

ISE I (B1) Reading & Writing

Task 4 – Extended writing self-study activities

Welcome to Trinity’s ISE I self-study worksheet, which will help you understand how to do task 4 of the Reading & Writing exam. There are activities that will guide you through the different types of question in the exam. Then you can try the whole exam for yourself. The answers to the questions in each activity are at the end of this document. There is also space for your own notes. You can find information about the whole ISE I exam in the **Guide for Students – ISE I (B1)**.

More resources to help you prepare for your exam are available at trinitycollege.com/TfLstudy

Task 4 – Extended writing

We’re going to look at what you need to do in Task 4 – Extended writing. Before we do, think about the following two questions.

Activity 1

- ▶ What do I write?
- ▶ How many words do I write?

Information

We’re only going to look at how to write an essay on this worksheet. You can find information about how to write a letter, email, article or review by looking at the document at trinitycollege.com/ISEgenres

Activity 2

Look at the following task 4 question and answer the following questions:

- a) What genre (article/review/essay) do you need to write?
- b) What should you write about? What information should you include?
- c) Are marks given for planning notes?

Task 4 – Extended writing

Write an essay (100-130 words) for your teacher about a festival in a country you know. You should:

- ▶ give examples of what happens at this festival **and**
- ▶ explain why this festival is important.

You should plan your essay **before** you start writing. Think about what you want to say and make some notes to help you in this box:

Planning notes

(no marks are given for these planning notes)

Now write your essay of 100-130 words on the lines below.

Information

Before you start writing, it's very important to plan what you're going to write about. A good way to do this is to start with a mind map. Note down any ideas you have about the question. You don't need to write full sentences because this will waste time. When you have noted all your ideas down, it's a good idea to think about how you will organize your ideas into paragraphs. This should help you get a better score for organisation.

Activity 3

Look at the three examples of plans below. Put them in order, from most helpful (1) to least helpful (3).

Plan A

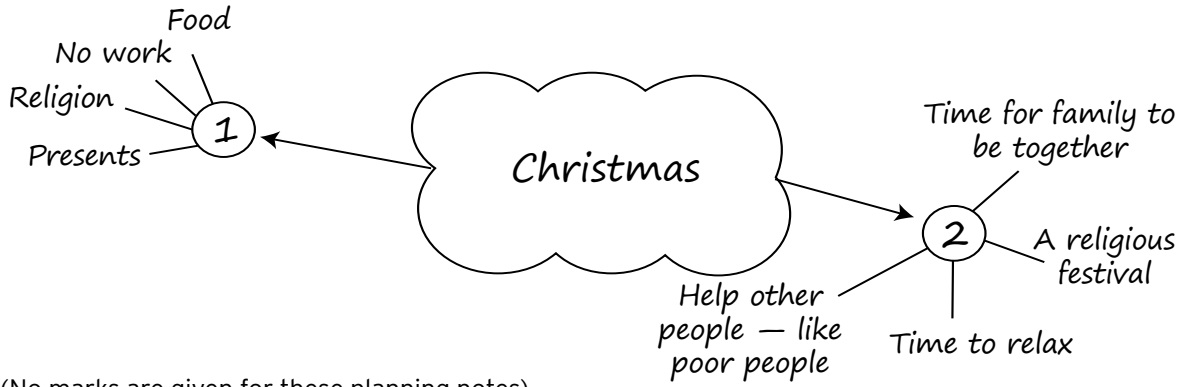
Planning notes

Christmas is an important festival because we spend lots of time with our family + friends and we get lots of presents

(No marks are given for these planning notes)

Plan B

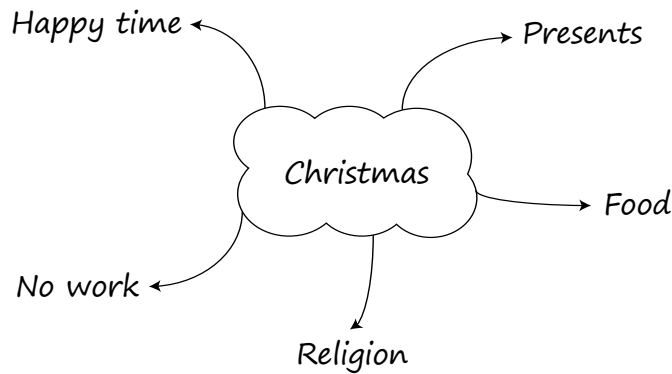
Planning notes



(No marks are given for these planning notes)

Plan C

Planning notes



(No marks are given for these planning notes)

Activity 4

There are a few important things to remember when writing an essay. Look at the list below and decide which ones are true.

| Features of essays | True or false? |
|---|----------------|
| A You mustn't use contractions (eg he's). | |
| B You mustn't use slang (eg 'mate' instead of 'friend'). | |
| C You should address the reader (eg I'm sure you love Christmas too). | |
| D It's a good idea to separate your answer into 2 or 3 paragraphs. | |
| E It's better to give your essay a title. | |

Activity 5

Look at the sentences below and decide which option is more suitable for an essay. Think about the rules from question 4.

