

## English for Life: Writing (B2)

Unit	Topic	Key phrases	Language notes	Writing tips	Practising writing skills
1	Writing emails: formal, semi-formal and informal emails	Dear ... / I hope you are well. / I look forward to hearing from you. / Kind regards, / Hey ...! / How are things? / Speak soon! / I am writing on behalf of ... / I would be grateful if ... / I trust this finds you well.	Formal, semi-formal and informal emails / Phrasal verbs	Gauge the level of formality required by reading previous emails from the person you are writing to / Avoid emoticons and phrasal verbs in formal emails	Underline formal and informal phrases / Rewrite phrases formally / Match the email extracts to their functions / Rewrite sample email / Write formal email to elderly aunt / Write informal email to close friend
2	Writing letters: formal letter writing	Dear ... / I am writing to ... / Yours sincerely, / Action is needed to reduce noise in residential areas. / You should act to reduce noise in residential areas. / I'm absolutely exhausted.	The passive voice / Intensifiers / the preposition + -ing	Find out the name of the person you are writing to / Have a clear purpose and get straight to the point / Use formal phrases supplied / Proofread your letter	Read the letter and answer the questions / Underline the correct intensifier / Rewrite the sentences / Comprehension questions / Write a thank-you letter / Write a hotel / Write to the local mayor
3	Writing online (1): contributing to a discussion forum	Hey guys. I could really do with some advice ... / All suggestions welcome! / Personally, I would ... / You could look ... / You could quite possibly ... / Cuba tends to be ... / Travelling with young children can be somewhat stressful.	Hedging language / Formal and informal language	When asking for advice include information about yourself / Read all the posts carefully before replying / If you wrote the opening post reply thanking people for their advice and suggestions	Comprehension questions / Match informal words and phrases / Rewrite sentences using hedging language / Write an opening post for an online discussion / Write a reply to the sample opening posts
4	Writing online (2): commenting on a blog or online newspaper	You're absolutely right to point out that ... / Right now, I'm not convinced that is the case. / Awesome post! / I guess it's ... / I think that ... / I agree with you ... / It cuts both ways. / It's a mixed bag. / It's part and parcel of ...	Connotation / Seeing both sides of the argument	Try to write a comment which adds something new to the debate / Avoid simply repeating what has already been said	Choose a title for the sample article / Comprehension questions / Match the word to its connotations / Choose the best title for the blog post / Match the expressions to their definitions / Write responses to the sample comments provided
5	Planning: writing a reference	I taught ... during her Masters degree. / She graduated in the top 5% of her class. / She is highly organized and utterly reliable. / It is a pleasure to support her application unreservedly. / Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.	Writing a reference	Before you write a reference look back over the candidate's CV, academic grades, essays and examples of work / Discuss the reference with the candidate before you write it / How do they match the job specifications?	Comprehension questions / Number the information in order / Circle the character adjectives / Number the paragraphs in the correct order / Write the missing paragraph based on data given / Write three references using the information provided
6	Structuring: writing a covering letter	I am writing in reply to the advertisement on your website. / As my CV illustrates ... / I have developed important skills. / I am adept at organizing my time and used to meeting deadlines. / Thank you for your time. / I look forward to hearing from you. / I have always enjoyed writing. / Writing plays an important part in my life.	Sentence structure	Covering letters should be concise / Write your covering letter with the job advertisement beside you / Every covering letter must be specifically tailored to fit the job for which you are applying / Always end your cover letter positively	Match paragraphs 1-4 / Choose the sentence which sounds best / Rewrite the sample sentences / Comprehension exercise / Write a cover letter for one of the sample job adverts provided
7	Developing: writing an opinion piece	We live in a world obsessed with celebrity culture. / Why do we idolize them? / What effect is our obsession with the glitterati having on our relationships? / Is it any wonder that my generation are known as 'the permanent adolescents'?	Lexical fields / Topic sentences	Interesting opinion pieces voice strong opinions / Make your strongest point first then back it up with facts / Use clear, powerful and direct language	Comprehension exercises / Match the word to its definition and example / Match the underlined words to the idiomatic phrases / Fill the gaps / Write an opinion piece on one of the topics provided
