

C2 Proficiency: Writing Part 1

Description

This activity familiarises students with the requirements of Part 1. It also helps students understand how to plan before they start writing. They complete a writing plan in table format in preparation for a Writing paper, Part 1 question.

Time required:	30 minutes
Materials required:	▪ Student's worksheet (one copy per student) ▪ Sample task (one copy per student) ▪ Sample answer (one copy per student)
Aims:	▪ to familiarise students with the requirements of Part 1 ▪ to help students plan for Part 1 writing questions

Procedure

1. Give out **Student's worksheet** and make sure everyone can see a copy of the **Sample task**. Ask students, in pairs, to complete the key facts using the information in the box for question 1. Check the answers with the whole class. Make sure these points are covered:
 - The questions in Part 1 always have a summarizing and evaluating focus.
 - The input, which explains and defines the task, will always present two texts to be addressed, and candidates are required to cover the points in these texts in their answers and to add their own views and opinions. Candidates must write an essay.

Ask if there are any other questions about Part 1.

2. Refer students to question 2 on the **Student's worksheet**, and the **Sample task**. Ask students to read the Sample task question very carefully, and with a partner to discuss what they have to do to answer the question by completing the writing plan.
3. Check the answers with the whole class (see **Key**). Point out that, in order to get a good grade, students:
 - must address all content points in the two texts
 - should organise their writing in a logical way using appropriate paragraphs
 - should write in an appropriate format and register
 - should use a good range of vocabulary and grammar
 - should have a positive effect on the target reader
 - should keep to the word limit.

4. Give out the **Sample answer**. Allow a few minutes for students to read it. Elicit their initial reactions to the answer (*Do you think it's a good answer? Why/Why not?*)

In pairs, students work through the questions below the Sample answer.

Suggested follow-up idea

- 1 Ask pairs or groups of students to start writing their first draft of their answers to the sample task. Depending on time, this can be finished as homework.
- 2 Ask students to review another pair/group's first draft.
- 3 Students write final version, incorporating comments from their peer review.

Additional information

This part of the paper tests the candidates' ability to summarise and evaluate the points in a two texts and add their own views.

Task type and focus

There will be two input texts on the same topic, of about 100 words each. Each text will have two clear main points. The texts may present opposing or complementary views. Candidates must integrate a summary of these four points and their own views on the topic in a coherent essay. The word range is a guide; the task can be accomplished well within this range but candidates will not be penalised for exceeding the upper limit.

Task format

Candidates are required to base their answers on input material which will take the form of two short texts. The texts will come from a variety of sources such as extracts from newspaper articles, magazines or books.

Task length

Candidate scripts will be read in full and marked. A response that is longer or shorter than the guideline number of words may be entirely appropriate. On the other hand, an overlength script may result in irrelevance, repetition, or poor organisation, or have an adverse effect on the target reader, and could be marked down. Similarly, an underlength script may not exhibit an adequate range of language, may not communicate effectively, and /or provide adequate information, which would affect its score.

You could look through the FAQs for Writing on the Proficiency website to see if there are any points there you would like to raise with your class.

Answer keys

Student's Worksheet 1 Exercise 1

Key facts:

- Part 1 is compulsory
- The type of writing is an essay
- The focus is on summarising and evaluation
- The input material is approximately 200 words.
- The specified word range of 240–280 words is intended as a guide to candidates.

Student's Worksheet 1 Exercise 2

Who is going to read this?	The examiner
What am I going to write, a report, a review an essay?	An essay
What style / format is it going to be in?	neutral to formal.
How many content points are there? What are the content points?	Four points + your own opinions on them Outdoor advertising is being transformed by digital screen media Digital screen media is entirely positive Traditional advertising was harmless and could be ignored Digital screen advertising is unnecessary and has a negative impact
What sort of language do I need to use?	A summary and evaluation of the main points, adding your own views.

