ARTICLES CAE (CPE)

At least one of the tasks in Paper 2 will involve writing something intended for publication. Such tasks include ***an article, an entry for a competition, and a review***, and all could be published in an English-language magazine. The publication can sometimes be described as a ***newspaper***, and sometimes as a ***newsletter***, which is a one or two page magazine, sent to members of a club or society. Always read the instructions for the task carefully to be clear about **whom** you are writing for.

What is an article?

An article

- is a piece of writing usually intended for publication in a newspaper, magazine or journal
- is written for a wide audience, so it is essential to attract and retain the readers' attention
- may include amusing stories, reported speech and descriptions
- can be formal or informal, depending on the target audience
- should be written in an interesting or entertaining manner
- should give opinions and thoughts, as well as facts
- is in a less formal style than a report

An article can

- describe an experience, event, person or place
- present an opinion or balanced argument
- compare and contrast
- provide information
- offer suggestions
- offer advice

A realistic article should consist of:

1. an eye-catching **title** which attracts the readers' attention and suggests the theme of the article. (Think about why you read a magazine or newspaper article recently - what made you read it?) Articles can also have subheadings before each paragraph.

2. an **introduction** which clearly defines the topic to be covered and keeps the reader's attention.

3. the **main body** of two to five paragraphs in which the topic is further developed in detail.

4. the **conclusion** - summarising the topic or a final opinion, recommendation or comment.

REMEMBER

Before you begin writing it is important to consider:

- ***where*** is the article going to appear - in a newspaper or magazine?
- ***who*** are the intended readers - a specific group such as students or teenagers, or adults in general?
- ***what*** is the aim of the article - to advise, suggest, inform, compare and contrast, describe, etc.?

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These three points are the deciding factors in the layout of your article, its style, language and level of formality.
Determine the information you are going to use and organize your ideas carefully into paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a clear topic sentence.

The article could be formal, semi-formal or informal, depending on your intended audience.

Use vocabulary and descriptive language appropriate for the article. Linking words and expressions, and a variety of vocabulary will only improve your work and make it more interesting.

DO NOT use over-personal or over-emotional language or simplistic vocabulary.

DO NOT talk about yourself. You are writing for the general public, not a close circle of friends. Your opinions are only interesting to other people if you can make them amusing, justify them or explain them.

