



A story

Head-first into the river

One Saturday last month, I had a really stupid accident **while** I was out in the country with my friend, Ben. We decided to set out early in the morning, take our bikes **and then** have a picnic. We were both looking forward to a lovely, peaceful day. We were cycling along a river bank **when** we decided to have a race. I was winning, and **as** I turned quickly to see where Ben was, I lost control of my bike and fell head-first into the icy cold river. Unfortunately, that wasn't the end of it. **As soon as** I was almost out of the water, I slipped and fell in again. **Meanwhile**, Ben was watching me and did nothing to help. He just laughed and laughed! **Afterwards**, I had to walk home in my wet clothes and **during** the rest of the weekend, I got a terrible cold. In the end, I saw the funny side!



Writing task: write a story of about 100 words on something unusual that happened to you.

1 Read the story. Choose the best option to complete the sentence.

The purpose of this text is to ...

- a explain to the reader how to do something.
- b entertain the reader.
- c give factual information to the reader.

2 Read the story again and answer the questions.

- 1 Where did the accident happen?
- 2 What were the two boys doing when the accident happened?
- 3 Why did the writer lose control of his bike?
- 4 What was Ben doing as the writer fell into the water?

Tip

Organising your ideas in paragraphs helps your reader follow the story.

3 Look at the organisation of the story and choose the correct option in the sentences below.

- 1 There are *two / three / four* paragraphs in the story.
- 2 Each paragraph has *one / more than one* sentence.
- 3 The first paragraph tells the reader about the *main event / context / conclusion*.
- 4 The second paragraph tells the reader about the *main event / context / conclusion*.
- 5 The third paragraph tells the reader about the *main event / context / conclusion*.

4 Put the following words and phrases from the story in the table. Compare with a partner.

country cycling fell laughed lost control
 race saw the funny side slipped turned
 watching wet clothes winning

The context	The main event	The conclusion

Writing builder

5 Complete the text with the words in the box.

scene climax consequences
 story ending main characters

When you are writing a **1** *story* or a narrative, in the first paragraph you should set the **2** and introduce the **3**. In the second paragraph, you should give details and write about the main events leading up to the **4**. And in the last paragraph, you should write your **5** and explain the **6**.

Signpost

Writers use signposts to help readers follow their ideas. For example, the highlighted words in the story are words to show how the actions are related to each other in time.

6 Choose the best signpost.

- 1 *When / While* I fell, Josh laughed.
- 2 *As / Meanwhile*, I got my phone out of my bag, I dropped my keys.
- 3 We were walking by the river bank *as / when* we decided to have a drink.
- 4 I was trying to climb out of the water. *While / Meanwhile*, Ben did nothing.
- 5 *During / As soon as* the night, I felt very cold.
- 6 *And then / After* that experience I never went out on my bike again.

Improve your writing

7 Rewrite the sentences so they are more reader-friendly. Use the signposts in Exercise 6.

- 1 We watched nervously. The car drove away.
- 2 I was walking happily along the street. The storm started.
- 3 I was away on holiday. I had my passport stolen.
- 4 I was waiting patiently for Jan to ring. I played a computer game.
- 5 Their parents went out. The children started fighting.

Useful language

When it happened	Reactions / feelings
A few years ago	It was a disaster!
At the beginning of April	It was fun.
Before I knew it ...	It was terrifying!
For the first couple of days	It was the best / worst holiday I've ever had
From the beginning, ...	It was the happiest time of my life.
In December ...	The funny thing is that ...
In the second week	To my surprise ...
It all began when ...	
It was a cold summer	
On the last day	
One summer / winter / spring / autumn	
The next afternoon	
Two days before	
When I was (nine)	

Write!

8 Write a story about a personal experience (100 words) on one of these titles.

- an adventure while you were on holiday or away from home
- an accident
- a time when you got lost
- a strange dream you had
- a time when you were very surprised

Steps

STEP 1: Getting ideas

- Work with a partner. Choose one of the ideas or write your own.
- Write notes on your story in a story box like this.

The context	The main event	The conclusion

STEP 2: Organising your ideas and writing a first draft

- Write a first draft of your story.
- Follow the paragraph plan in your story box.
- Think about the language you need to use for writing a story.

STEP 3: Reviewing your writing

- Reread your first draft and answer these questions
 - 1 Have you followed the plan?
 - 2 Have you used some signposts to help your reader?
 - 3 Have you used the correct language for a story?
 - 4 Is your grammar, spelling and punctuation correct?
 - 5 Does each sentence move smoothly to the next?

STEP 4: Writing a final draft

- Recheck your work before handing it in.
- Write a brief note to your teacher about why you chose to write this story.

See Writing guide on page 148.