

HOW TO WRITE AN AMUSING STORY

1. Read the task you are set carefully and underline the key words.
2. Think about your reader:
Are you writing your story to give facts? To entertain? To present the results of a survey?
3. Format required: paragraphed text
4. Time and tense
When you are telling a story Past Perfect and Past Continuous are often used in the opening paragraphs for setting the scene.
Simple past is used for relating dramatic events.
5. Style: Formal style is not required for this kind of writing.
6. Think of your plot: Background, Events, Results /sequel



background	Who are the main characters?	Describe 2 or 3 important features
events	Where and when did the story take place?	Set the scene briefly but vividly. Set the scene in a clear and definite past time.
	What happened? How? When?	It is easier if you sequence the events chronologically. Explain the events explaining how and why they took place.
results/sequel	How was the story resolved? How did the main characters react?	Is it a usual or an unusual ending? Is it an open or a closed ending?

7. Be dramatic!
 - a. Use different and varied structures to make your story more vivid.
 - "Not daring to breathe, she crept into the dark room."*
 - "Never before had I seen such a wonderful view."*
 - "What I need is time to think."*
 - b. use short, agitated sentences to heighten the sense of drama.
 - "He was relaxing in the garden and trying to forget what had happened when he heard a sudden noise. He turned. He couldn't believe his eyes. There she was, looking at him as if nothing had happened."*
 - c. Use Direct Speech to give the impression that the action is faster.

“What are you doing here?, he asked sadly. Nothing, I just wanted to see you for the last time, she replied coldly. Then he went on watering the plants.”

d. Use vivid vocabulary.

8. Use linking devices within sentences.

9. Connect your paragraphs:

Useful language

Sequencing events	At first / At the start / To start with / In the beginning... Then / Next / After that... The next thing that happened was ... The next thing he knew was ... Seconds / minutes later... Later on / Some time later... It wasn't until much later that ... After ages... Finally / In the end... At last ...
Simultaneous events	Meanwhile / In the meantime, ... While all this was going on, ... In the middle of all this, ... During all this time, ...
Sudden or unexpected events	Suddenly / All of a sudden, ... All at once, ... Out of the blue, ... Without any warning, ... The next thing I knew was...
Rapid events	As quick as a flash, ... In the wink of an eye, ... In a matter of seconds, ... In no time at all, ...
Looking back	In retrospect, ... When I think back to what happened then, ...

10. Think of your opening and closing paragraphs.

a. One of the most difficult things to do is to find a good way to begin so that you arouse the curiosity of the reader. Avoid typical beginnings (*It was a rainy evening when she phoned*). Try to be imaginative.

b. It is very important to supply a good, well-rounded ending so that the reader comes away satisfied that the outcome has been fully explored. A disappointing ending can ruin a good story!

11. Proof-read your text when you finish. Check grammar, spelling and punctuation.