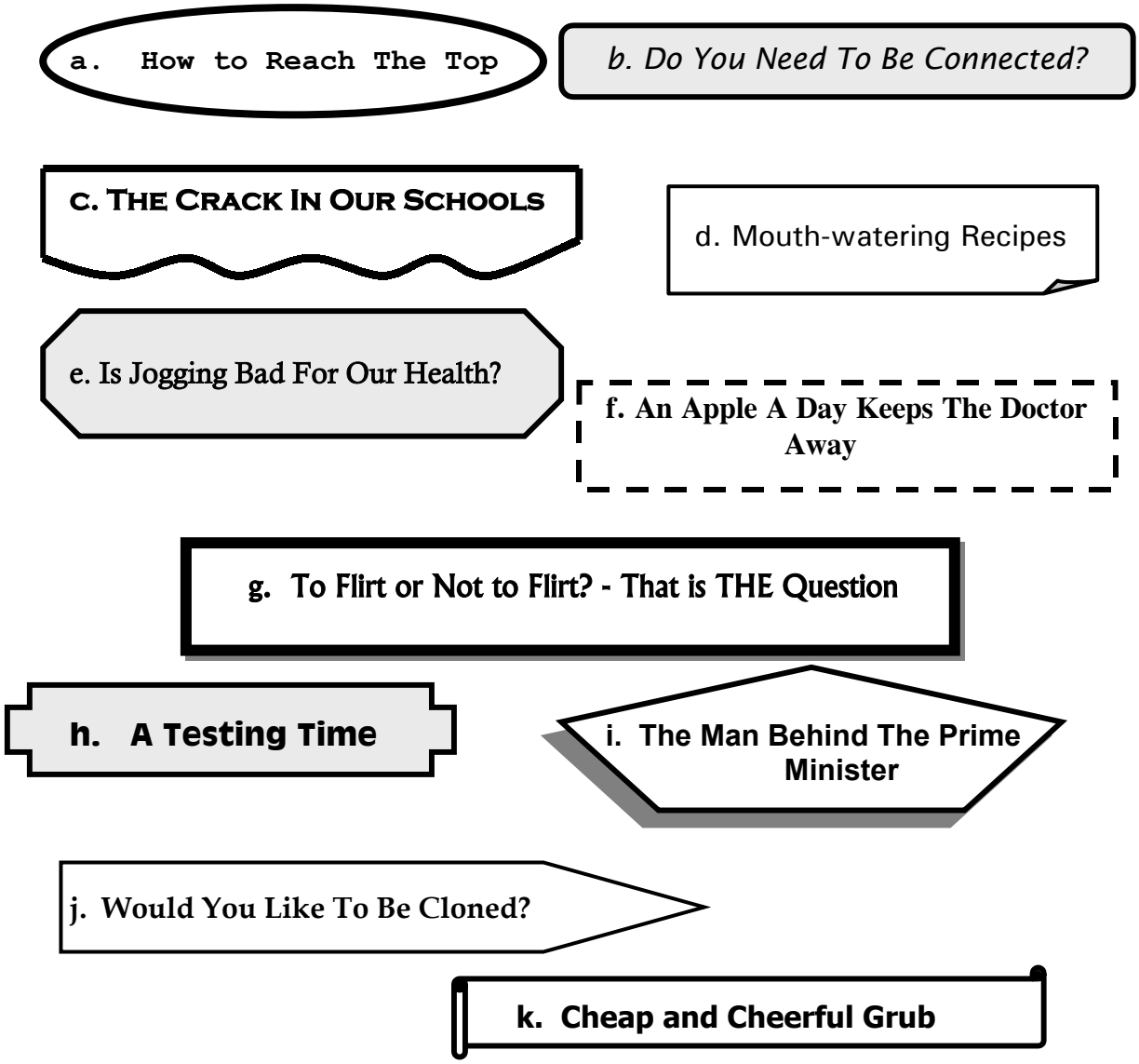
WRITING TITLES

A title is absolutely necessary when writing an article, and should be a concise summary of the information which is going to follow in the article. In other words, the main topic of the article should be stated in the title.

Stimulating the reader's interest is also essential - if the title looks uninteresting, why would anyone read it? There are various ways to achieve this. For example, if you are writing a description of a place, using adjectives can enhance the attractiveness of the place, before the reader begins reading the article, e.g. "*The Tranquillity and Peace of an Island that Time Forgot"*. If the task involves proposing a solution to a problem or your opinion, and so on, you can address your audience directly, e.g. "What You Need to Do to Be Successful", or use a question such as "Is Learning English Really Necessary Today?" for the title. In more formal articles, it is more common to just summarise the topic in a short statement, e.g. "Laughter Can Improve Our Health". The title should not be too long and should mirror the style of the article - formal or informal.

A. Match the topics (1-10) below with the titles (A-K) on the next page. There is *one* extra title that you do not need.

1. A healthy diet. _____
2. School Exams. _____
3. Eating out inexpensively. _____
4. The Internet. _____
5. A famous person. _____
6. Genetic Engineering. _____
7. Drug-taking. _____
8. An outdoor activity. _____
9. How to attract a man. _____
10. A successful career. _____



B. Match the following first paragraphs with the titles on the next page.

1. It is now official that they are the reason man has AIDS. Scientists agree that although Chimps do not suffer from AIDS themselves, eating them, as is common and considered a delicacy in some countries, is the reason the virus is passed on to humans.

2. It is said that everyone has the ability or potential to write that blockbuster that will ensure our fame and fortune. Now a bus-driver from London has done just that and proved the point by writing a novel that has already been nominated for the prestigious Booker Prize.

3. After a hectic morning shopping, all my friend and I wanted to do was to sit down, drink a cup of tea and have a cigarette. Easy enough you might think, but not so. Every coffee bar, café and fast food restaurant we looked in, did not allow smoking. It seems us smokers truly are the pariahs of society.

4. Eco-friendly vehicles will soon be a fact of life. No more popping into the local garage for £5.00's worth of petrol. Instead, we will be plugging a battery into a spare socket at home, filling up with water from the tap, or using whatever idea the scientists come up with. Great you might think. But is it really possible that no giant corporation will be making money out of us?

5. One of the most unusual places that I have visited on my travels around the globe is Petra in Jordan. Nicknamed 'The Rose City', as the colour of the rock changes throughout the day, depending on the angle of the sun, it is also fascinating because every structure except one is built out of the rock of the mountains. The exception is a temple built by the Romans, who obviously did not have the instincts of the Nabataeans.

6. They are two famous film stars in their own right, who between them have been married seven times. After starring together in "Elizabeth", they are now divorcing their respective partners to marry each other. They say it was an instant attraction that is much deeper and more intense than either have ever experienced before. So what makes this time different? I went along to see them both at the Hilton Hotel to discover their secret.

