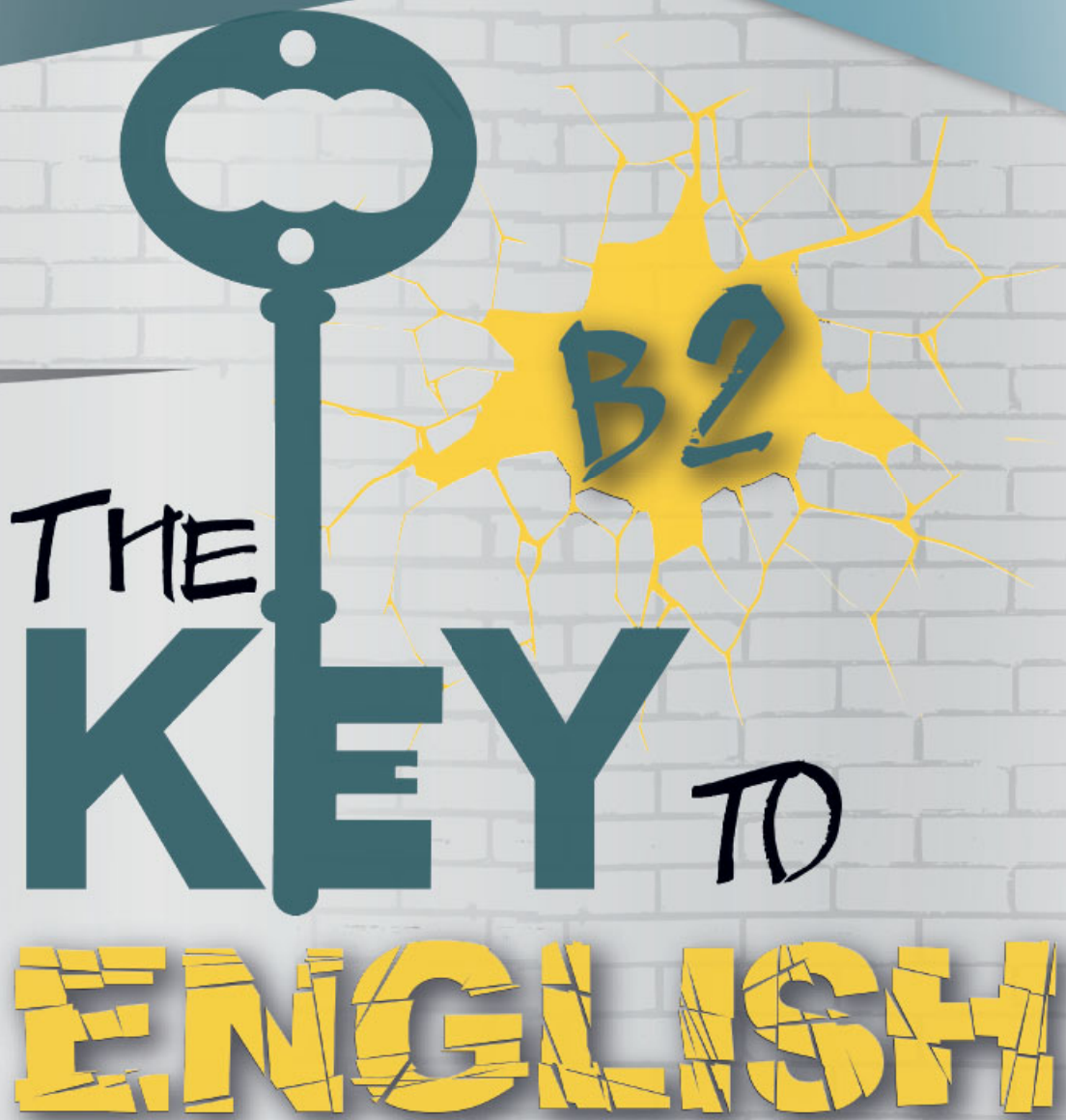


WRITING



THE
KEY **B2** **TO**
ENGLISH

ABOUT THIS BOOK

HOW “The Key to English B2 Writing” IS DESIGNED

The Key to English B2 Writing aims at familiarising students with all letter and essay types typically encountered in B2 Level exams. Upon completion of this book, students will have acquired a thorough foundation for writing, before they choose which type of exam suits them best. More specifically, they will have learned how to deal with guided and non-guided tasks, use texts creatively and paraphrase information. At the same time, they will enhance their brainstorming, technical and organisational skills and enrich their vocabulary.

