

SAMPLE UNIT

Successful Writing


INTERMEDIATE

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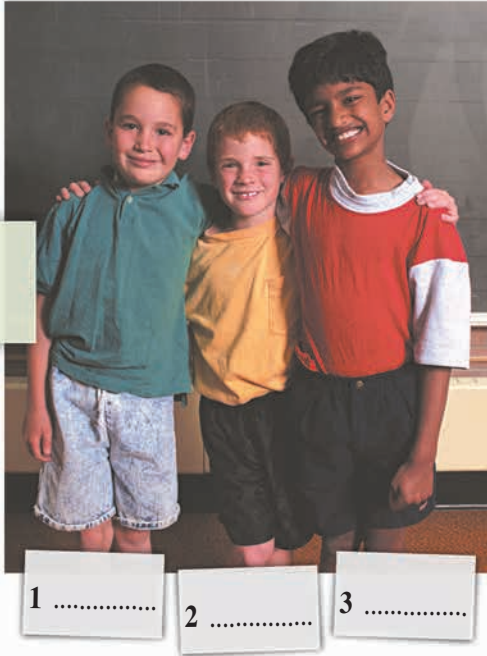


Express Publishing

UNIT 6 Describing People

- 1  a) Look at the photo, then listen to the recording and label the children with their names – Martin, Ravi and Alex.
 b) Listen to the recording again and match the personal qualities to the children's names. Write M (for Martin), R (for Ravi) and A (for Alex). Finally, use your answers and the photograph to describe each person.

1 naughty <input type="checkbox"/>	3 funny <input type="checkbox"/>	5 well-behaved <input type="checkbox"/>
2 clever <input type="checkbox"/>	4 quiet <input type="checkbox"/>	6 sporty <input type="checkbox"/>



A descriptive essay about a person should consist of:

- a) an **introduction** in which you give general information about the person, saying when, where and how you first met them;
 - b) a **main body** in which you describe their physical appearance, personal qualities and hobbies/interests. You start a new paragraph for each topic;
 - c) a **conclusion** in which you write your comments and/or feelings about the person.
- When describing someone you know well or see often (i.e. a friend, a neighbour, etc), you should use present tenses. When describing someone who is no longer alive, or someone you knew a long time ago and you do not see any more, you should use past tenses.
 - Descriptions of people can be found in articles, letters, narratives, etc. The writing style you use depends on the situation and the intended reader. For example, if you are writing an article for a magazine, you should use semi-formal style and a polite, respectful tone.

2 Read the rubric and underline the key words, then answer the questions.

The editor of your school magazine has requested articles for a special issue about friendship. You have been invited to write a short article about a close friend of yours. Write your **article** describing the person's appearance, personality and hobbies/interests.

- 1 Which of the following would you use? Tick (✓) or cross (X)
 passive voice __, colloquial language __, abbreviations __, linking words __, complex sentences __
- 2 What tenses should you mainly use?
 A past tenses B present tenses
- 3 Which of the following people should you *not* describe and why?
 A a historical figure C your best friend
 B a film star D your nursery school teacher
- 4 In which paragraph should you say when, where and how you first met your friend?
- 5 In which paragraph should you include your comments and/or feelings about your friend?
- 6 Which of the following main topics *must* you include? Tick (✓).
 A details about his/her school timetable D qualifications
 B physical appearance & clothes E hobbies/interests
 C details about your friend's house F personality

Introduction

Paragraph 1

name of the person
 when, where and how
 you first met him/her

Main Body

Paragraph 2

physical appearance
 (facial features & clothes)

Paragraph 3

personal qualities and
 justification(s)/examples

Paragraph 4

hobbies/interests

Conclusion

Paragraph 5

comments & feelings
 about the person

3 a) Use the points below to complete the table, then make sentences about your family members.

fantastic sense of humour, sailing, painting, good-looking, immature, great sense of style, scuba diving, outgoing, olive skin, curly dark hair, casual clothes, friendly, wavy hair, pale complexion, rude, lazy, pointed nose, shoulder-length hair, tall, slim, of medium height, generous, popular, skiing, bossy, attractive, plump, rafting

	Topic	Main Points
MAIN BODY PARA 2 PARA 3 PARA 4	appearance	
	personal qualities	
	hobbies/interests	

e.g. *My mother has a fantastic sense of humour.
My brother likes sailing a lot.*

b) Read the article and label the paragraphs with the headings below, then replace the topic sentences with other appropriate ones.

hobbies/interests, name & when/where/how met, comments/feelings, physical appearance & clothes, personal qualities

A Close Friend by Jim White

Introduction

Jacques has been my close friend for two years. I first met him on a school exchange trip to Calais, France. I asked him the way to the library and we started talking. We've been friends ever since.

Para 1
*name & when/
where/how met*

Main Body

Jacques is quite good-looking. He's tall and slim, with olive skin and curly dark hair. Like many French people, he has a great sense of style, so he always looks well-dressed even in casual clothes.

Para 2
.....
.....
.....