7. The British are said to be the most watched people in the world. Video cameras on nearly every set of traffic lights, on motorways, on street corners, car parks, football grounds and shopping centres - to name but a few - they cannot make a move without being seen. For a country of people that refuses to have Identity Cards as they consider them an invasion of privacy, why do they tolerate this?

8. They say there is nothing like a woman scorned, and after the exploits of Polly Metcalfe, they might just be right. Her partner left her not just for another woman, but a woman half Polly's age and Polly was miffed, to say the least. What did she do in reply? Cut all his clothes in half and destroyed one of each pair of his shoes.

a **SOCIAL OUTCASTS**

b. **Revenge Was So Sweet**

c. **Love At First Sight**

d. **They ARE carriers of HIV**

e. *The Future Of Oil Companies*

f. BUILDING SIGHTS

g. We All Have A Best Seller In Us

h. Are They Intrusive?

C. Read the following first paragraphs and think of an appropriate title for each one.

1. TITLE: _____

It's that time of year again! Lots of expense, your patience tried to its utmost limits thanks to being in such close proximity to your family, over-eating and over-drinking - perhaps over-indulging generally - receiving presents you don't really want and seeing relatives you don't really want to see. They get wheeled out every year for a free meal and a sherry and drive you mad with their complaints. How to avoid all this? Do something different - go on holiday and let someone else take the strain.

2. TITLE: _____

The oldest known disease to man, and the first to be identified, is on the increase. It is now prevalent in twenty-four countries, and still doctors are unsure what causesleprosy. There is a general consensus that it could be contracted through the respiratory system, but as yet there is no solid evidence. On the other hand, it could be spread by touch. Leprosy is curable if detected in the early stages, but what are the symptoms?

3. TITLE: _____

The joy of writing a long, newsy letter to a friend, a short thank-you note or even a letter of complaint, seems to have disappeared nowadays. People just pick up the phone, fax or send an e-mail instead of composing something in their own handwriting, which is much more appreciated by the person receiving it. It shows thought, care and consideration but people, or their way of life, are changing.

4. TITLE: _____

Dieting seems to have become a way of life for many people, particularly women. It is said that at any one time three out of four people are on a diet, convinced that this is the magic formula, and that they will finally look like that model on the television they so envy. What they do not seem to realise is that they might well lose weight but will inevitably put it all back on - often more weight than they lost in the first place. The whole exercise is futile, and people never seem to realise that to lose weight permanently, one needs to change one's entire eating lifestyle.

5. TITLE: _____

Learning another language is not an easy process - different word order, irregular verbs, those tricky prepositions and difficult to pronounce, strange looking vocabulary. There are also many methods on offer to accomplish this feat - so many in fact, that it can become confusing and hard to decide which is the best way for you. Courses on cassette, evening classes, private lessons, a language school, move to the country of the target language (an extreme method, perhaps), a correspondence course or a pen friend - the list is endless and it is like a jungle trying to decide what to try.

TOPIC SENTENCES

To ensure unity in a paragraph, it is necessary to group sentences around a main idea. This means that it is necessary to begin by finding a theme or Topic Sentence which sums up the main idea of the whole paragraph. The best position for this sentence is normally at the beginning of the paragraph, but it need not always be there. Sometimes there is no Topic Sentence, but only a topic or main idea around which the paragraph is written. However, it is preferable when writing an article to place the Topic Sentence at the beginning to help the reader to quickly comprehend the topic of the whole paragraph and minimise the likelihood of losing the theme altogether.

Read the following paragraph.

> Curling up with a good book and reading for pleasure or relaxation is less common now than it used to be. Increasingly, people are using electronic books on their home computers. There is endless choice and it saves on the expense of buying that new book you so want to read by your favourite author. This trend, though, adds a whole new dimension to reading just a few chapters before you go to sleep, snuggled up under your duvet. Difficult with a computer!

In the preceding paragraph, the topic - reading - is stated in the first sentence and informs the reader exactly what the whole paragraph is going to continue to discuss.

D. In the following paragraphs, only the supporting ideas are given. The paragraphs are followed by three possible topic sentences. Circle the letter of the sentence that would best introduce the paragraph.

1. _____

Today, it is a science fact that technology has advanced to the point where anything is possible. Used as a means of increasing productivity, many factories are switching to automation - R2D2 does not require holidays, a bigger office, sick pay, a pension, and, most importantly, he does not go on strike.

a. Star Wars is alive and well and living in our factories.
b. At one time, robots were only found in science fiction books and films.
c. Robots, once a fantasy and every housewife's dream, have become a part of our lives.