8	Being clear: writing instructions for a friend	Preheat the oven to 180C and grease the cake tin. / Mix the flour and sugar together. / Bake for one hour.	Sounding friendly / Present simple imperative	Keep instructions as factual as possible / Avoid using I or you / Make sure your instructions follow a logical sequence / Would your reader be able to complete the task?	Tick the correct box / Match the extract to the problem / Rewrite the sentences / Rewrite the instructions / Comprehension questions / Write a recipe / Write instructions on how to use your cooker and washing machine

9	Being precise and factual: writing a report	I am writing to make a claim on the above insurance policy. / The bedroom which is underneath the bathroom was badly water damaged. / My husband, who is a plumber, did all he could to stop the flood. / I was injured in an accident with your insured ... / As a result of this injury and my consequent loss of earnings, I would like to be compensated £2,500.	Defining and non-defining relative clauses	When writing a report ask yourself what, who, where, when, why, and how? / Avoid emotive and subjective language. / Only include concrete facts / Do not use colloquialisms and abbreviations / Describe the event chronologically and be precise about dates and times	Comprehension questions / Underline the appropriate language / Rewrite the claim to make it more factual / Rewrite the crime report to make the tone more factual / Identify the mistakes in each sentence / Write an insurance claim / Write a witness report
10	Improving: reviewing and editing your work	Dear Mrs Giles, I came across your ad for the post of receptionist and am writing to attach my CV ... / I have worked in the customer service industry for ten years. / I speak fluent French and German. / Hi Keiko, I'm sorry but I don't agree with you at all. / The building of a new store will be very beneficial to our town.	Reviewing and editing / A two-part process	Read your work for comprehension first / Read your work from reader's point of view / Read your writing aloud to check that it reads well	Review and correct the samples texts / Identify the purpose of each sample text / Match texts to type of error / Review and edit three of your previous writing tasks
11	Showing disappointment: writing a letter of complaint	I am writing to express my deep disappointment ... / I would like to be refunded for my accommodation. / The accommodation and activities programme were unacceptable. / I would appreciate a reply within the next two weeks. / I would like to express my disappointment at this evening's events. / I would appreciate your assurance that this will not happen again.	Tone / Remaining tactful	Gather relevant facts before writing complaint / Keep your complaint concise and to the point / Be explicit about action that needs to be taken / Avoid aggressive or threatening language	General comprehension exercises / Identify the tone of the sample text and underline inappropriate sections / Rewrite the sample letter of complaint / Write two letters of complaint based on the scenarios given
12	Being polite but firm: writing a delicate email	I'm writing to check whether you've received my invoice. / The amount has not yet been transferred into my account. / Please could you check with your accounts department that my invoice has been processed? / I have no choice but to issue you with a warning. / If you do not resume attending class within a week, you will lose your place on the course.	Impersonal and human subjects	Start and end letter with a friendly tone / Be polite at all times / Make clear what the reader needs to do / Avoid using too many negative sentences	Comprehension questions / Language focus exercise / Rewrite the sentences in the active voice / Match the sentences / Rewrite the sentences with politer tone / Rewrite sample email / Write two emails based on sample scenarios
13	Remaining balanced: writing about a cause you believe in	I was absolutely shocked and horrified to discover that ... / I was moved to tears. / Please let me know your intentions on this matter. / It has recently come to my attention that ... / This is unacceptable! / It is time for you to confront the serious consequences your industry is having on the environment.	Remaining balanced	Keep your letter factual and polite / Avoid sounding aggressive / Write a little about who you are / Show that you expect a reply	Comprehension questions / Underline matching phrases / Underline and match subjective language / Rewrite sentences / Write three letters based on the sample scenarios
14	Being light-hearted: writing a personal anecdote	Spring has sprung here after an endless and freezing winter. / I've been slaving over a hot photocopier all day. / When I returned from my blissful spring stroll ... / I had been rushing around all day at work. / That's when I realized that I'd left my wallet in the supermarket. / I often thought about how easy my life had been back then.	Past perfect and past perfect continuous	Plan what you want to say before you start writing / Use a range of narrative tenses / Keep the tone chatty and conversational / Make sure there is a beginning, middle and end to your story	Comprehension questions / Number anecdotes in correct order / Underline different verb tenses used / Rewrite anecdotes using the past perfect / Match words to meaning / Reorder anecdote / Write a humorous anecdote