Jacques is very outgoing. He is always friendly and loves to have fun. He's got a fantastic sense of humour and he always makes me laugh. However, he can be a bit immature at times. For example, when he doesn't get what he wants, he acts childishly and stamps his feet.

Para 3
.....
.....
.....

Jacques is very keen on water sports. He likes sailing and he spends a lot of time on his boat. He enjoys scuba diving, too, and loves exploring life under the sea.

Para 4
.....
.....
.....

Conclusion

All in all, I'm glad to have Jacques as my friend. It's a pleasure to be with him and I really enjoy his company. I'm sure we'll always be close friends.

Para 5
.....
.....

- When you describe someone's **physical appearance** you start with the general features (i.e. **height, build, age**) and move on to the more specific ones, such as **hair, eyes, nose**, etc. You can also add a description of the clothes the person likes to wear.
e.g. Laura is a tall, slim woman in her early twenties. She has got red hair, green eyes and freckles. She usually wears smart suits.
- When you describe someone's **personal qualities** you should support your description with examples and/or justifications.
e.g. Wayne is very shy. For example, he finds it difficult to make new friends.

You can also describe someone's personality through their **mannerisms** by:

- referring to the **way they speak**
e.g. He speaks in a soft voice as if he were whispering.
- describing the **gestures they use**
e.g. She constantly uses her hands when she speaks.
- mentioning a **particular habit they have**.
e.g. Jason always bites his nails when he is nervous.

Note: When you mention someone's negative qualities you should use mild language (*seems to, can be rather, etc*). For example, instead of saying *Paul is lazy*, it is better to say *Paul can be rather lazy at times*.

4 Read the article in 3b) again and circle the adjectives/phrases used to describe Jacques' physical appearance and personality. Does Jacques have any negative qualities? Does the writer describe any of Jacques' mannerisms?

Unit 6 Describing People

LINKING WORDS AND PHRASES

To make your piece of writing more interesting, you can use a variety of linking words and phrases to join sentences or ideas together.

e.g. Joyce has got red hair. She's got freckles.

Joyce has got red hair **and** freckles. David is a tall man. He is in his late forties.

David is a tall man **who** is in his late forties.

Bridget is an attractive woman. She's got shoulder-length hair.

Bridget is an attractive woman **with** shoulder-length hair.

She is tall. She is thin.

She is **both tall and thin**.

- You can join descriptions of **similar** personal qualities by using **in addition, also, and, moreover**, etc

e.g. She is cheerful. She is always smiling. She always behaves politely.

She is cheerful **and** is always smiling. **Moreover**, she always behaves politely.

- You can join descriptions of contrasting qualities by using **but, on the other hand, however, nevertheless**, etc

e.g. He is clever and always does well at school. He can be bossy at times. *He is clever and always does well at school. **However**, he can be bossy at times.*

- 5** Fill in the gaps with the correct linking word/phrase from the list below.

and, but, with

1 Bob is a tall man in his late twenties dark hair and brown eyes. He has a beard he hasn't got a moustache. He likes wearing jeans, T-shirts trainers.

and, with, who

2 Jenny is a pretty child will soon be eight years old. She is quite tall for her age, long curly hair, big almond-shaped eyes a wide smile.

as well as, also, both

3 Helen is cheerful and friendly. She is polite kind-hearted. She never says a bad word about anyone.

however, and, also

4 Carl is very intelligent always gets fantastic marks in all his tests. He is creative and likes to write short stories., Carl is rather shy and feels uncomfortable speaking in front of a lot of people.

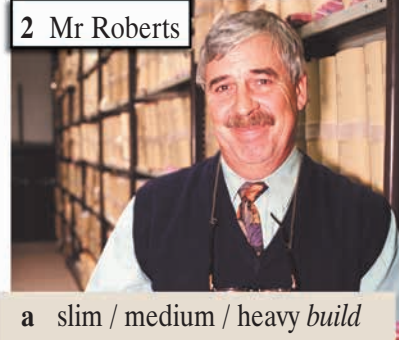
6 a) Look at the pictures and circle the correct item, as in the example.

1 Susie



a red / blonde / dark hair
 b blue / brown / green eyes
 c pointed / small / big nose

2 Mr Roberts



a slim / medium / heavy build
 b young / middle-aged / elderly
 c scar / beard / moustache

3 Gerald



a short / average height / tall
 b dimples / glasses / beard
 c sportswear / business clothes / casually dressed

4 Veronica



a early teens / early thirties / late forties
 b wavy / curly / straight hair
 c fair / pale / dark complexion

5 Julie



a short / long / shoulder-length hair
 b tanned / pale / olive skin
 c friendly / aggressive / rude expression

b) Describe the people in the pictures using a variety of structures and linking words.

- 1 *Susie has dark hair, brown eyes and a small nose.*
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

7 Match the adjectives to their justifications. Then, use your answers to talk about your friends and/or relatives, as in the example.