2. _____

Although initially building a subterranean home is more expensive than a conventional home, in the long run it can save the owner a great deal of money in heating and air-conditioning costs. These homes require much less energy, as the temperature of soil is relatively stable and concrete walls store the sun's heat, but keep the place warm at night.

a. Underground homes are not a new idea.
b. Underground homes are increasing in popularity.
c. Underground homes can be cost effective and energy efficient.

3. _____

Two million microscopic bugs live in our beds, making a meal of our bed linen and anything else they find on the sheets. Our wardrobes support a breed of moth that not only eats through our clothes, but disguises itself by weaving a 'coat' from whatever it is eating at the time. This system breaks down when it moves from one garment to another, but is still extremely successful. Our eyelashes support a whole ecosystem, and these three are just the tip of the iceberg!

a. If you think you are clean, think again.
b. Most of the time we only worry about the insects we can see.
c. Wherever we sit, stand, sleep or walk, we are engulfed by invisible to the naked eye mites.

4. _____

We set so much store by it, and rush around to be in different places at the precise time we are meant to be there. Deprive people of a watch or clock, and most of them have no conception of what the time really is. It is man made and man imposed. People used to go to bed when the sun set, and rise when the sun came up. In antiquity, man had no timepieces but worked with the seasons - the flooding of the Nile meant irrigation of the crops and therefore the populace could be fed. The rural Egyptian did not care if this happened at eight o'clock in the morning or four in the afternoon; of paramount importance was the season.

a. Have you ever wondered about time?
b. Is time two or three-dimensional?
c. Whether it is a Rolex or a Timex, is it really significant?

5. _____

We all want pearly white, even, straight teeth, but all eat the wrong foods and drink liquids full of sugar. How many people do you know who have actually wanted to become dentists? Yet they are everywhere and we all at some point in our lives need them, however long we put off that visit. It is usually when the pain becomes so bad that we finally venture into their surgery, quivering at the knees and shaking like a jelly. Have you ever noticed too, how that pain miraculously disappears once you are there?

a. How many people are suffering from mercury or lead poisoning from all those fillings?
b. They are a necessary evil but nine out of ten people are frightened to death of them.
c. Don't you just dread the sound of that drill?

When you have checked your answers, write a title for each of the paragraphs.

PLANNING AN ARTICLE

It can now be seen that in order to write a good article you need first to find the theme or topic sentence which summarises what you are going to write about, and then make a plan. This strategy will enable you to write quickly and clearly, help you think of a title more easily and your work will have cohesion.

Using this method gives the topic sentence of each paragraph and connects it to the other paragraphs. These topic sentences can be made into one paragraph and then developed to form a whole article. Conversely, these topic sentences, when taken together, can be used to cut down the entire article into a one-paragraph summary of the whole piece.

Imagine you have been asked to write the following article:

Have you studied abroad?

Have you spent time studying in another country? We invite you, our readers, to submit an article on your experiences in that country, to be included in our forthcoming series on living and studying abroad.

Share your experiences with us. Tell us what you studied **and** about any difficulties you faced while you were there. Have you changed as a result of this?

Write your **article.** (250 words)
First think about:

- **Where** is the article going to appear? (In a magazine.)
- **Who** are the intended readers? (Probably a fairly wide age group.)
- **What** is the aim of the article? (To talk about your experiences, good and bad, while studying abroad.)

Then you need to decide:

- **Which** country have you studied in?
- **How** long were you there for?
- **What** did you study?
- **What** problems did you have while you were there?
- **How** have you changed?

Brainstorm your ideas and make notes of what you are going to include.

Then, after some thought, you should be able to think of a topic sentence which can be expanded into a paragraph. For example, a topic sentence which could start an introduction is:

'Studying abroad is an exciting experience, giving you the opportunity to learn more about the traditions and culture of the host country and its people.'
This could then be expanded into the following paragraph:

'Studying abroad is an exciting experience, giving you the opportunity to learn more about the traditions and culture of the host country and its people. Apart from the excellent education I received during three years in England, I also made a wide circle of friends and improved my language skills. I learned how to face and deal with various problems, and as a result, have become more independent and self-confident.'

If we extract the ideas out of this one paragraph, it is possible to form a plan for the article, based on the following topic sentences:

INTRODUCTION	**Paragraph 1**	-	Exciting experience, learn about the host country and the people.
MAIN BODY	**Paragraph 2**	-	Education, friends and language skills.
	Paragraph 3	-	Various problems.
CONCLUSION	**Paragraph 4**	-	Result - independent and self-confident.

