Article Writing and Sample Articles

A Guide to Format, Style and Technique

1. What Is an Article?

An article is a piece of writing that is published in a newspaper, magazine, website or school journal. It is written for a specific audience and has a clear purpose: to inform, to describe, to explain, to advise or to entertain. Unlike a letter or an essay, an article has a title and is written in an engaging style that holds the reader's interest from the first line to the last.

Types of Article

Type	Purpose	Example Topics
Informative	To give facts and explain a subject clearly	The Benefits of Reading; How Recycling Helps the Environment
Descriptive	To create a vivid picture using the senses	A Busy Market; A Stormy Night at the Coast
Fictional (Narrative)	To tell an imaginary story in an interesting way	The Last Lighthouse Keeper; An Unexpected Journey
Persuasive / Opinion	To convince the reader to agree with a viewpoint	Why Schools Should Start Later

An article may be non-fiction (based on facts and real experiences) or fiction (based on imagination). Informative and descriptive articles are usually non-fiction, while a narrative article may be completely imaginary. In every case, the writer must choose a tone and vocabulary that suit the topic and the reader.

2. Format of an Article

Part	What to Include
Title	A short, catchy heading that tells the reader what the article is about.
Introduction (Paragraph 1)	Introduce the topic and capture attention with a question, a surprising fact or a strong statement.
Body (Paragraphs 2 to 4)	Develop the main ideas. Write one idea per paragraph, supported by reasons, facts or examples.
Conclusion (Final Paragraph)	Summarise the main point, leave the reader with a final thought or recommendation.

- **Tone:** Formal or semi-formal for informative articles; lively and expressive for descriptive or fictional articles.
- **Person:** Use the third person for general topics. Use the first person (I, we) only for personal or narrative articles.
- **Tense:** Present tense for facts and general truths; past tense for stories and experiences.

3. Word Count and Paragraphing

Feature	Guideline
Length	Between 150 and 250 words, unless the question states otherwise.
Number of paragraphs	Four or five paragraphs: introduction, two or three body paragraphs and a conclusion.
Paragraph length	Three to five sentences. Each paragraph begins on a new line and deals with a single idea.
Linking words	Firstly, Secondly, In addition, However, As a result, In conclusion.

4. Do's and Don'ts

Do	Don't
Write a clear and interesting title.	Do not use a long or vague title.
Plan the article before writing.	Do not begin without deciding the main points.
Keep to the topic and the audience.	Do not include unrelated information.
Use varied vocabulary and sentence structures.	Do not repeat the same words and phrases.
Use linking words to connect ideas.	Do not write paragraphs that jump between ideas.
Give examples, facts or descriptive details.	Do not make general statements without support.
Maintain a consistent tone and tense.	Do not use slang, text language or contractions in formal writing.
Proofread for spelling, punctuation and grammar.	Do not exceed or fall far short of the word limit.

5. Useful Language for Articles

Purpose	Examples
Opening	Have you ever wondered...? / Imagine a world where... / It is often said that...
Adding ideas	Moreover, / In addition, / Furthermore, / Another important point is...
Contrasting	However, / On the other hand, / In contrast, / Although...
Giving examples	For instance, / For example, / Such as...
Descriptive phrases	The air was filled with... / Glistening in the sunlight... / A deafening roar echoed...
Concluding	In conclusion, / To sum up, / Ultimately, / All things considered,

6. Sample Articles

The following articles demonstrate correct format, paragraphing and word count in clear, simple English.

Sample Article 1: Informative

Informative article (non-fiction)

Why Sleep Matters for Every Student

Many students believe that staying up late to study is the best way to succeed. In reality, a good night's sleep is one of the most powerful tools for learning. Understanding why sleep matters can help every student perform better at school.

Firstly, sleep strengthens memory. While the body rests, the brain organises what has been learned during the day and stores it for later use. A student who sleeps well is therefore more likely to remember facts, vocabulary and formulas.

