

## **Tipos de texto (Trabajo Escrito y Prueba 2)**

- Artículo
- Blog/entrada en un diario personal
- Conjunto de instrucciones, directrices
- Correspondencia escrita
- Crónica de noticias
- Entrevista
- Folleto, hoja informativa, folleto informativo, panfleto, anuncio
- Informe oficial
- Introducción a debates, discursos, charlas y presentaciones
- Propuesta
- Reseña

## Conventions of text types

So what exactly are these 'conventions' referred to in the WA, Criterion C, Format?

Bear in mind that this list is for Paper 2, and candidates may use other text types in WA if they wish. These notes were produced by English B examiners, and conventions may be different in other language cultures. This is not an IB document and is simply what English B senior examiners will be using as guidelines.

Here the recognisable features of each text type have been organised according to two categories

- **Basic Format** ... the most easily visible (and teachable) features of the text type - 'format' in the sense of aout, the physical organisation of the text. Not all of the features listed would need to be present for the text type to be clearly recognisable.
- **Approach** ... the less visible features of how the text type would normally be handled - register, writer's voice and tone, address to audience, organisation of ideas, and so on. Major elements are listed in descending order of importance (the most important first). Again, not all of these need to be present.

### 1. Article

The term 'article' applies to a very wide range of styles and approaches. Clearly, it carries the notion of a journalistic discourse, but the context – which includes where it is to be published, and to whom it is to be addressed – will have a powerful influence on how it is written (see NB, below).

#### Basic Format

- Headline / title
- Sub-headline, summarising
- Byline (author, date, location)
- Short paragraphs (possibly)
- Sub-headings (possibly)

#### Approach

- 'Duty to inform'? A defining element of any 'article' is that it sets out to inform – does the script actually tell the reader something?
- Precise nature of task? Is the main purpose to :
- Inform? In which case, is the flow of information methodical and clear?
- Discuss? In which case, is there a reasonably balanced coverage of different points of view?
- Give opinion? In which case, is a clear point of view presented? And is it coherent / consistent?
- Persuade? Does the text engage and involve the reader and appeal to feelings as well as to reason?
- Opening & closing: Is the opening, in particular, attractive and attention-catching?
- Address: Is there a sense of effective address to the reader?

A basic problem of the 'article' as a task is that articles appear in many contexts, and these contexts may define style and approach. Unless the question specifies the publishing context very carefully, one should beware of jumping to conclusions – for instance, a 'school magazine' may be written in many different ways, from jokey / colloquial to formal / serious. Accept any approach which is credible and consistent.

## 2. Blog/diary entry

A distinction: both text types typically present personal experience and comment, but a blog is more of a public statement, whereas a diary is more of a private reflection. Beyond that, there is a problem: are there conventions for the relatively new blog - or for the anarchically personal diary?

### Basic Format

- Heading
- Blog - title (perhaps quirky, witty); there may be multiple entries over various days. These should be latest first, but accept any clear indication of day or date.
- Diary - date; or dates, if multiple entries. 'Dear Diary' may be unrealistic, but we should accept it as the student is at least conscious of the text type and is informing the examiner of this.
- Lucid paragraphing

While there may be real examples of both blogs and diaries which ignore basic paragraphing, students writing an exam script are expected to show that they understand that sensible paragraphing aids clarity.

### Approach

- Organisation - What should govern the effective organisation of these text types?
- If a blog is a 'public statement', ideas can be expected to be organised to show some evident and consistent purpose
- Even if a diary is a (more) private reflection, an exam script can still be expected to show a clear and organised flow of ideas. This may include:
  - control of narration – the diary is usually set to address a narrative of some sort, so effective explanation and control of the events is expected
  - narration plus comment – what distinguishes the diary from other forms of narrative is that the diarist reflects on the events and draws personal conclusions.
  - register : informality enriched with sophistication - if both text types are personal, some informality can be expected in register and rhetoric, but higher marks will go to exam scripts which combine colloquialism with dashes of complex phrasing and effects.

## 3. Brochure, leaflet, flyer, pamphlet, advertisement

What all of these formats have in common is that they are concerned to disseminate information quickly and concisely. The task may define an emphasis on informing (e.g. the health leaflet) or on promoting (e.g. the publicity brochure).

### Basic Format

- Main heading (informing), or slogan (promoting)
- Use of multiple sections : identified by bullet points, lines, stars, etc
- Subheadings : used to show the steps/stages of the argument
- Succinct explanation : individual concepts / ideas are presented clearly and quickly
- Background information : e.g. 'Contact us' + phone number / email

### Approach

- 'address' - all of these text types include the idea of a form of direct address to a target audience ... are there indications that the student understands this, and expresses such address?

