



Articles News Reports Reviews

1ST YEAR ENGLISH CLASS

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General information

What is an article?

An **article**, in general, is a piece of writing for publication in a magazine, newspaper, brochure, leaflet, etc. It may be formal or informal in style, depending on its intended readership. Its purpose may be to provide information, describe a place/event/experience, etc, present an opinion or balanced argument, offer advice/suggestions, etc.

Special types of articles

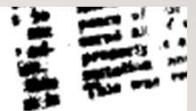
There are certain specialised types of articles, however. These include:

- i) **news reports**, which are brief, factual pieces of writing written for publication in newspapers, describing important current events in a formal, impersonal style; and
- ii) **reviews**, which are specialised articles written to describe, discuss and/or evaluate a film, book, theatrical performance, TV series, etc. Such pieces are usually published in a magazine or newspaper.

Organisation of the text

A successful article should consist of:

- a) an eye-catching **title** or **headline** which suggests the topic of the article that follows;
- b) an **introduction** which clearly outlines the topic(s) to be covered;
- c) a **main body** of several paragraphs in which the subject is developed in detail; and
- d) a **conclusion** which summarises the topic and/or offers an opinion, comments, recommendations, etc.



Title/Headline

Introduction

Paragraph 1

state the topic of the article/news report/review

Main Body

Paragraphs 2-3-4-5*

development of the topic
— each new aspect
should be presented in a
separate paragraph with a
clear topic sentence

Conclusion

Final Paragraph

summary of the topic
and/or opinion/comments/
recommendation(s)

** The exact number of paragraphs will depend on the specific requirements of each writing task.*

Points to consider

- Before you start writing, it is important to decide:
 - where the article is intended to appear (*e.g. magazine, leaflet, etc*)
 - who the intended readers are (*e.g. the general public, fellow students, etc*)
 - what the purpose of writing is (*e.g. describe, inform, advise, etc*)These three factors will determine the style, language and arrangement of your article.
- The style of the article may be formal or semi-formal, depending on the intended readership; however, in all articles/news reports/reviews you should avoid extremely vivid description, over-emotional or over-personal writing, and simplistic vocabulary.
- Use suitable descriptive, narrative or argumentative techniques (as presented in units 1 - 6) and expressions which are consistent with the purpose of the article. Appropriate use of linking words/expressions and a wide range of vocabulary will make your writing more interesting.
- Select and organise the ideas and information you will present in each paragraph carefully, and begin each paragraph with a clear topic sentence.

Guidelines for Writing Titles/Headlines

A headline/title is a short, clear summary of the information which is presented in a news report/article.

When writing **titles** you should give a clear idea of what the article is about; so, the main topic of your article should be mentioned in the title. You should also try to arouse the readers' interest. There are a variety of ways to do this. For example, if you are writing a description of a holiday destination, you could use adjectives to make the place sound attractive even before the reader starts reading the article (e.g. ***"The Untamed Wilderness of the Scottish Highlands"***). If the article involves the presentation of an opinion, balanced argument or solutions to a problem, etc, you can address the reader directly (e.g. ***"What You Can Do to Save the Planet"***), or present a question (e.g. ***"Is Capital Punishment the Answer?"***) in the title. Alternatively, and especially in more formal articles, you could just present the topic in a short statement (e.g. ***"The Role of the Monarchy in Britain Today"***). Try to keep the title/headline short and remember that the style of the title/headline (e.g. ***formal/semi-formal***) should reflect that of the article. If you are writing a review for a book, film, etc the title of your piece should be the same as that of the book, film, etc (e.g. ***"The People Vs. Larry Flynt"***).

Rules you should follow when writing headlines

Certain rules can be followed when writing **headlines**:

- a) use the **Present Simple** tense to describe events which have occurred very recently. ***Typhoon kills ten***, for example, means ten people have died, probably in the last twenty-four hours, in a typhoon;
- b) omit the verb "be" when using the passive voice to describe a past event. Write: ***Forests destroyed*** or ***Cyclist injured*** not: *Forests were destroyed* or *cyclist was injured*;
- c) write "**to be + past participle**" when using the passive voice to describe a future event, as in: ***Summit meeting to be held*** (= *A summit meeting is going to be held*). When using the active voice to describe a future event, write the to-infinitive form only, as in: ***Council to close nightclubs*** (= *The council is going to close nightclubs*);
- d) omit articles (**a, an, the**) as in: ***Man questioned in murder case*** (= *A man was questioned in a murder case*);
- e) put nouns one after the other as in: ***Murder investigation team baffled***, which means that a team of people working on an investigation related to a murder are baffled;
- f) avoid using prepositions (**to, from, etc.**) where possible. Write: ***New York plane crashes*** rather than *A plane which was flying to New York has crashed*; and
- g) use abbreviations like UK, FBI, DNA, etc. Write: ***US satellite launched*** not: *A United States satellite was launched*.



Articles

What are articles?

Articles are pieces of writing for publication in a variety of forms, covering a wide range of possible subjects. They may be intended for the general public, or a specific group of readers (*e.g. an article in your college newspaper for fellow students*).

Types of articles

- The ones printed in **magazines, newspapers and newsletters** presenting an opinion or balanced argument concerning social/environmental issues, describing a place/event/experience, etc., providing information, offering practical advice, etc. (*e.g. an article for a college magazine giving practical advice to new students who will be living away from home for the first time*).
- The ones printed in **leaflets and brochures** providing information, describing and/or advertising a company/product/service, offering advice/suggestions, etc. (*e.g. an article in a brochure for a company which wants to attract new customers from around the world*).

Points to consider_1

- An article usually has a **brief title**; this should attract the reader's attention and indicate what the article is about. Articles may also have **subheadings** before each paragraph.
- Depending on the topic of the article, the type of publication and its readership, you may need to use **formal, impersonal language**, or **informal language**.
- Articles may be **written for a wide variety of purposes** and can be **descriptive, narrative, discursive**, etc. and the **techniques, style** and **expressions** used should be **appropriate** to each kind of writing.

Points to consider_2

- **Articles for leaflets and brochures** are usually **informative** and/or **descriptive**, and are written for advertising purposes, or to provide readers with information, advice or suggestions. They should be **clear, avoiding extremely vivid description and over-emotional, over-personal or simplistic language**.
- **Select and organise the ideas and information** you will present in each paragraph carefully. **Begin** each paragraph with a **clear topic sentence**.

Points to consider_3

- When you write **an article** to be published in a **leaflet** or **brochure** you should give it an **eye-catching title** which will attract the reader's attention. **State** the **topic** of the article in the **first paragraph**, then **develop the topic in separate paragraphs**. Each paragraph can be preceded by an appropriate **subheading**. **End** your article by **summarising the topic**.



References

- V. Evans, *Successful Writing Proficiency*, 1998, last accessed on 15/01/2024

The End