Secondly, sleep improves concentration and mood. Tired students often find it difficult to focus in lessons, and they may become irritable with friends and teachers. In contrast, a rested student is alert, patient and ready to take part in class discussions.

Finally, sleep protects health. Regular rest helps the body fight illness and reduces stress. Experts recommend that teenagers sleep for eight to ten hours each night. To achieve this, students should switch off screens an hour before bedtime and keep a fixed sleeping routine.

In conclusion, sleep is not wasted time; it is an investment in learning and wellbeing. By making rest a priority, students can study more effectively and enjoy a healthier, happier school life.

Word count: 198 words | Paragraphs: 5

Sample Article 2: Descriptive

Descriptive article (non-fiction)

A Morning at the Saturday Market

It is six o'clock in the morning, and the Saturday market has already woken up. A cool breeze carries the smell of fresh bread, ripe mangoes and roasting coffee through the narrow streets, drawing sleepy visitors towards the bright stalls.

The first thing that catches the eye is the colour. Pyramids of red tomatoes sit beside glossy purple aubergines, while baskets of golden oranges glow like tiny suns. Overhead, striped canvas roofs flap gently, casting patterns of blue and yellow shadow on the ground.

Sound is everywhere. Stallholders call out their prices in cheerful, singing voices, and children laugh as they chase one another between the crowded rows. Somewhere nearby, a street musician plays a lively tune on his battered guitar, and passers-by tap their feet as they walk.

As the morning grows warmer, the market becomes a busy, swirling mass of people, bags and bargains. Yet in the middle of the noise, there is a feeling of friendship; neighbours greet one another warmly and strangers share smiles over a basket of peaches.

By noon the stalls begin to empty, but the memory of the market lingers. It is not simply a place to shop; it is the beating heart of the town.

Word count: 203 words | Paragraphs: 5

Sample Article 3: Fictional (Narrative)

Fictional article (imaginary story)

The Last Light of Cape Harbour

Old Tomas had climbed the three hundred steps of Cape Harbour Lighthouse every evening for forty years. Tonight, however, he climbed them slowly, knowing it would be the last time. In the morning, a machine would replace him.

At the top, he lit the great lamp as usual and watched its golden beam sweep across the dark water. The sea was calm, and the stars shone brightly. Tomas sighed and sat down in his worn wooden chair, wondering what he would do without his lonely tower.

Suddenly, a faint cry drifted up from the rocks below. Tomas grabbed his lantern and hurried down the steps as fast as his tired legs would allow. At the bottom, he found a small fishing boat, broken against the stones, and a young girl clinging to its side.

With trembling hands, he pulled her to safety and wrapped her in his coat. "I saw your light," she whispered. "It was the only thing I could follow."

Tomas looked up at the beam turning above them and smiled for the first time that week. Machines might shine just as brightly, he thought, but only a keeper would have heard that cry. That night, the lighthouse had saved one more life, and its keeper had remembered why he had stayed.

Word count: 214 words | Paragraphs: 5

7. Features of the Sample Articles

- **Titles** are short and relevant to the topic.
- **Introductions** state the subject and invite the reader to continue.
- **Each body paragraph** develops one idea, with a clear topic sentence.
- **Linking words** such as firstly, however and finally guide the reader.
- **Descriptive language** (colours, sounds, smells) is used in Sample 2 to create a picture in the reader's mind.
- **Narrative techniques** such as a problem, a turning point and a resolution are used in Sample 3.
- **Conclusions** close the article with a summary or a memorable final thought.

8. Article Writing Checklist

Check	Yes
Does the article have a suitable title?	
Is the opening interesting and relevant?	
Is there one main idea in each paragraph?	
Are ideas supported with facts, reasons or details?	
Is the tone suitable for the audience and purpose?	
Are linking words used correctly?	
Is there a clear conclusion?	
Is the word count within the limit?	
Have spelling, punctuation and grammar been checked?	