INTRODUCTION

The first part of the book consists of three introductory lessons, each one devoted to 1) informal letters/emails, 2) essays and 3) formal & semi-formal letters/emails respectively. Each lesson provides a thorough analysis of issues related to organisation, structure and register. Basic theory and practice are included to ensure consolidation. The introduction also includes presentations of all types of letters, essays and descriptions typically encountered in a B2 exam, accompanied by useful expressions, suggested writing plans and linking words/phrases.

UNITS 1 - 4

The main part of this book is divided into 4 units, covering 1) informal letters/emails, 2) essays, 3) formal letters & semi-formal emails and 4) descriptions. Each unit consists of 3 lessons.

- The first lesson of each unit presents two similar writing tasks. The first one is accompanied by a model and relevant exercises while the second one is assigned for homework. These lessons focus on basic technical and organisational skills.
- The second lesson of each unit features a guided task, accompanied by one or two relevant texts. These lessons focus on using and paraphrasing information from texts and also contain technical and organisational exercises.
- The third lesson of each unit presents less guided or non-guided tasks, accompanied by lead-in, brainstorming, technical and organisational exercises. These lessons focus on developing students' critical thinking and autonomous writing. In addition, for each 3rd lesson, there is an extra text with accompanying exercises at the end of the book, to be used at the teacher's discretion, in class or as homework.

EXTRA LESSONS

Extra lessons 1 - 3 present a letter of invitation, a letter of complaint and a review, respectively. They all feature two similar tasks. The first task is centred around a model and the second is assigned for homework.

All lessons also contain useful expressions, relevant vocabulary and suggested writing plans. It is not compulsory for students to follow these plans. They can provide their own plan for each topic as long as it makes sense. Teachers are provided with indicative models for all tasks which they can photocopy at their own discretion, whereas students are provided with space to rewrite their corrected essays/letters.

EXTRA TOPICS

At the end of the book there are extra topics (informal letters/emails, essays, formal & semi-formal letters/emails and descriptions) both guided and non-guided, which can be used throughout the year, as a form of revision and consolidation.

PROPOSED TEACHING PLAN

The Key to English B2 Writing is designed to cover a period of approximately six months, leaving ample time to focus on specific exam preparation. Each teacher, student and class has specific needs and the teaching of writing cannot be formulated in the same way as the teaching of other skills. However, here are some general suggestions regarding the order of teaching this book:

1. Introductory lesson 1: Informal letters/emails
 2. Unit 1: Informal letters/emails + Extra text (Unit 1, Lesson 3)
 3. Introductory lesson 2: Essays
 4. Unit 2: Essays + Extra text (Unit 2, Lesson 3)
 5. Introductory lesson 3: Formal & Semi-formal letters/emails
 6. Unit 3: Formal & Semi-formal letters/emails + Extra text (Unit 3, Lesson 3)
 7. Unit 4: Descriptions + Extra text (Unit 4, Lesson 3)
 8. Extra Lessons
- The sections of the introduction entitled “Types of letters”, “Types of essays”, “Types of descriptions” and “Useful linking words & phrases” can be used for reference during the course of the year.
 - The “Extra topics” section can be used either throughout the year or after completion of this book.
 - Teachers are recommended to allocate one teaching period each week to writing

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Lead-in: In-class discussion

- What are the differences between the two pictures?
- Where would you rather live? Why?
- What are some problems of living in the country / in a city?



Writing Task

Your friend Mark's family are thinking of leaving their home in the city and moving to the country. Your family has been living in the country for over ten years. Write a letter to your friend discussing the advantages and disadvantages of living in the country, to help him decide. Your letter should be approximately 200 words.

- In your letter you should include:
- an introduction
 - the advantages and disadvantages of living in the country
 - a conclusion with your personal opinion

Topic Analysis

1. Who is the letter to?

- Mark's parents
- A friend who needs advice on moving house
- A friend who needs help deciding whether or not to move

2. What does the task ask you to do?

- To discuss the pros and cons of the country
- To describe the pros and cons of the city
- To give advice on how to travel to the country

Model Letter

Dear Mark,

I was happy to hear that your family are considering moving to the countryside. As I have been living here myself for many years, I can tell you all about its benefits and drawbacks.

