Cambridge
English Qualifications

B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 – teacher's notes

Description

First, students answer some true/false statements about a sample task. They then discover how Part 2 is assessed by looking at the two different mark schemes used, before evaluation two sample answers themselves. They write their own answers for homework.

Time required:	*60 minutes*
Materials required:	▪ *sample task* ▪ *student's worksheet (copies or on OHT)* ▪ *sample answers* ▪ *examiner's comments (optional)*
Aims:	▪ *to introduce Preliminary Writing Part 2* ▪ *to raise awareness of the task by analysing the assessment criteria and two sample answers* ▪ *to practise writing and assessing a Part 2 task*

Procedure

1. Hand out the **sample task** to students and ask them to read it. Ask them what they have to write *(a card to their friend James).*
2. Check their understanding of the task by handing out the **student's worksheet Exercise 1** or showing an OHT of exercise 1.
3. Explain that it is important for candidates to know what examiners are looking for in the answer. Put students in pairs and ask them to complete **Exercise 2**, the Task Specific Mark scheme. They should write down the three content points that need to be included.
4. Check that the whole class have the correct points in their mark scheme.
5. Put students in pairs or small groups and ask them to brainstorm ideas for each point. Emphasise that they should imagine they really went to the party to make it more realistic, and encourage them to think about the following questions for each point:
    - *say thanks for the party* – **what phrases do you know for thanking someone in English?**
    - *say what they liked best* – **what different things do like about parties?**
    - *suggest when to meet next* – **how do you make suggestions in English?**
6. Now direct students to **Exercise 3** (the simplified general mark scheme on the worksheet.) Go through it as a class, emphasising how marks are given for completing all the parts of the task and for communicating a message. Explain that this means the language does not have to be perfect.

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7. Tell the students they are now going to be examiners of two candidates' answers. Hand out the **sample answers**. Ask the students to work together in pairs, read the script for Candidate A and decide how many marks they will give the candidate. Allow 5 minutes for students to discuss their ideas.
8. Ask them to do the same with the script for Candidate B. After a few minutes, put the pairs in groups of four to discuss the scripts. Refer them to **Exercise 4** on the worksheet and ask them to consider the questions in their discussion.
9. Check the marks they gave each script and their answers to **Exercise 4** on the worksheet as a whole class. Tell them the examiner's mark and comments. Students may like to have a copy of the examiner's comments for reference.
10. Review the task by going over the key requirements of Preliminary Writing Part 2:
    - Part 2 always involves the candidate writing a short communicative message of about 35–45 words
    - the task and situation vary, so candidates must read the instructions carefully
    - the context is important and the answer should reflect this
    - candidates should plan their answers before they write
    - answers must always be on the answer sheet
    - for top marks, the message must be clear and all the content points must be included
    - candidates should always check their writing at the end
    - small errors that don't stop the message being understood are not penalised.

    Refer students to the end of the worksheet for a copy of this.

Suggested follow-up activities

1. Ask students to write their own answers to this sample task and then to exchange their answers with their partner. Their partner marks their answer following the mark schemes and gives feedback. Students exchange their answers with another student too. If time allows, students could then re-write their answers, improving them according to the feedback or other ideas that they have got from reading other answers. Collect the answers in for marking.
2. Have a class discussion about the benefits and disadvantages of writing a rough version on the question paper first before transferring it.

   Benefits:

   - it helps you plan and think about your answer
   - you may be able to include more complex language by trying it out first
   - it encourages you to check and edit your answer

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Disadvantages:

- it takes longer
- you may run out of time to transfer it or make mistakes when you transfer it

Whether students decide to do a rough version or not is their own choice. Encourage those who want to do so to keep it to notes and not to write out a complete first draft.

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B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 – answer keys

Key to Student's Worksheet Exercise 1

a) Candidates have to write more than 45 words. **False, between 35 – 45 words**

b) You have to imagine you went to a restaurant yesterday. **False, you have to imagine you went to a party yesterday**.

c) Candidates have to write a story about a party they went to yesterday. **False, they have to write a note**.

d) The note should be friendly and informal. **True, you are writing to a friend**.

e) The instructions tell you what you have to write about in your note. **True, in this case you should thank James for the party and mention what the best thing about it was**.

f) You have to make a suggestion about when you could meet James again. **True**

Key to Student's Worksheet Exercise 2

Writing Part 2, question 6
Task Specific Mark Scheme
1. say thanks for the party
2. say what student liked best
3. suggest when to meet next