- ▶ It's an important festival
or
▶ It is an important festival
- ▶ At Christmas people spend time with their friends and family
or
▶ At Christmas people hang out with their mates and family
- ▶ I want to tell you about why Christmas is important
or
▶ This essay will discuss why Christmas is important

Activity 6

Look at the following example of an essay and answer the following questions:

- a) Which paragraph describes the festival?
- b) Which paragraph gives the writer's opinion?

Celebrating Midsummer in Sweden

This festival is as close as possible to 21st June, longest day of the year. It's a very old celebration and modern Swedes drive to summer cottages to stay, or sail to bays on coast to celebrate. People in traditional dress dance around a maypole – a tall pole decorated with flowers. After the dancing, people eat marinated fish and drink a strong, spicy drink. People think that if a girl who isn't married picks different flowers and puts them under her pillow at Midsummer she'll dream about her future husband.

I think that the festival allows people in Sweden to relax and enjoy themselves outside during the long light days of Midsummer. It also mean that the traditional dances, food and drink are remembered. In my opinion this festival also helps you keep in touch with your family and it helps Swedes know how their great-grandparents lived. However I believe that thinking a girl will dream about her future husband if she put flowers under her pillow is a silly idea.

Information

It's important to check your work carefully for the last 2 or 3 minutes of the task. This will help you improve the accuracy of your writing. You might also think of more interesting words to use, or notice some features of the genre you forgot to include or missed out.

Activity 7

Look at the example essay in question 6. Spend 2 to 3 minutes looking for mistakes, or things you could improve about the essay.

Activity 8

What kind of mistakes do you usually make when writing? It's important that you think about this so you know what to look for when checking your work. Look at the list below for some typical mistakes.

- ▶ Spelling mistakes
- ▶ Mistakes with punctuation (eg , . :)
- ▶ Forgetting to use articles (eg the, a, an)
- ▶ Forgetting the 's' at the end of 3rd person present simple verbs (eg he live in London)

Information

On this worksheet we have looked at how to write an essay. You can find information about how to write articles, letters, emails and reviews at the document at trinitycollege.com/ISEgenres

Answers

Activity 1

What do I write? An essay, article, letter, email or review.

How many words do I write? 100-130 words.

Activity 2

- a) An essay
- b) A festival in a country you know. You should give examples of what happens at this festival and explain why this festival is important
- c) No – but it's still important to plan – it will help you write a more organised response.

Activity 3

Plan A – 3

The plan is not helpful because the writer has written complete sentences, there is no information about how they will organize ideas into paragraphs, and they have only thought of a few ideas.

Plan B – 1

This is an excellent plan. They have written in note form, thought of lots of ideas and also organised the ideas into two paragraphs.

Plan C – 2

This is quite helpful. The writer has written in note form and has quite a few ideas. They haven't really thought about the second part of the question though (why the festival is important) and they haven't thought about how to organise their ideas into paragraphs.

Activity 4

- A True – essays are either neutral or formal so contractions are inappropriate
- B True – this is too informal for an essay
- C False – this is informal. Try not to use words like 'you' and 'we'
- D True – it's important to divide your writing into paragraphs. Each paragraph should address one bullet point in the question, eg Paragraph 1 – Give examples of what happens at this festival, Paragraph 2 – Explain why this festival is important
- E True

Activity 5

- ▶ It is an important festival
- ▶ At Christmas people spend time with their friends and family
- ▶ This essay will discuss why Christmas is important

Activity 6

- a) The first paragraph
- b) The second paragraph

Activity 7

The suggested improvements to the essay are highlighted in blue.

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This festival is as close as possible to 21st June, the longest day of the year. It is a very old celebration and modern Swedes drive to summer cottages to stay, or sail to bays on the coast to celebrate. People in traditional dress dance around a maypole — a tall pole decorated with flowers. After the dancing, people eat marinated fish and drink a strong, spicy drink. People think that if a girl who is not married picks different flowers and puts them under her pillow at Midsummer she'll dream about her future husband.

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