- 'promotional language' – usually, these text types are all hortatory, they encourage the target audience to agree with what is being presented, to 'buy the idea' ... so to what extent do the style and rhetoric achieve this effect?
- In certain cases, lucid step-by-step overall argument : individual points are linked together into a convincing sequence of ideas.

#### 4. Essay

The essay is one of the commonest forms that teachers mark – but is there really agreement on what is meant by 'a good essay' ? There are many different conventions for many different types of essay, so which are expected, if any in particular, and how are the conventions to be recognised ? Also, essays are not distinguished by any particularly strong features of physical layout or format, but rather by a distinctive organisation of ideas.

##### Basic Format

- There may be a title stated sense of purpose / aim: how effectively is the text directed at a clear issue or question?
- Introduction + conclusion : these should effectively embody the 'sense of purpose'.
- clear organisation : both in terms of the individual steps of the argument, and in terms of the overall pattern of the argument.
- clear and appropriate paragraphing : emphasising the logical steps of the argument + good use of cohesives & sequence markers – all expected in a good exam script.

##### Approach

- register - Tricky, this; because teachers seem to have differing expectations as to how formal / impersonal an essay should be – for instance, some encourage and some discourage the use of the pronoun 'I'. A good exam script will be rewarded for consistency, rather than penalised for expectations that may not be valid.
- range of aspects considered - There should be a sense that different arguments are explored – if only to refute some of them. Actual balance between, say Pro & Con, will depend on the task specified.
- rhetoric – Some touches of rhetoric may be expected, but not the regular effects more typical of a speech.

#### 5. Interview

There are two common varieties of 'interview': the 'transcript' and the 'embedded'. The transcript reads like a script, being an accurate transcription of the words used, without commentary or description. The embedded variety is essentially an article, based on description and commentary, with liberal quotation (which may be either direct quotation or reported speech).

##### A. Embedded

###### Basic Format

- As with the Article text type ...
- Headline / title
- Sub-headline, summarising
- Byline (author, date, location)
- Short paragraphs (possibly)
- Sub-headings (possibly)
- Interview details + context of interview + background of interviewee

### **Approach**

- opening & closing? Is the opening, in particular, attractive / attention-catching ?
- address? Is there a sense of effective address to the reader?
- point of the interview: Does the script lead to some sort of overall conclusion (which is likely to have been specified in the question) ?
- register: Are the changes between written prose and colloquial dialogue handled effectively?

## **B. Transcript**

### **Basic Format**

- Question & Response - The basic structure will be defined by the 'alternating speeches' of the characters.
- Realistic oral interaction - complex exchanges, such as interruptions, completions of questions, etc

### **Approach**

- relevance + development How skilfully does the student handle ideas, relevant to the task set ? This will be seen in (a) the questions asked, and (b) the way that the dialogue develops .
- overall organisation Is a clear pattern of argument detectable, despite the 'division of labour' between the characters?
- rhetoric: How lively / entertaining is the sense of dialogue? This may be suggested by humour, and elements of personal response such as surprise.
- register: Does the dialogue reflect a sense of whatever degree of formality may be implied by the task?

## **6. Introduction to debate, speech, talk, presentation**

This text type involves the written form of a discourse to be presented orally. The task may emphasise clear explanation (talk, presentation), or convincing argument (introduction to debate, speech).

### **Basic Format**

- 'address' established : direct address to audience at the beginning
- 'address' maintained : use of the pronouns 'you' and 'we' to maintain direct links with the audience ? ... and/or, how consistently?
- clear opening / introduction : statement of purpose
- appropriate closing / conclusion : summary of case / point

### **Approach**

- Does the student aid the audience's understanding by giving an early summary, or 'map', of what is going to be said?
- lucid development: How clearly does the script present ideas in order to explain or impress?
- cohesive devices: How clear is the use of sequence markers to guide the audience?
- opening & closing: How forcefully does the script catch the audience's attention at the beginning, and leave a clear impression at the end?
- rhetoric: To what extent, and how effectively, are rhetorical techniques used? Such as – rhetorical questions ...humour...repetition... references ... metaphors ... irony ... exaggeration (understatement?) etc.

## **7. News report**

The essence of a good news report is that it efficiently conveys a lot of clear facts about a defined situation. News media always have restricted space, so the information needs to be selected carefully and then presented concisely.

#### **Basic Format**

- Headline / title
- Sub-headline, summarising
- Byline (author, date, location)
- Short paragraphs (possibly)
- Sub-headings (possibly)

#### **Approach**

- register : ... usually, semi-formal / clear / direct
- main facts to subordinate details : ... standard good practice in news reporting is to start with the important facts, and move gradually downwards to the least important facts (also known as the 'cut-from-the-bottom system' - subeditors could safely trim the text to size without having to re-write)
- fact / opinion distinction : ... good journalism always strives to make clear what are objective facts, and what subjective opinions (e.g. opinions likely to be expressed as quotes from identified individuals).