Key to Student's Worksheet Exercise 4

a) Look at the way the notes start and end. Are both versions possible? Is one better than the other? **Both are possible but Hi James is slightly better as it is more informal.**

b) How else could you start and end a note? **Start – Hello James, End - love from, see you soon, take care.**

c) What different ways do the candidates use to show their thanks? **Thanks / thank you, plus positive comments.**

d) Which letter sounds more enthusiastic? **B** Why? **'The party was great' is more positive than 'the party was very nice' plus the sentence 'I've never been to so (such an) interesting party' in B.** What's the effect on the reader? **The enthusiasm makes you feel that Ali is a very good friend and makes you like him.**

e) Do you think Ali thought he'd covered all 3 parts of the task? Why? **Yes because he says 'I want to meet you again'.** Why hadn't he? **This is too vague for the instructions – he has to make a suggestion about when you could meet again.**

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f) Did both candidates read the instructions well? How do you know? **Yes because they understand and write according to the situation, include the main points and write in an informal style to a friend.**

g) Can you see any mistakes in either answer? Do they make the message difficult to understand? **There are mistakes in both but the message is still easy to understand. In A Marco has written 'The best I liked' (what I liked best), in B Ali has written 'I've never been in so interesting party' (I've never been to such an interesting party' and 'the best in your party' (what I liked best was/ the best things were)**

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B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 – Student's worksheet

Exercise 1

Are these sentences about Preliminary Writing Part 2 true or false?

a. Candidates have to write more than 45 words.

b. You have to imagine you went to a restaurant yesterday.

c. Candidates have to write a story about a party they went to yesterday.

d. The note should be friendly and informal.

e. The instructions tell you what you have to write about in your note.

f. You have to make a suggestion about when you could meet James again.

Exercise 2

What are the points that need including in your answer for it to get full marks?

Write them in the spaces 1 – 3 below.

Writing Part 2, question 6
1.
2.
3.

Exercise 3

Simplified General Mark Scheme for Writing Part 2

Mark	Notes
5	The student has included all the points fully. I can understand the message easily and clearly.
4	The student has included all the points. I can understand the message.
3	The student has included all the points but I can't always understand the message clearly. or The student has forgotten one of the points but I can understand the message easily and clearly.
2	The student has forgotten two of the points or I can't always understand the message clearly. or The student has written fewer than 25 words.

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1	I can't really understand the message. or The student has written fewer than 19 words.
0	I don't understand what the student has written. or The student has not answered the question. or The student has written fewer than 10 words.

Exercise 4

Discuss the following questions as a group about candidate A and B's answers.

1) Look at the way the notes start and end. Are both versions possible? Is one better than the other?
2) How else could you start and end a note?
3) What different ways do the candidates use to show their thanks?
4) Which letter sounds more enthusiastic? Why? What's the effect on the reader?
5) Do you think Ali thought he'd covered all 3 parts of the task? Why? Why hadn't he?
6) Did both candidates read the instructions well? How do you know?
7) Can you see any mistakes in either answer? Do they make the message difficult to understand?

Summary of Preliminary Writing Part 2

- Part 2 always involves the candidate writing a short communicative message of about 35–45 words.
- the task and situation vary, so candidates must read the instructions carefully.
- the context is important and the answer should reflect this.
- candidates should plan their answers before they write.
- answers must always be on the answer sheet.
- for top marks, the message must be clear and all the content points must be included.
- candidates should always check their writing at the end.
- small errors that don't stop the message being understood are not penalised.

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B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 – Sample task

Part 2

Question 6

An English friend of yours called James gave a party yesterday, which you enjoyed.

Write a card to send to James. In your card, you should

- thank him for the party
- say what you liked best
- suggest when you could both meet again.

Write **35-45 words** on your answer sheet.

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B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 – Sample answers

Candidate A

Hi James,

Your party yesterday was very nice. Thanks for inviting me. The best I liked was that interesting game we played. I think we could meet on next Saturday because on Friday I have school.

Bye, Your dear, Marco

Candidate B

Dear James,

The party was great! I've never been in so interesting party. Thank you organising this party! The best in your party were music and attractive games. I want to meet you again!

Your friend, Ali

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B1 Preliminary Writing Part 2 – Examiner's comments

Candidate A
5 Marks - The student has included all the points fully. I can understand the message easily and clearly.

Candidate B
3 Marks - The student has forgotten one of the points (does not suggest when to meet again) but I can understand the message easily and clearly.

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