Sample task

- 1a)** all points are covered in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3
- 1b)** e.g., *contrast the pros and cons, from the point of view of, has to be offset against, is seen as.*
- 1c)** Adequate, e.g.: *hence manipulate, renders the term, boiling down, creepingly commercialising*
- 1d)** Adequate, e.g.: *in which, is seen as, can be just as unwanted, that will be followed*
- 1e)** four paragraphs are used clearly to deal with each of the main points and the writer's opinions are clearly stated
- 1f)** Linkers are used well and appropriately, e.g. *In particular, In this respect, , However*

2. Yes, the writer balances the main points and concludes with his own point of view. It is the correct format for a short essay
3. Yes, the reader can understand the writer's key points.

Student's Worksheet 1

Exercise 1

Working in pairs, complete the key facts below by choosing correct information from the box.

a.	article	essay	proposal	report	
b.	describing	evaluating	summarising	explaining	making
	recommendations				
c.	100	150	200		
d.	250–300	300–350	240–280		

Key facts:

- Part 1 is compulsory.
- The type of writing is a(n)
- The focus is on and
- The input material is approximately.....words.
- The specified word range of words is intended as a guide to candidates.

Exercise 2

Read Sample Task 1 and complete the writing plan.

Who is going to read this?	
What am I going to write, a report, a review or an essay?	
What style / format is it going to be in?	
How many content points are there? What are the content points?	
What sort of language do I need to use?	

Sample Task

You **must** answer this question.

Read the two texts below.

Write an essay summarizing and evaluating the key points from both texts. Use your own words throughout as far as possible, and include your own ideas in your answers.

Write your answer in **240 – 280** words.

1 **The Excitement of Advertising**

Outdoor advertising has to attract, engage and persuade potential customers; it is the most important way of grabbing customers' attention and outdoor media continue to undergo a transformation. At the core of this transformation is the digital screen media, which encompass everything from giant screens to digital billboards. The technology is cheap and advertising agencies rave about the creative possibilities for advertisements which entertain, amuse, inform, make the environment brighter and enliven the world we live in.

Advertising: an undesirable business

Once upon a time outdoor advertising was straightforward. Posters were stuck up on anything from a bus shelter to a motorway hoarding. Many people considered this kind of advertising to be fairly dull, a harmless blot on the landscape and chose to ignore it. These people now regard digital advertising as a form of unwanted, creeping commercialization: it attracts a buzz simply because it is new. They feel that any advertising which targets children or vulnerable adults is a dubious practice at the best of times, and digital advertising is, moreover, wasteful, damaging to the environment and completely unnecessary.

Write your **essay**.

Sample answer

The two texts contrast the pros and cons of outdoor advertising, in particular in its latest digital form. Text 1 claims that outdoor advertising, like any advertising, is designed to appeal to potential customers, even creating in them a need for which it promises immediate satisfaction. In this respect, outdoor advertising is the most effective type and digitalisation considerably broadens the ways in which advertising professionals can reach and hence manipulate customers.

While outdoor advertising undoubtedly has an alluring power for customers, I seriously doubt its importance and overall impact. At least from the point of view of a European citizen, everyday exposure to outdoor advertising, digital or not, appears to be minimal. And the cheapness of digital media has to be offset against the continuous need for power to run these media, a fact that renders the term 'cheap' short-sighted and unconvincing.

Text 2 argues that traditional, paper-based outdoor advertising was unobtrusive and overall, unimportant. Digital advertising, however, is seen as intrusive, its attractiveness simply boiling down to it being a novelty. People sharing these opinions regard advertising practices, particularly those focusing on the young and those in need of help, as deplorable, especially when it damages the environment at the same time.

I agree with the statements in text 2 as far as the environmental damage and advertising practices in general are concerned. However, those practices are not solely dependent on the medium they use. Paper-based outdoor advertising can be just as unwanted and creepingly commercialising as the digital counterpart. The fundamental question is: 'Do we want to be seduced and manipulated in such a way at all? If people answer 'yes', I assume that digital outdoor advertising is just another step that will be followed by yet more intrusive ones.

1. Look at the sample answer to Sample Task 1 and find:

- a) the 4 content points from the two input texts
- b) evidence of appropriate register
- c) evidence of good vocabulary
- d) evidence of a good range of grammar
- e) clear paragraphs and organisation
- f) a variety of linking words

2. Is it in the right format?

3. Would the reader understand the writer's point of view?