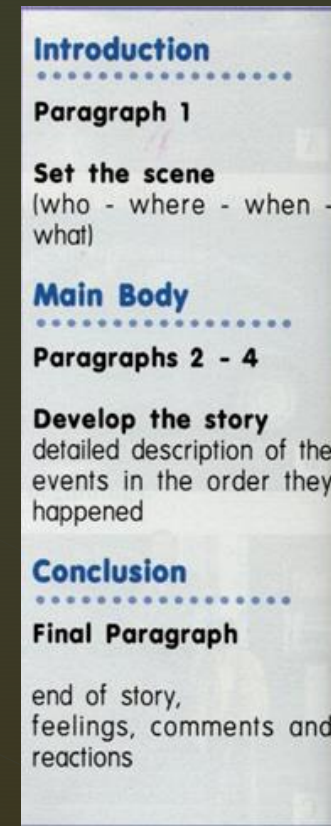
What are they?

Real or imaginary stories about another person or other people written in the 3rd person (he/she/they/etc.)

Structure

A third-person narrative should consist of:

- an **introduction** in which you set the scene (who was involved, time, place, etc.) in an interesting way to help the reader imagine the scene and want to continue reading;
- a **main body** consisting of two or more paragraphs in which you develop your story presenting the events in the order that they happened; and
- a **conclusion** in which you say what happened at the end and refer to people's feelings, final comments or reactions.



Top Tips!

- You should normally use **past tenses** as well as **a variety of adjectives or adverbs** to make your story more attractive to the reader.
- Narratives can be found in articles, letters, novels, etc. To attract the reader's attention, give **interesting and catchy titles** to your stories, especially if they are for a magazine, newspaper, etc.
- Before you start writing your story you should **decide on the plot line** i.e. the main events which make up the story. You should make sure that you write these events in the order they happened. **To show the sequence of events** you can **use linking words** such as: *as soon as, while, before, first, next, then*, etc.

PAST TENSES

- You can use various past tenses in your story:
- **past simple**, to describe actions which started and ended in the past, or actions which happened one after the other in the past (e.g. *I **went** to Paris **last month**. I **walked** past the bank and **stopped** at the post office to buy some stamps*).
- **past continuous**, to set the scene or to describe events/actions in progress at a certain time in the past (e.g. *It **was pouring** with rain that evening. We **were all sitting** in the living room*).
- **past perfect**, for actions which happened before other past actions or to give the background of the story (e.g. *I decided to call Mr. Jones and tell him the truth about what **had happened***).

TECHNIQUES TO BEGIN YOUR STORY₁

An interesting beginning is as important as an interesting ending. An interesting beginning will catch the reader's attention and make him/her want to continue reading. A good ending will make him/her feel satisfied.

You can **START** your story by:

- **using your senses** to set the scene and describe the weather, atmosphere, surroundings or people's actions to create mystery or suspense (e.g. *I could hear the wind howling around me. It was quite dark that night and it felt strange to be out in the wilderness all alone*).

TECHNIQUES TO BEGIN YOUR STORY₂

- **using direct speech** (e.g. *"Always look on the bright side of life, kids", Mr. Frisbain used to tell us*).
- **asking a rhetorical question** i.e. a question that does not require an answer (e.g. *Have you ever travelled by train on a warm summer night?*)
- **addressing the reader directly** (e.g. *I am sure you all know what a bargain is*).
- **referring to your feelings or moods** (e.g. *I was exhausted because I had been painting walls all day*).

TECHNIQUES TO END YOUR STORY

You can **END** your story by:

- **using direct speech** (e.g. *“Thank you, sir,” the boy said to me.*)
- **referring to your feelings or moods** (e.g. *We were shivering but we were happy to have made it.*)
- **asking a rhetorical question** (e.g. *“Why did I have to suffer so much?”*)
- **describing people’s reactions to/feelings about the events developed in the main body** (e.g. *My brother had become the hero of the day and I was extremely proud.*)

SOME MORE NARRATIVE ENDINGS

Circular ending	Your story circles back to the beginning. You can use the same idea or even the same sentence or exact words you used at the beginning of your writing.
Reflection ending	You step back and reflect on what has happened. You look back on the experience thinking about its importance, its meaning for the future etc.
Surprise ending	Something unexpected or exciting happened in the end - it can be a twist ending!
Moral ending	You show what we can learn from the story - how the main character has changed or grown at the end, as a result of the experience he had!
Capturing emotion ending	You make the reader feel emotional/touched at the end of your story! Talk to your readers' heart!
Question ending	You end your story with a question to keep your reader thinking.
Cliffhanger	You manage to make your readers "hanging" or wanting more! What happens next?
Dialogue ending	Your story ends with a conversation between your characters, captivating your readers, making the scene realistic and stirring the readers' emotions.
Funny ending	If you manage to make the readers laugh at the end your story will be memorable!

WRITING TECHNIQUES

To make your narrative more interesting to the reader, you should:

- use a variety of **adjectives** or **adverbs**, such as *imaginative, wonderful, cautiously, etc.* instead of simplistic ones such as *nice, good, well, etc.*
e.g. *Instead of: John is a good boy with nice ideas.*
*you can write: John is a **great** boy with **wonderful** ideas.*
- Use a variety of **verbs** such as *wondered, screamed, whispered, etc.* to avoid using “said” all the time.
e.g. *Instead of: “Help!” he said.*
*you can write: “Help!” he **screamed**.*
- Use **similes** i.e. expressions which describe people or things by comparing them to someone or something else.
e.g. *She ran **like** the wind. He was **as quiet as a mouse**.*
- Use **present** or **past participles** to join two simple sentences into one longer, more sophisticated sentence.
e.g. *Instead of: He turned on the light He saw someone in the room.*
*you can write: **Turning on** the light, he saw someone in the room.*
Instead of: She was relieved. She left the police station.
*you can write: **Relieved**, she left the police station.*