

A REVIEW

1 Read the exam task. What three points should you include in your review?

A new shopping mall opened in your town recently. You have been asked to write a review of it for a local newspaper, describing what kind of shops and facilities are available. Explain one or two of the features that make the shopping mall special, and suggest any improvements that would make it provide better for needs of the local community.

Write your **review**.

2 Study the model answer and answer the questions.

- Does the review cover all the points in the task?
- How many of the mall's positive aspects does the writer describe?
- Is the language in the review appropriate for its target audience?

3 Read the exam task and complete the paragraph with the words in the box.

A gaming magazine is asking for reviews of newly released computer games. You should say how the game compares with similar games you have played, what you liked most about it and how you think it could be improved.

Write your **review**.

as more most much prefer
rather unlike wide

In Other Waters is different from any other science-fiction game I have played. (1) most games which take place on earth or in space, this game is played under the ocean. It is a (2) gentler game than others, allowing you to explore and learn (3) than simply fight an enemy. Even though it is (4) educational than many games, *In Other Waters* is just (5) engaging as other games I have played, because you are responsible for the well-being of the main character, Ellery. I feel the game will appeal to a (6) variety of people because it includes scientific knowledge as well as the usual excitement of gaming. Generally, I (7) slightly faster-paced games, but this is still one of the (8) fascinating games I've played.

MODEL ANSWER

¹Start with a general comment on how you know about the product or service.

²Make sure your review focuses on the specific aspects outlined in the task.

⁵Finish with a summary of your overall view and recap any main points briefly.

⁶Include a recommendation.

¹Like many other people in Newtown, I was delighted to hear the long-awaited mall would finally be opening. I went along a few weeks after it opened with a group of friends, and we were not disappointed.

Unlike many other shopping centres, the new mall offers more than just shops. The children's play area, cinema, bowling alley and food court make it a place that will appeal particularly to families and teenagers.

²What makes the mall stand out is its ³marvellous atmosphere. The music being played is ³upbeat and the water fountains and plants give it a ³more natural and calming feel than you might expect. ²Another special feature is that the food court has more of an emphasis on healthy eating, with salad and juice bars in addition to the usual fast food outlets. ⁴For me, this was a major plus point.

On the flip side, I would like to see a wider variety of shops. At present, the mall only has the typical high street stores selling clothes and shoes. In my view, this is too limited, making it less attractive for shoppers. ²Currently there are no designer or independent shops selling something a little different. However, there are some vacant shops, so hopefully this will change.

⁵Overall, the Central Mall is a great addition to Newtown, offering entertainment, dining and shopping facilities for the whole family in a relaxing atmosphere. There is some room for improvement in terms of the current lack of variety in choishops, but nevertheless, ⁶I strongly recommend visiting it.

³Use complex descriptive adjectives and phrases.

⁴Make it clear which aspect(s) you liked most.

4 Make the sentences more emphatic using cleft sentences. Begin each sentence with the word in brackets.

- 1 The storyline impressed me most. (It) *It was the storyline that impressed me most.*
- 2 I liked the sound effects best. (What)
- 3 I was disappointed because I couldn't get to the highest level. (What)
- 4 The quality of the animation really stands out. (It)
- 5 I like the way you are forced to use your brain. (What)
- 6 The designers went wrong by making the higher levels too difficult. (Where)

5 Replace the underlined descriptive language in the sentences with the synonyms in the box. The number of possible answers is given in brackets and the synonyms can be used more than once.

absolutely atrocious absolutely breath-taking
 absolutely extortionate absolutely riveting
 beautifully designed excessive to say the least
 extremely user-friendly not of a high standard
 not up to scratch totally awesome shockingly bad
 well thought-out utterly gripping

- 1 The film was very interesting. (2)
- 2 The photography was really beautiful. (2)
- 3 The game play was not so good. (3)
- 4 The website was very easy to navigate. (3)
- 5 Anne Hathaway's portrayal of the heroine, Selena, was very good. (4)
- 6 The service at the restaurant was really awful. (2)
- 7 For what you receive, I think the price you pay is extremely high. (2)

6 Study the words and expressions in the Key language box.

KEY LANGUAGE FOR REVIEWS

Comparing and contrasting: (not) as + adj + as, although, however, in spite of, on the one/other hand, whereas, unlike

Praising: what I impressed me most was, it was the (noun) that most stood out for me, one/another of the plus points/benefits/advantages of this is ...

Criticising: one of the main drawbacks is, one area/thing that could be improved is, on the negative side, it is probably not suitable/appropriate/ideal for, I was a little/extremely disappointed with ...

Suggesting and recommending: One area/improvement that could be made is, I would suggest that, I wholeheartedly/highly/strongly recommend, I (strongly) advise against, If I were you, I would avoid/steer clear of this ...

7 Correct the mistakes in the sentences. One of the sentences is correct.

- 1 Although I enjoyed the film, it was not as good than the other films in the series.
- 2 What did impress me most was the band's performance in a live context.
- 3 In spite of the restaurant was crowded, the staff were always very attentive and helpful.
- 4 It was the scenery that stood out the more.
- 5 Personally, I strongly advise to not buy the app.
- 6 In conclusion, I would strongheartedly recommend to visit the nature reserve.
- 7 If I were you, I avoid this film like the plague.
- 8 Whilst I liked the book, it is probably not suitable for younger children.

8 Read the exam task and use the table to plan your review.

A travel magazine has asked for reviews from people who have made interesting journeys on public transport in their country. You decide to write about a journey you have made, briefly describing where you went and your reason for choosing public transport. Your review should explain what was interesting about the journey and encourage other people to consider going on journeys by public transport themselves.

Write your **review**.

PARAGRAPHS	IDEAS	USEFUL PHRASES
Introduction (Why you decided to use public transport)		
Where you went and type(s) of transport used		
What was interesting about the journey		
Conclusion (encourage others to use public transport)		

9 Write your review. Write between 220 and 260 words.

10 Check your review and make changes if necessary.

- Have you explained why you decided to use public transport?
- Have you written about where you went?
- Have you highlighted some interesting aspects of the journey?
- Have you encouraged others to use public transport?
- Is your writing clearly divided into paragraphs?
- Have you used language for comparing, praising, criticising, suggesting and recommending?
- Have you written between 220 and 260 words?