

## Speakout Upper Intermediate

### WRITING REFERENCE UNIT 8

#### ▶ **Writing** an informal article

When you write an informal article, you should use conversational language and talk directly to the reader. Although the article is informal, it is important to structure it clearly.

#### ▶ **Learn to** write an informal article

**1 a) Quickly read only the first paragraph. What is the article about?**

**b) What advice do you think the author is going to give?**

**c) Read the rest of the article and check your ideas.**

**2 Do you think that the article clearly structured? Why? / Why not?**

<p><u>Do you panic when exam time comes around?</u> Are you always up late the night before, cramming for the exam the next day? If you answered yes to these two questions, I think I might be able to help you! <u>Here are some ideas that have worked for me when I've done exams-</u> and they just might work for you, too!</p> <p><u>First of all</u>, you need to prioritise. Not all exams are equally important - some are much more important than others! So, if an exam is really vital, schedule more time for revision but if it's not crucial, don't spend so long preparing for it. <u>For what it's worth, here's what I do ...</u> First, I rank my exams in order of importance. Then I draw up a revision timetable <i>a long time</i> before the exams begin. <u>Personally, I find it much easier to</u> do a bit of revision every day over a long period rather than to revise <u>like crazy</u> just before the exam.</p> <p><u>Second</u>, you need to stick to your plan. This is the hard bit! A couple of months before you have to do your exams they can still seem a long way off, so it's difficult to find the motivation to get down to any serious work. Don't let this happen to you! <u>I've</u> found that the best <u>way round</u> this problem is to have a fixed routine - so <u>I try to revise</u> every day at the same time, just as if I was doing a job.</p> <p><u>Finally, you're</u> much more likely to pass an exam if you spend time revising the things that you find difficult - and not the things that you can do <u>in your sleep!</u> Of course, we all like to focus on <u>stuff</u> what we already know because it's easier. But how is studying what you already know going to help you pass your exams?</p> <p>If you follow these tips, I think you'll have a much better chance of doing well in your exams. It goes without saying that <u>you'll</u> need to be disciplined and organised. So, <u>have you got what it takes?</u></p>	<p><b>Introduction to the topic</b></p> <p><b>First point</b></p> <p><b>Second point</b></p> <p><b>Final point</b></p> <p><b>Concluding paragraph</b></p>
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**3 Match the underlined words and expressions in the article with these categories.**

personal examples	talk directly to the other person	contracted forms	conversational language	linkers

▶ **Extension**

**4 Match these formal phrases with informal ones in the article.**

- 1 revise intensively in a short space of time (paragraph 1)
- 2 a little (paragraph 2)
- 3 rigorously follow (paragraph 3)
- 4 things (paragraph 4)

▶ **Writing practice**

**5 Write an informal article on one of these topics (250–300 words).**

- How to make friends
- How to become rich
- How to be healthier

**Writing plan**

- Paragraph 1: introduce the topic.
- Paragraph 2: explain your first point.
- Paragraph 3: explain your second point.
- Paragraph 4: explain your final point.
- Paragraph 5: write a short conclusion.

**Check your article.**

- ✓ Have you followed the writing plan?
- ✓ Have you used informal language?
- ✓ Have you used linkers to structure the article?
- ✓ Have you given personal examples?
- ✓ Have you talked directly to the other person?
- ✓ Have you used contracted forms?