First of all, nothing compares to living close to nature. There are trees, fields and forests everywhere, and we enjoy fresh produce, straight from the farm. Secondly, you have the opportunity to play outside and do many outdoor activities. My friends and I, for instance, go cycling every day and we often swim in the nearby lake.

That's not to say, of course, that living in the country doesn't have its drawbacks. To begin with, there is a lack of facilities and amenities, such as hospitals or a cinema. If there's a medical emergency or we want a night out, we have to travel to the nearest town. Moreover, it is difficult to get a job here, as most employment opportunities involve agriculture or animal farming.

All in all, despite its disadvantages, I believe that living in the country is a great choice and I wouldn't change it for the world. I hope you will come to see it my way.

Take care,
Sandra

1. Collocations - Fill in the expressions with words from the model letter.

- produce
- outdoor
- employment
- go
- farming
- medical

2. Derivatives - Find derivatives of the following words in the model letter.

- employ —
- cycle —
- medicine —
- act —
- farm —
- live —
- choose —

Describing pros and cons

1. Try to think of two advantages and two disadvantages of living in the city and write them down in sentences. Use the words given to start your sentences. You may use the NOTES space of this lesson to write down any additional ideas you may have.

ADVANTAGES

1. The main advantage of living in a city is that

2. In addition,

DISADVANTAGES

3. One of the disadvantages of living in a city is that

4. Besides,

TIP:

To come up with an **advantage**, ask yourself "what is good about ...?"

To come up with a **disadvantage**, ask yourself "what is bad about ...?"

To come up with an **explanation**, ask yourself "why is it good or bad?"

2. Write supporting sentences for each one of the advantages and disadvantages you have come up with above.

1.

2.

3.

4.

TIP:

To explain a point, you can use expressions like **this means that, in other words, that is to say**, etc. To give an example, you can use **for example, such as, for instance**, etc. To show the result of an action, you can use **as a result, this way**, etc. To explain the reason, you can use **as, because, since**, etc.

Conclusions

1. Read the following conclusions. Which expresses an opinion and which a balanced statement?

1. To sum up, although living in a flat has many advantages, I prefer the luxury of living in a house. I hope my letter helps you decide what would be best for you to buy.
2. All in all, both living in a house and living in a flat have their benefits and drawbacks. It is up to you to decide what your needs are and what is best for you in the long run.

2. Now rewrite the conclusion of the model letter, so that it expresses a balanced statement.

.....

.....

.....

Writing on your own

Your friend Linda's father has accepted a job in the city and her family are leaving their house in the country in order to move there. You have been living in the city for many years. Write a letter to your friend discussing the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city. Your letter should be approximately 200 words.

- In your letter you should include:
- an introduction
 - the advantages and disadvantages of living in the city
 - a conclusion



NOTES

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USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

- One of the main benefits/drawbacks of ... is
- A major advantage/disadvantage of ... is
- The best/worst thing about ... is



USEFUL VOCABULARY

FOR THE COUNTRY

live close to nature, breathe clean air, enjoy fresh produce, reconnect with nature, experience rural life, farming, cattle, forests, do outdoor activities, live in peace and quiet

FOR THE CITY

employment opportunities, job prospects, entertainment sources, medical/educational facilities, traffic jams / congestion, overcrowded streets, hustle and bustle, lose contact with nature, confined indoors, impersonal relationships, isolated people, alienation

FOR BOTH

there is a lack of, there are plenty of, there is a wide range of, offer a variety of, provide sb with the opportunity to, give sb the chance to, enable sb to



SUGGESTED PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1-2 sentences:

- greet
- make a reference to the letter you are replying to
- say why you are writing

MAIN BODY

1st paragraph

- 2-3 advantages
- + explanations/examples

2nd paragraph

- 2-3 disadvantages
- + explanations/examples

N.B. Order of paragraphs may be reversed

CONCLUSION

1-2 sentences:

- summarise
- state your opinion or give a balanced statement

WANT TO BE A PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER?

Qualifications: Bachelor of Education, or any first degree followed by a Graduate Teacher Programme is required.

Other skills:

- excellent interpersonal abilities and leadership qualities
- good organisational skills, computer literacy
- enthusiasm, patience, dedication and self-discipline

Remuneration: Main salary scale rises incrementally from £20,627 to £30,148, or up to £35,121 for experienced teachers.

