

A story

Example question

Your teacher has asked you to write a story for the school's English language magazine. The story must **begin** with the following words:

Anna began to think about why Mark had stopped talking to her.

Write your **story**. Write your answer in 120–180 words.

Example answer

Anna began to think about why Mark had stopped talking to her. It was really strange. He had been perfectly friendly up until the weekend and then, when she had seen him at the party, he had ignored her.

She thought it all started when they were studying together for their exams. He seemed to get very cross with her when she was trying to explain something to him. Then he had suddenly packed his books up and walked out.

The next day in school he laughed behind her back when she answered questions in class. She went up to him afterwards and told him he was rude. He just laughed again and she felt totally miserable. Then she found someone had poured yoghurt into her school bag all over her books. She knew it was Mark so she tried to talk to him at the party but he refused to speak to her.

Maybe it was because he thought Anna was cleverer than him. The question was, what was she going to do now?

Use past perfect for things that happened before the main events of the story.

Use descriptive adjectives and adverbs

Use past continuous for background information.

Show how your story was resolved. Alternatively, you can leave the reader in suspense.

Useful language

Saying when something happened:

It all started ...
Some time later ...
Shortly after that ...
Soon after ...
Gradually ...
Slowly ...
Minutes later ...
Meanwhile ...
Eventually ...
In the end ...

Making your story interesting:

Suddenly ...
At that moment ...
All of a sudden ...

Using adverbs and adjectives for descriptions:

It was amazing / incredible / wonderful / so unexpected ...
I felt so scared / worried / nervous / frightened ...
... incredibly scary ...
... absolutely overjoyed ...
... completely miserable ...
... totally overwhelming ...
... fantastically happy ...

The end of the story:

When it was over ...
When I looked back ...
After all that happened ...
It had all been ...
At last, ...

Exam help: Stories

- Read the instructions carefully. Make sure you begin or end with the sentence you are given.
- Don't change the words you are given to start or finish your story.
- Use the names you are given in the sentence as character(s) in your story.
- Use a variety of vocabulary; avoid unnecessary repetition.
- Check your past tenses carefully.
- Use a variety of words and expressions to show sequence.