



EXAM PAPERS PLUS

THE COMPLETE
ILLUSTRATED GUIDE
TO 8+ WRITING



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ABOUT

THE GUIDE



NOTE FOR PARENTS, TEACHERS AND TUTORS

The purpose of this study guide is to help your child develop the key skills that they will need to succeed in the composition section of the 8+ English exam.

In this part of the exam, they could be asked to write a story, diary entry, recount, report or set of instructions. Some writing tasks may be as short as 20 minutes and others as long as 45 minutes. Some give your child specific planning time and others do not. It is important that your child is fully aware of how to plan, write and edit their work within specific time limits, whilst making intelligent choices about what information to include.

This guide covers how to approach the writing task and key skills that will enable your child to become a fluent and competent writer whilst fulfilling the required criteria for the 8+ exam.

The guide is broken up into sections with a handful of skills being developed in each one. Your child will be accompanied on their journey by some friendly characters: Wilfred the Writing Wizard, Lucy Light Bulb, Charlie Challenge and Tanya Teamwork. These characters help to make the activities fun and enjoyable.

Where children see Tanya Teamwork, they are encouraged to work with a friend or family member so that they can discuss what they have read or written or check their answers. However, you are encouraged to work through as much of the guide as possible with your child to ensure that key concepts are being fully understood. This will also enable you to monitor their progress effectively, provide plenty of encouragement and hopefully enjoy the journey too!

If there are any sections that your child finds difficult, or if you think they would benefit from more preparation, there are extra practice activities towards the end of the guide.

Keep in mind

It is very important that your child gets used to working under timed conditions. They must be able to plan, write and check their work within a given time limit. Therefore, many of the activities and exercises in this guide require the use of a timer or stopwatch.



MEET THE TEAM

Wilfred the Writing Wizard

Hello there! My name is Wilfred. My full title is 'Wilfred the Writing Wizard' because I'm the most skilled writer in all the land. I'm here to help you become a fantastic writer too. Not too fantastic though - I don't want you stealing my title! Hehe, only joking!



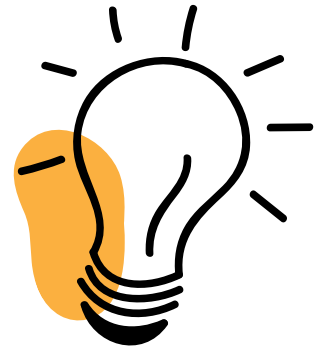
Now, I hear that you will be sitting the 8+ exam. Well, I've put together this guide to help you with the writing part of the exam or, as it's sometimes called, the 'composition' section.

There's lots of information to work through, so don't try to do it all at once or you'll end up like my friend, Exhausted Eddie. He always tries to do everything in one go and gets so tired that he falls asleep in the strangest places. He once fell asleep in the supermarket. Imagine how surprised the other shoppers were to find Eddie curled up asleep on a shelf in the cereal aisle! Anyway, back to my point. Complete the guide in small chunks, maybe an activity or two at a time and - whizz-bang! - before you know it, you'll have successfully completed your quest to become a fantastic writer!

To help you along your journey, I have asked three of my most trusted assistants to come with us:

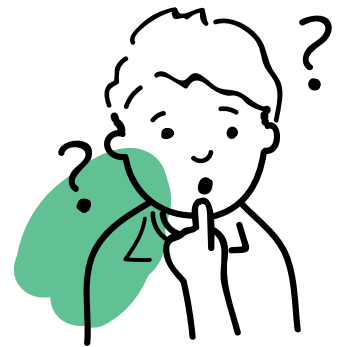
Lucy Light Bulb

Lucy is full of useful hints and top tips that will make your quest much easier. When you see her shining, be sure to pay close attention to what she has to tell you.



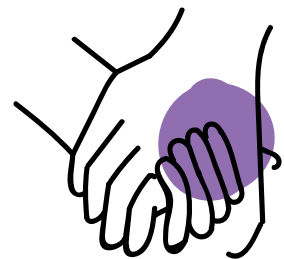
Charlie Challenge

Charlie loves activities that get his brain working harder. If you feel like giving your brain an extra workout, look out for Charlie's Challenges.



Tanya Teamwork

Tanya loves working with other people and, whenever you see her along your journey, she is letting you know it would be a good idea to read or complete the activity with a friend or family member.



So now you have met everyone, let's get started on your quest! I will be here at all times to help you along the way. Race you to the first activity...

STARTING POINT – STORY ACTIVITY

Wilfred says: ...Ah, I knew I'd get here before you – wizards are as quick as a flash! We're going to start with a writing task so that you can see what you are good at already and which skills might need a little practice.



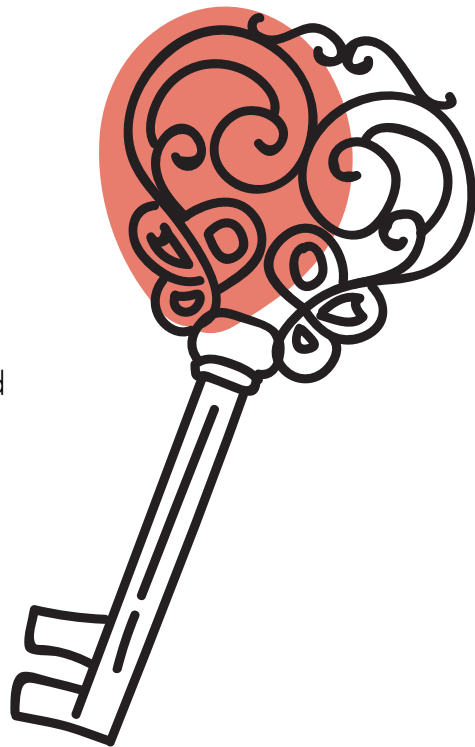
You have 30 minutes to complete this task.

The Magic Key

Write at least one page about a boy or girl who finds a magic key. Give your story the title 'The Magic Key'. Use the picture below to help you.

Think about the following questions:

- Who is your main character?
- Where do they find the key?
- How do they know it is magical?
- What does the key unlock?
- What happens to your character and the key at the end of the story?





Wilfred says: Here is a checklist of the things that you need to do really well to become a fantastic writer.

Tanya Teamwork says

Read through your story with a friend or family member. Give yourself a mark out of 5 for each item on the checklist. 1 mark means that you have not done it at all and 5 marks mean that you have done it really well and there is nothing you could improve.



Checklist

Complete the task within the given time limit, i.e. write a complete story with a beginning, middle and end.

Write a relevant story that clearly follows the instructions provided without drifting off topic.

Use correct punctuation: capital letters, full stops, question marks, exclamation marks, speech marks, apostrophe and commas.

Make interesting word choices and use adventurous vocabulary.

Spell words correctly and use clear, neat handwriting.

Organise your writing in paragraphs that begin and end in the correct places.

Which items on the checklist did you do well and which ones need a bit more practice? By working through this guide carefully, your writing will improve tremendously! Try this task again once you have completed all the activities in this guide.

Lucy Light Bulb says

You will find this task repeated on page 264. Be sure to work through all the activities in this study guide before you attempt it again.





SECTION 1

THE WRITING

TASK

Skills covered:

Understanding the purpose and key features of different types of writing: stories, reports, diary entries, recounts and instructions

Presenting your writing as a letter

Reading and understanding the writing task

Planning your writing

Checking your writing