With the above plan, it is now possible to proceed to write the article, simply by enlarging on each topic sentence so that you can produce a paragraph about that idea. It is also easier to think of a title.
Read the following article based on the above plan.

LEARNING ABOUT LIFE

Studying abroad is an exciting experience, giving you the opportunity to learn more about the traditions and culture of the host country and its people. Apart from the excellent education I received during three years in England, I also made a wide circle of friends and improved my language skills. I learned how to face and deal with various problems, and as a result, have become more independent and self-confident.

I studied English Literature and this, along with making many friends both at university and through the part-time job I had, helped improve my English. Although I already spoke the language quite well, when I first arrived I had trouble understanding some accents and the slang or colloquialisms that are in everyday use. Now I am a much more fluent and natural speaker, and my writing has improved, too.

The biggest problems I faced were finding somewhere to live when I did not know the area well, getting the electricity and phone connected and generally learning to look after myself. I had to get used to shopping, cooking and doing the housework, as well as studying and working, so I quickly mastered the art of planning my time sensibly.Although adapting to living in a new country is not easy, once the initial homesickness and missing the family has been overcome, learning to fend for yourself certainly makes you a more independent person, and definitely more self-confident. My time abroad helped me grow as a person and I feel I could tackle any problem now in a calm and confident manner,
without having to immediately ask someone for their help.
To practise everything you have learnt about article writing, choose one of the following titles and write your article.

We are a popular tabloid newspaper and would like to receive articles from students to see how they have reacted to the decision made by their university to get rid of examinations. All degrees will now be based on continuous assessment and project work. How do you feel about this? We want to hear from you. Is it a good or a bad idea? Send your articles to the address below, or e-mail us direct.

Write your **article.** (About 250 words.)

The Times newspaper has asked the public to contribute articles for a series in their Sunday magazine supplement. If we make a concerted effort to conserve energy, could we live without electricity?

They wish to receive your views and opinions on this subject. What do YOU think life would be like with no electricity? Send your articles to us at the address below or use the e-mail number.

Write your **article.** (About 250 words.)

ARTICLES

ANSWER SHEET

Go over the introduction carefully with the students, making sure they understand the importance of an article looking like an article, and how necessary a title is.

NOTE: Most students will have done Article writing at FCE level. Their work just needs refining and expanding at this level.

WRITING TITLES

A. 1. F 2. H 3. K 4. B 5. I 6. J 7. C 8. E 9. G 10. A

'D' is not used.

B. 1. D 2. G 3. A 4. E 5. F 6. C 7. H 8. B

C. Suggested titles - accept students' versions if appropriate.
Put students in pairs to do one or two titles each and put their answers on the whiteboard.

1. Christmas Is Coming
   Breakaway This Xmas
   Break the Routine/Habit
   Break/Change The Habits Of A Lifetime
   GETAWAY
   Break Out
   Let Someone Else Take The Heat/Strain

2. Leprosy On The Increase
   Leprosy - Still A Mystery
   What Causes Leprosy?

3. The Art Of Writing
   Drop Me A Line

4. Obsessed With Their Appearance
   Obsessive Dieting
   A Waist Of Time
   Change Your Life

5. Which Way To Learn?
   Which Is Best?
   Lessons Or Cassettes?

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TOPIC SENTENCES

Go through the first paragraph with the students. Students to read the paragraph in the box. Point out how easy it is to understand the topic from the first sentence. Then do exercise D.

D. 1. B 2. C 3. C 4. A 5. B

Suggested titles:

1. Robots In Our Factories
2. Living Underground / Life Underground / Going Underground
3. It's A Bug's Life
4. It's Ticking Away
5. To Drill or Not to Drill / Everybody Hates Them! / A Necessary Evil

PLANNING AN ARTICLE

Go over the introduction and the question.

Discuss **First think about** and **Then you need to decide.**

Brainstorming ideas - suggestions for problems:
Ask students for ideas and whiteboard their answers.

getting used to the food / different meal times
going shopping
weather
money or expenses
language
looking after yourself - cooking, shopping, housework
finding somewhere to live
getting utilities connected
difficulty studying
finding friends
being lonely
missing the family
homesickness

Explain that the topic sentence tells the reader immediately what the paragraph is going to be about.

Discuss in detail how this topic sentence has been expanded into a paragraph, and from this paragraph a plan for the article can be made.

Students read through the article. (270 words)

The students choose one of the articles to write for homework.

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