

B1 Preliminary Writing Part 1 – Teacher’s notes

Description

Students think about the type of notices found in different locations before matching a set of notices with three different given locations. They then match paraphrases to these notices and before looking at a sample task from the exam.

Time required: 30 minutes

Materials required:

- Student handouts 1 and 2
- Sample task

Aims:

- to familiarise students with B1 Preliminary Writing Part 1
- to highlight the importance of identifying the four core elements of the task
- to provide guidance on how to approach the task

Procedure

1. Ask students how they communicate in writing. Do they write text messages, emails, letters? How often? Elicit answers from the whole class and then ask students what makes emails different from other ways of communicating in writing. Ask them in what situations they use emails. Encourage as many answers as possible. Establish that emails are used both in formal and informal situations (e.g. with a teacher, at work, with a classmate, with a friend) as well as the fact that emails allow for more ideas to be included in a single piece of writing (as opposed to a text message).
2. Ask students to look at **Handout 1** and discuss the questions on it with a partner. Give the students about 5 minutes for this and then elicit some answers from the class.
3. Ask students to look at **Handout 2**. Students work alone or in pairs to re-order the segments of text into a coherent email. Then clarify order as a class, identifying any useful clues noted (e.g. the use of ‘Also’ to introduce another idea/point).
4. Explain to students that in the task they are given four ‘notes’ which in the task they need to respond to. Write the following ‘notes’ on the board and ask them to decide which part of the email each one links to: ‘**No, because**’, ‘**Say which I prefer**’, ‘**Me too!**’ and ‘**Ask Sandy**’. As a class, identify which note links to which section of the email.
5. Elicit some ideas as a class on what you might write in response to the first segment of the email: *I’m so excited that you’re coming to stay with me for a week! [Me too!]* – For example:

'I'm so excited too!' 'I can't wait to see you!' 'It's going to be so much fun!' etc.

It may be useful at this point to refer to the sample answers in the Handbook, which show how candidates could answer these points and to show how they can use language to organise and expand on ideas; below is a summary:

Email segment	Note (prompt)	Examples of candidate language from handbook sample answer
I'm so excited that you're coming to stay with me for a week!	<i>Me too!</i>	I can't wait for coming to stay with you too. I'm sure it will be an awesome week!
On your first evening here, there's a rock concert in our town. Would you like to go to the concert or would you prefer us to relax at home?	<i>Say which I prefer</i>	I find really exciting going to the rock concert and I think it would be a great idea, better than staying at home and relax.
Also, shall we go climbing in the mountains while you're here?	<i>No, because ...</i>	Two months ago I broke my left leg and I'm still recovering, so I'm afraid that I won't be able to go climbing mountains with you, although I want it so bad! The funny thing is that I broke my leg climbing the Alps, in France, with my family.
Let me know if you have any questions.	<i>Ask Sandy</i>	Speaking of family, can you e-mail me how is yours? I haven't seen them for a while.

The samples above help show that candidates do not need to repeat the note verbatim (e.g. the 'No, because' in this case is elaborated much more without using the prompt as given but the sense of the prompt is clearly there). Similarly, the 'Speaking of family' in relation to note 4 adds to the organisational quality of the response, the 'I'm sure it will be an awesome week!' adds to the communicative effectiveness of the reply etc.

- Point out to students that each note/prompt is trying to focus on a different function (for example, compare prompts 2, 3 and 4 – expressing preference, refusing/explaining why not

and asking about something.

7. Ask the students to write their own reply to Sandy either within class or at home within 20 minutes so that they get used to writing within the exam timeframe (give students the **sample task**).

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Answer key

Handout 1

1. Can you choose not to answer this question? **No**
2. How many words can you write for this task? **About 100 words is expected in this task. You can write more or fewer words as long as you answer all of the points required by the task.**
3. Who has written this email? **Sandy**
4. Is Sandy your friend? **Yes.**
5. What is this email about? **'Your visit': the candidate's visit – it is important for candidates to understand the scenario clearly before they begin answering the question. Misinterpretation of the task could affect the candidate's score.**
6. Can you think of one thing that might be in this email? **e.g. practical arrangements: time of the visit, arrangements to meet, activities etc. or features of an email: greeting, layout, signoff.**

Handout 2

Hi,

I'm so excited that you're coming to stay with me for a week!

On your first evening here, there's a rock concert in our town. Would you like to go to the concert or would you prefer us to relax at home?

Also, shall we go climbing in the mountains while you're here?

Let me know if you have any questions.

See you soon

Sandy

Look at the task below and answer the questions that follow.

Part 1

You **must** answer this question.

Write your answer in about **100 words** on the answer sheet.

Question 1

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Sandy and the notes you have made.

EMAIL	
From:	Sandy
Subject:	Your visit!
Hi,	

1. Can you choose not to answer this question?
2. How many words can you write for this task?
3. Who has written this email?
4. Is Sandy your friend?
5. What is this email about?
6. Can you think of one thing that might be in this email? For example, something you and Sandy will need to write about?

These are sentences taken from the email Sandy has sent you. Put them in the correct order.

Also, shall we go climbing in the mountains while you're here?

Sandy

Let me know if you have any questions.

On your first evening here, there's a rock concert in our town.

I'm so excited that you're coming to stay with me for a week!

See you soon

Would you like to go to the concert or would you prefer us to relax at home?

Hi,

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Sample task

Question 1

Read this email from your English-speaking friend Sandy and the notes you have made.

EMAIL

From: Sandy

Subject: Your visit!

Hi,

I'm so excited that you're coming to stay with me for a week!

On your first evening here, there's a rock concert in our town. Would you like to go to the concert or would you prefer us to relax at home?

Also, shall we go climbing in the mountains while you're here?

Let me know if you have any questions.

See you soon

Sandy

Me too!

Say which I prefer

No, because ...

Ask Sandy ...

Write your **email** to Sandy using **all the notes**.