Working conditions:

- Most teachers work long hours during term time, often over 50 hours per week.
- Parents' evenings, school clubs, after-school activities and preparation for school inspections all take up extra hours.
- Marking and preparation are usually done at home.
- Up to 12 weeks per year away from the classroom, but most do work on marking, planning and preparation during this time.
- Part-time and temporary work is available.

WANT TO BE AN INTERIOR DESIGNER?

Qualifications: A degree in spatial design, interior design or architecture is required.

Other skills:

- a high level of technical knowledge
- creativity and imagination
- good drawing skills
- business and marketing skills

Remuneration: junior designer: £22,000 - £26,000 / senior designers (e.g. after 8-15 years in the position): £30,000 - £70,000.

Working conditions:

- Most interior and spatial designers work in studios.
- Working hours typically include working overtime.
- Evening and weekend work should be expected, flexible working hours are offered.
- Travel within a working day is frequent, and absence from home overnight is sometimes required.
- Self-employment and freelance work are common.
- Part-time work is possible.

Writing Task

Your friend Laura is in her last year of high school and needs to make an important decision about her future career. She has written a letter to you asking for your help. Here is an extract from her letter:

"I'm very confused about which career I should follow. I have always wanted to do something creative, like interior decorating, but, I enjoy being around children, and would also like to work as a primary school teacher. There are other things I should probably consider, like the salary I will be earning in either job, the responsibilities I will have or the qualifications required. And will I have time to start a family later on? Oh, it's all so confusing! Can you help?"

Use information from the texts above as well as your own ideas to write a letter to Laura advising her which career to follow. Make sure you provide all the relevant information to answer her questions and justify your choice. Do not copy exact phrases from the texts.

Vocabulary Exercises - Paraphrasing

1. Collocations - Fill in the expressions with words from the two ads.

- | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. degree | 5. evenings | 9. design |
| 2. computer | 6. school | 10. knowledge |
| 3. salary | 7. hours | |
| 4. time | 8. part-time | |

2. Find words in the text which mean:

- work for a limited period of time — *temporary work*
- good communication skills —
- commitment —
- self-control —
- salary —
- increases gradually —
- convenient work schedule —
- working for different employers non-exclusively —

TIP: You may need to change the register/style of the vocabulary used in texts and turn it from formal into informal and vice versa, depending on the task. This is quite challenging but whatever the case, you should always **paraphrase** information in your own words. **NEVER COPY** information straight from the text because this results in marks being deducted.



TIP:
 When a task includes **questions**, you **must answer all of them**.
 A good way to make sure you have answered all the questions is to **come up with a brief answer for each** one before you proceed to writing your letter/essay.

Organising your letter - Dealing with questions

1. What are the questions you must answer according to the writing task?

- Q1.
- Q2.
- Q3.
- Q4.

2. Give brief answers to the questions above.

Job 1: Becoming a primary school teacher

- A1.
- A2.
- A3.
- A4.

Job 2: Becoming an interior designer

- A1.
- A2.
- A3.
- A4.

Making comparisons

Use the phrases given to make comparisons between the two jobs.

PAYMENT • While the salary of a(n) X is ..., the salary of a(n) Y can be ...

- 1.

OTHER SKILLS • X requires ... and ... skills, whereas Y requires ... skills

- 2.

FREELANCE WORK • Although ... is available in X, this is not the case with Y

- 3.

WORK RESPONSIBILITIES • X ... is expected to ... Y, on the other hand, is expected to ...

- 4.

(FREE CHOICE) • If you choose X, you will have to/must/can ... If you choose Y, you ...

- 5.

Writing on your own

Write the letter on the previous page, advising Laura which job to choose. Use the two texts as instructed and the information from the exercises above. Your letter should be approximately 200 words.



NOTES

Spiral-bound notebook page with horizontal lines for writing.



USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

- You wanted me to tell you a few things about
- This is what I found out
- I hope this will help you
- Let me know if you need any more information



USEFUL VOCABULARY

VERBS

fulfil your ambition/dream, earn/make a (good) living, earn/make money, earn a (high/low) salary (of), pursue a career, have a degree in, be computer literate, work overtime, work under pressure, involve a lot of stress, be absent from home, strike/maintain a balance, start a family, be devoted/committed to your career, neglect your children

NOUNS

well-paid job, chances for promotion, working conditions, part-time work, temporary work, convenient working schedule, flexible hours, overnight stay, basic/average/ monthly/yearly salary



SUGGESTED PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1-2 sentences:

- greet
- make a reference to the letter you are replying to
- say why you are writing

MAIN BODY

1st paragraph

- give the relevant information

2nd paragraph

- make a suggestion

CONCLUSION

1-2 sentences:

- express your hope that you have helped
- make a reference to future contact

Copy your corrected letter here:

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Lead-in: In-class discussion

- Have you ever moved to another village/town/city?
- If so, what was the most difficult thing about it?
- If not, what would you be worried about if you suddenly had to move?
- What would you be most excited about?

