

W.2 · Preliminary writing: article or story

A2 Key and B1 Preliminary (KET, PET) · Cambridge English · B1 Preliminary (PET)

What this topic covers

Writing Part 2 gives you a **choice** : an **article** for a magazine or website (~100 words, with a title question like “*What’s your favourite place?*”), or a **story** starting from a given sentence.

- Both are ~100 words. Both want organisation, a clear voice, and correct, varied language.
- Memory hook: the article **answers** the reader; the story **moves** the reader. Pick the one you can write better today – there is no prize for choosing the harder one.
- Choose fast: 30 seconds of deciding, not five minutes. The clock is a budget.

The article: answer, with personality

Structure: title question → your answer → two reasons or examples → a closing line, all with personality .

- Open by answering directly: *My favourite place is the school roof at sunset.* Then two reasons: what you see, how it feels. Close with an invitation: *Go there once. You’ll see.*
- △ An article is not an essay . It’s a magazine page: direct, personal, a little lively. *You*-questions are welcome: *Have you ever watched the sky turn pink?*
- The examiners reward a **voice** : an opinion, an example, a small joke. Correct and boring is a C; correct and alive is a B.

The story: the given sentence is your springboard

The task gives the first sentence: “*The door opened slowly, and I couldn’t believe my eyes.*”

- The given sentence is a springboard : continue it, don’t restart it. It sets tense (past), place and mood – inherit all three.
- The story machine from A2 Part 7 works here: background (past continuous), events (past simple), one feeling per paragraph, connectors to move time.
- End with a turn or a feeling: *I never found out who left the key. I never needed to.*
- △ 100 words is short. One scene, one moment, one turn. A story that tries to fit a whole week reads like a timetable.

Watch out: traps for Chinese speakers

- △ **Don't write the .** The template essay – *Nowadays... With the development of... In conclusion...* – is instantly recognisable and quietly penalised . Write like a person with a favourite place.
- △ **Choose one task and commit.** Marking both costs you nothing except the better mark: only one is marked – pick, write, check.
- △ **The article needs the title question answered in line one.** Don't warm up for three sentences; the reader (and the examiner) is impatient.
- △ **The story must stay in the past.** The given sentence is past tense; the story follows it. Drift is the mark-loser, as always.

Try it

Article: “*What's the best season in your city?*” – answer in line one, two reasons, an invitation at the end.

Story: “*When I opened the box, I found something I had lost three years ago.*” – continue: what was it, how did it leave, how does it feel to hold it again.

Check yourself

Answer first, then read the explanation.

1. Article or story? – **The one you write better today.** No prize for difficulty.
2. The article's first line – **answers the title question directly.**
3. The story's given sentence – **inherit its tense, place and mood.**
4. *Nowadays, with the development of...* – × → **write like a person**, not a template.
5. Length – **~100 words, one scene, one turn.** A week in 100 words reads like a timetable.