Adjectives

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 generous | 7 impatient |
| 2 talkative | 8 popular |
| 3 energetic | 9 cheerful |
| 4 intelligent | 10 lazy |
| 5 bossy | 11 well-dressed |
| 6 rude | 12 selfish |

Justifications

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|
| a I | always buys family presents |
| b | doesn't like working |
| c | always tells people what to do |
| d | wears smart clothes |
| e | isn't polite to other people |
| f | does well at school |
| g | is very active |
| h | cares only about him/herself |
| i | never stops chatting |
| j | hates waiting for anything |
| k | always smiles |
| l | is liked by everyone |

My sister is a generous person who always buys her family presents.

8 Complete these descriptions using the adjectives in the list.

moody, energetic, generous, cheerful, lazy, impatient, aggressive, selfish

- 1 Tom is Whenever he visits us he brings flowers and gifts for the children.
- 2 Susan is When she gets angry she starts shouting and bangs her fist on the table.
- 3 Paul is When he has to wait for anything he constantly looks at his watch.
- 4 Alison is She hardly ever gets tired and is enthusiastic about everything.
- 5 My aunt Betty is She is always in a good mood and smiles a lot.
- 6 Rick is He doesn't like working or doing sports. He would rather sit around and watch TV all day.
- 7 Angela is She doesn't like sharing her toys with other children.
- 8 Wanda is One minute she is happy and the next she is sad and won't talk to anyone.

9 Read the paragraphs below and cross out the unnecessary words, as in the example. What is each paragraph about? How does the writer justify Megan's description? What examples of her mannerisms does the writer give?



Megan is a very cheerful ~~and~~ little girl who is always happy and smiling. However, she can to be a bit shy at times. Whenever she will meets new people she blushes then looks down at the floor.

Megan loves doing the puzzles. Nothing makes her the happier than spending much hours putting the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together.

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1 | <i>and</i> |
| 2 | ..... |
| 3 | ..... |
| 4 | ..... |
| 5 | ..... |
| 6 | ..... |

Unit 6 Describing People

10 Read the topic sentences, then write appropriate supporting sentences, as in the example.

e.g. My grandmother is a very kind-hearted person.
She cares about everyone she meets, and she is always ready to help someone in trouble.

- 1 Our teacher is quite handsome.

- 2 I like my five-year-old cousin, but he can be very naughty.

- 3 My friend, Jackie, is very intelligent.

- 4 My neighbour, Mrs Gray, takes good care of herself.

- 5 My sister's friend, Simon, loves adventure and dangerous sports.

11 a) Read the rubric and underline the key words. Then, read the composition and put the paragraphs into the correct order.

Your teacher has asked you to write a composition describing a person who once helped you. Write your **composition**, describing the person's appearance, personal qualities, mannerisms and hobbies/interests.



A In her spare time, Ruth liked to read. She loved detective stories and crime novels, and she used to bring me many of her favourite books to read. I remember she also spoke about the karate lessons she went to twice a week.

B I first met Ruth when I was in hospital in Melbourne about three years ago. I was there on holiday, but had become seriously ill. Ruth was the patient in the next bed. She not only kept me company the whole time I was in hospital, but also visited me for many weeks after she recovered from her own illness.

C When I returned to England, we kept in touch by letter. Then, about a year ago, Ruth got a new job and moved to another part of Australia. Sadly, we have lost touch with each other, but I will never forget her kindness and help.

D Ruth had a quiet but very friendly nature. She was generous as well as kind-hearted. Whenever she visited me she always brought flowers and chocolates. She talked in a low voice because she was rather shy. She also blushed very easily, although she had a great sense of humour.

E Ruth was pretty. She was tall, fairly slim and in her mid-teens then. She had a small pretty face, with smiling eyes and long straight brown hair. She liked to dress casually in bright, colourful clothes which matched her sunny personality.



- b) Have all the points in the rubric been included in the composition?
- c) Which tenses have been used? Why?
- d) Underline the linking words/phrases used in the main body paragraphs.
- e) What mannerisms does the writer describe in the composition?
- f) Underline the topic sentences and replace them with the ones below.

- 1 Ruth's favourite pastime was reading.
- 2 Ruth was a gentle and affectionate person.
- 3 Ruth was quite attractive.

12 Read the rubric and underline the key words, then answer the questions.

You have seen the following advertisement in your local newspaper:



Write your **article** describing his/her appearance, personal qualities and/or mannerisms and hobbies/interests. (120 - 180 words)

- a) Which of the following people would *not* be a suitable subject for this article?
i) a school friend ii) a relative iii) someone you work with
- b) What style should you use?
- c) Which tenses should you use? Why?
- d) Read the following topics and decide which ones you would include in your article. Then use them to complete the plan below, as in the example.

- the person's address
- his/her hobbies/interests
- description of his/her appearance
- description of his/her job
- name, when/where/how met
- your comments/feelings
- description of the person's house
- description of his/her personality/mannerisms

Main topics/points		
Introduction	Para 1	<i>name: Julia Stevens</i> <i>when met: 2 years ago</i> <i>where met: at work</i> <i>how met: while having a lunch break in the canteen</i>
	Para 2	.....
Main Body	Para 3	.....
	Para 4	.....
	Para 5	.....
Conclusion	Para 5	.....

13 Read the rubric in Ex. 12 again and write your article (120-180 words). Use the plan and your answers from Ex. 12 to help you.