Writing Task

Your friend Carol used to live in a village, but she has just moved to a big city. You have received an email from her saying that she is having difficulty making new friends. Write an email to Carol giving her advice on how to make new acquaintances.

Topic Analysis

1. Who is the letter to?

- a. A friend who wants to move to another village
- b. A friend who can't get used to city life
- c. A friend who wants to make new friends

2. What does the task ask you to do?

- a. Suggest how your friend can make new friends
- b. Describe life in the city
- c. Discuss the difficulties of moving to the city

3. Tick the points which answer the task.

- a. Start a new hobby.
- b. Get some rest.
- c. Try to improve your English.
- d. Join a gym.
- e. Join a school club.
- f. Take up a team sport.
- g. Eat healthy food.
- h. Go shopping.

Organising your letter

Match each suggestion with its supporting sentences.

1. *If I were you, I would join the school drama club.*

2. *Another good idea would be to join your school's basketball team.*

3. *Why don't you start dancing classes?*

- a. I know how much you love this sport, so why not combine something you are good at with the opportunity to meet new people? After all, you will have a lot to share.
- b. You could take up evening classes and finally learn the samba like you always wanted to. This way, you will have dance partners and meet plenty of interesting people.
- c. This way you will be part of a group with a common interest. You can rehearse with the other members of the club and organise outings to see popular plays.

TIP:

When you **make a suggestion** or **give a piece of advice**, you should always follow it up with **supporting sentences** (explanations, examples, and/or expected results), using appropriate linking words.

○ Sentence formation exercises - Making suggestions

1. Match each suggestion with an explanation/example and an expected result.

SUGGESTIONS

- join a study group in your class
E R
- start an evening class
E R
- sign up for volunteer work
E R
- take up a team sport
E R

EXAMPLES

- Tutor children or help serve community dinners.
- Find one for a lesson that interests you or start a new one with your classmates.
- Take a course in computer skills, or something creative, like cooking.
- Join a volleyball team or a basketball team.

RESULTS

- You will get to know your classmates better and improve your grades.
- It will do you good to exercise and you will get to know your teammates.
- You will meet interesting people while offering something to your new community, as well.
- You will make new friends who share the same interests as you.

2. Now turn the sentences above into complete paragraphs using appropriate linking words. The first one has been done for you.

a. *Why don't you join a study group in your class? You could find one for a lesson that interests you or start a new one with your classmates. That way you will get to know your classmates better and improve your grades.*

.....

b.

.....

c.

.....

d.

.....

○ EXTRA PRACTICE - Supporting sentences

Following the format suggestion - example - result, write suggestions and supporting sentences for the following ideas.

a. join a gym

.....

.....

b. take up a hobby

.....

.....

○ Writing on your own

Write the email on the previous page, advising Carol on how to make new friends in the city. You can use information from the exercises of this lesson to help you but you can also add your own ideas. Write 180-200 words.



NOTES

Blank lined area for notes.



USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

- Why don't you try ...? / It is a good idea to
- If I were you I would / How about (+ing) ...?
- It would be better if you / You could (always)
- Another good idea would be to
- More specifically, / For example,
- As a result, / This way, / By doing this



USEFUL VOCABULARY

make new acquaintances, get in touch with, make new friends, get to know new people, interact with peers, share common interests, enrol in extracurricular activities, take/start a course, sign up for a course, join a gym, spend time doing sth, become a member of a school team, explore / try out / enjoy new activities



SUGGESTED PLAN

INTRODUCTION

1-2 sentences:

- greet
- make a reference to the email you are replying to
- say why you are writing

MAIN BODY

1st paragraph

- 1st suggestion + explanation/ example/result

2nd paragraph

- 2nd suggestion + explanation/ example/result

3rd paragraph (optional)

- 3rd suggestion + explanation/ example/result

CONCLUSION

1-2 sentences:

- summary
- expected results