### **8. Official report**

The essence of this text type is the ability to present a clear explanation of a given subject – which involves (i) analysis, (ii) summary and (iii) organisation. What is meant by 'official' would presumably be defined in the question / task, but the fundamental skill in handling this text type must be to organise explanation in an objective and logical way.

#### **Basic Format**

- overall subject title
- main headings
- sub-headings, bullet points, numbered sections
- explicit clear organisation : determined by the precise nature of the task, but these main elements should probably be recognisable :
- background ... overall description ... description of important details ... concluding summary.
- register : use of (basically) formal language

#### **Approach**

- 'address': How well does the script direct the proposal to a specific audience?

### **9. Review**

This text type is really a journalistic form, which aims to combine objective information with subjective opinion. The (dominant) element of 'opinion' should involve analysis and evaluation – while the journalism context usually demands that the overall impact should be interesting and entertaining. A review is not the same thing as a commentary (which implies an academic context).

#### **Basic Format**

- Headline / title

- Sub-headline, summarising
- Byline (author, date, location)
- Short paragraphs (possibly)
- Sub-headings (possibly)

#### **Approach**

- 'address' - lively, direct communication that will interest the audience. [This is likely to involve a semi-formal register (for clarity and concise explanation) with dashes of informality to convey the personal tone + vivid comment / rhetoric.]
- 'Angle' – the script has a clear overall point of view / attitude, and this informs the structure of the argument

#### **10. Set of instructions, guidelines**

The essence of these two related but distinct text types is that they both aim to give precise guidance as to how to handle a practical situation. The key to good instructions is that they give concrete explanation in a precise sequence, whereas the key to good guidelines is that they give general explanation, which may or may not involve precise sequence.

#### **Basic Format**

- main heading / title
- secondary headings (guidelines)
- numbered sections (instructions)
- short paragraphs
- recommendation eg. to see the film

#### **Approach**

- control of language - \* plain & clear i.e. functional and efficient \* explanation of technical terms – where technical terms have to be used, are they explained / defined ?
- clear sequence (for instructions) – a sense of logical steps
- attention to detail + control of essential, useful information
- anticipation of difficulties – understanding which parts of the process may cause problems for the uninformed
- empathy with audience – most easily detected by the ability to anticipate difficulties, (e.g. explanation of technical terms, above), but may also involve use of encouraging, helpful comments

#### **11. Set of instructions, guidelines**

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#### **Basic Format**

- main heading / title
- secondary headings (guidelines)
- numbered sections (instructions)
- short paragraphs

### **Approach**

- control of language – plain, clear and efficient . Some explanation of technical terms if these are used.
- clear sequence (for instructions) – a sense of logical steps
- attention to detail + control of essential, useful information
- anticipation of difficulties – understanding which parts of the process may cause problems for the reader.
- empathy with audience – most easily detected by the ability to anticipate difficulties, (e.g. explanation of technical terms, above), but may also involve use of encouraging, helpful comments.

### **12. Written correspondence**

This group of text types involve writing directly to a specific reader – as opposed to the other text types, which all involve writing for a generalised or notional audience. The fundamental distinction between 'formal' and 'informal' is that in the formal type the purpose of the letter is more important than the relationship with the reader, whereas in the informal type, the relationship between writer and reader is at least as important as the purpose.

#### **A. Formal letter**

##### **Basic Format**

- sender's address
- date
- opening/closing salutations ('Dear Mr/Ms ...' / 'Yours sincerely...' etc)
- register : nature of 'formal' tone - what address + attitude to the recipient is expressed ?
- recipient's address (very optional)

##### **Approach**

- relevance: How consistently is the text focused on the set task / purpose?
- development of explanation: How succinct + clear/forceful is the presentation of the ideas?

#### **B. Informal letter**

Expectations for informal letters and for E-mails are very similar – but it may be useful to look at the small but significant differences between the two sets of recommended features.

##### **Basic Format**

- date (or simply day: 'Saturday')
- opening/closing salutations (personal + friendly - 'Dear Joe ...' / 'All the best / A big kiss...' etc)

##### **Approach**

- 'address': To what extent is it clear that the e-mail is addressed to a specific person? (Contrast with E-mail, below - less sense of 'dialogue' is expected since letters do not receive such rapid replies !)
- relevance & organisation: Contrast with E-mail: is it fair to say that written letters may be produced rather more slowly, and so with more consideration? If so, would require more careful attention to