



General guidelines

- Keep your language as simple as possible. Remember, complex sentences invite errors. It is also becomes a difficult task for examiners to comprehend.
- Use short yet complete sentences.
- Avoid heavy *sounding archaic or pedantic* language.

- Pay attention to syntax - grammar: tense, singular and plural numbers, arrangement of words etc and spellings.
- Do not begin sentences with conjunctions like but, and, because etc. Use alternative words like though, however, nevertheless, also etc.
- Where word limit is specified try not to go over or short by 5, or maximum 10 words.
- Examiners will mark on format, logical development, and presentation of ideas in addition to correct and comprehensible language.

(As and when more problem areas are noticed they will be addressed).

Specific Questions

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

- This is a formal letter so come **straight to the point**. *(Media space is very expensive. You have to express your thoughts within the limited words. Be economic in using/choosing your words. Do not give away your words at throw away price.)*
- **Begin by stating what you want to talk about** and mention that this widely circulated daily seems to be best way to spread the idea.
- Next, detail the grievance/problem/issue - highlighting the different aspects.
- Suggest solutions/remedies.
- Paragraph you ideas into three small paragraphs. *Each paragraph should represent a distinct idea.*
- End by thanking the editor for giving space in the paper and the wish that readers/authorities will take notice and act on the issue.
- **Sign XYZ**
- **Do not begin** with outdated words like “ventilate my feelings” and so on.
- **Do not write your own name**
- **One should stick to either Old format or New format. Old format** (Note here all new lines are left indented and goes at a slant) **or New Format** (It has no left indentions. All lines begin from the same point with double space to demarcate paragraphs). **But never mix them together.**

Old Format (Not used much nowadays, but not incorrect.)

To,
The Editor, (always write 'E' of Editor in Caps and put comma after)
Newspaper,
Place

Subject : ***Never forget to write an appropriate subject***

Dear Editor or Madam/Sir,

(We recommend "Dear Editor" because it is gender neutral. Avoid salutation formats such as "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" which are gender biased.)

Start writing leaving some space on left hand side.

New paragraph should begin keeping some space on left hand side.

FOR EXAMPLE

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Thanking you,
Yours sincerely
XYZ
Place:
Date:

→ ***(Correct format is 'Yours' not 'Your')***

New Format (It has no left indentions. All lines begin from the same point with double space to demarcate paragraphs)

To
The Editor,
Newspaper,
Place

Subject : ***Never forget to write an appropriate subject***

Dear **Editor** or **Sir/Madam**,

(We recommend "Dear Editor" because it is gender neutral. Avoid salutation formats such as "Dear Sir" or "Dear Madam" which are gender biased.)

Start writing your letter without leaving **any space on the left hand side**.
New paragraph should begin keeping **some space on top, but not on left**.

FOR EXAMPLE

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Thanking you,
Yours sincerely

Place:

Date:

(Correct format is 'Yours' not 'Your')

DRAFTING A REPORT

Drafting a report literally means reporting a scene after a major event has occurred. The main goal is to communicate the situation to an audience who are not present at the scene. Reporting therefore should be a factual commentary without expressing any personal opinion.

- Avoid Personal/**subjective comments**.
- **No** suggestions for change, rectification to be given other than what experts have suggested.
- **Specific issue to be highlighted** with appropriate facts and figures supporting it.
- **Pros and cons to be held up without personal support** of either side.
- People's words, reactions may be given as reports collected without any personal comment.
- Logical development of ideas:- statement of issue, - elaboration - data/ views of people/experts concerned - conclusion.

Dialogue:

- The **characters and place should be suitable to the topic**. Create them unless specifically mentioned. Thus: a) **political discussion could take place in a college canteen, local club etc.** b) **Price rise - at a market place, shopping complex.** c) **Education related topics - in front of a school/college, in queue for admission forms, outside examination halls.**
- The place can be specifically mentioned at the beginning: Example. Mr. X, bargaining with the fishmonger sees Y and calls out....OR it may be worked into the dialogue. (Do not give too much of such detail).
- It is not necessary that if X begins the conversation Y has to end it. Use your discretion and follow the logical flow of ideas.
- Also disagreement can lead to a more interesting debate, but a dialogue can also be between two people in agreement with each other. In the second kind each strengthens the other's viewpoint. The presentation will depend on the topic.
- You may **use a few expressions** like :- X, speaking angrily: OR Y, Laughing:..
Do not overburden your answer with too many of these .

- Concentrate on the logical flow - statement, elaboration/contradictions, consensus/conclusion.

Pre'cis

Rule of thumb: Should be 1/3 of the original passage.

Best method of approach

- Read through the passage.
- Underline key words and phrases on the question paper.
- Draw columns to fit 5-7 words in each line.
- This makes it easier to keep track of number of words. **Hyphenated words will count as two.**
- **ROUGH WORK IS MUST.**
- Build your precis around underlined words.
- To be written in **third person**.
- Do not introduce your opinion.
- Title - use actual key words from the passage or **echo a related** sentiment. Should be short and terse, not more than 3 or 4 words and not a sentence.
- **Final version should be written in paragraph** form.

Translation

- Be as close to the original piece as much as possible.
- **Do not** insert words not present in the passage.
- If there are more than one possible **English equivalents** choose the one which **fits the sentiment of the original text.**
- Ideally translate each sentence by itself.
- **Keep to the tense and other grammatical nuances of the original.**
- If a single word is not effective you may use a short phrase instead.
- Proper nouns may be spelt phonetically. (No need to change Barun to Varun in order to anglicize it.)