15	Creating mood: writing a short story	He was a thin, angry-looking man with skin which looked as if he had just brushed up against a cheese grater. / She pushed past me impatiently, all jagged elbows and astringent perfume. / The shop assistant was a plump, grinning cat of a woman. She gently waggled her chins in greeting.	Mood / Characters	Write clearly, yet descriptively / Choose your words carefully in order to create the mood you have chosen / Decide who is telling the story / Are you going to use first person narration (I) or third person (He / She)?	Comprehension questions / Identify mood of sample texts / Choose words to create sinister mood / Number events in order / Match plot elements to definition / Write a short character description
16	Communicating emotion: writing a speech	When I look around this room, I see faces alive with vitality and energy. / I know we are all here for the same reason. / I would like to thank each and every one of you for coming here tonight. / As sister of the bride, I have been privileged to grow up with Vanessa. / I hope you will join me in wishing them a long, happy and eventful life together.	Emotive language	Plan your speech carefully before you start writing / Think about how you are going to open and close your speech / Write your speech out in full and then review it / Add humour where appropriate	Comprehension questions / Identify and explain the metaphors / Underline the emotive words / Rewrite sentences to make more emotive / Write four speeches based on the sample scenarios given

17	Adapting to different audiences: writing about yourself	Mayumi Sato is a Japanese artist whose work is inspired by the beauty of the changing seasons. / Layla is an extremely hard-working person. / On top of running her own business, and editing Media Minds magazine, Layla also maintains her own photo blog. / For as long as I can remember, painting has been my passion and my release.	'Show, don't tell'	Consider tone and audience before writing / Think about the length of your piece / Has a word count been stipulated? / Read samples of other people's work to gauge length, style and tone / Be yourself. Readers are quick to detect insincerity	Comprehension exercises / List the style, tone and registers of texts / Underline irrelevant information / Rewrite sentences with correct tone / Write three descriptions of yourself based on the sample scenarios
18	Engaging your readers: writing a blog post	Yesterday, my flatmates and I toasted the one-year anniversary of my arrival to this green and pleasant land. / This was, perhaps, the most vibrant city I have ever visited (and I have seen many cities in my life). / Before coming here, learning English was an academic chore. / After spending six months in London I decided it was time to venture north (and visit Scotland).	Brackets	Write about something you feel confident about / Be yourself. Include your own feelings and opinions / Keep your paragraphs short / Address your readers directly	Comprehension questions / Rewrite post with more humorous tone / Read text and insert brackets where appropriate / Write four different blog posts based on the scenarios given
19	Sharing news and information: writing for social media sites	Living in poverty is a reality for millions of women across the world. / Techned@mperdu Calling all #techie teachers! I'm giving an online workshop. Could you please say hello and how often you use Twitter? / 5 top tips for social media success. Click here to read my summary. / Just witnessed scary-looking lad give up his seat on bus for an old lady #heart-warming.	Social media sites	Choose which social media sites are appropriate for personal or business use / Foster interaction by asking questions / Keep your social and professional sites separate / Be careful about what you post	Comprehension questions / Underline formal and informal language / Identify the target readers / True or false exercises / Rewrite Tweets to make them more appropriate / Write Tweets and Facebook posts based on four scenarios given
20	Writing notes: strategies for note taking	Early childhood education creates better jobs and can therefore promote a stronger economy. / The microbes on your skin can help boost your immune system. / In recent years, the profile of the refugees has changed. / Early childhood ed. creates better jobs & can promote stronger economy. / Microbes on your skin can help boost your immune system. / In recent years the profile of refugees has changed.	Abbreviations / Content words and function words	Revisit your notes shortly after you have written them / Check that your abbreviations still make sense / Fill in any missing information / Exchange notes with friends to see what you have missed / Read your notes as soon as possible and highlight important points	Listen to extract from sample lecture and take notes / Read a chapter of an academic book and take appropriate notes