

How to write different genres

Engelsk



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Klasse: _____

Indholdsfortegnelse

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How to write a short story

A short story is simply a short text. There is no certain number of pages that determines a short story, however it is shorter than a novel.

Characteristics

It is typical for a short story to:

- span over a **short period of time**
- only include a **few persons**
- have a **simple plot**, often with just one conflict or event
- have an **open or surprising ending**.



Before you begin

Before you start writing your short story, you should think about what kind of short story you want it to be and what kind of plot you want. For instance, you can make a mindmap with all your ideas. Among other things, you can consider these questions:

- **Topic:** What is the topic of your short story?
- **Persons:** Does your short story include many or few persons?
- **Time:** When does the story take place, e.g. present time or the medieval ages? Or is it even clear at all when the story takes place? And for how long time does your story span?
- **Narrator:** Which type of narrator do you want to use? Perhaps a first person narrator? Or an omniscient narrator?
- **Style:** In which style do you want to write? Minimalistic or everyday-like? Or do you want to use a very descriptive style? Or many metaphors?
- **Structure:** How do you want to structure your short story? Do you want it to be chronological? Or do you want your story to jump in time, e.g. with flashbacks?
- **Theme:** Does your story focus on a specific theme? It could be love, it could be loneliness, or it could be something else.
- **Message:** Do you think your story should convey a certain message? E.g. that crime does not pay or that it is important to be true to yourself.
- **Genre:** Do you have a certain genre in mind, like horror or science fiction? Genres come with specific rules of their own that you should be aware of while writing.

When you have considered these questions, you need to organise your ideas. Also, keep the characteristics of the short story genre in mind when you start writing your short story.

Pieces of advice

Here are some pieces of advice that might help you improve your short story:

- Give your short story an interesting title
- Pick out the most important things. The short story is a short text. Therefore, you do not have time for very long descriptions.
- Be consistent with the choice of present and past tense. You are free to choose whatever you want, but stick with one of them.
- Remember to proofread for typos and misspellings.

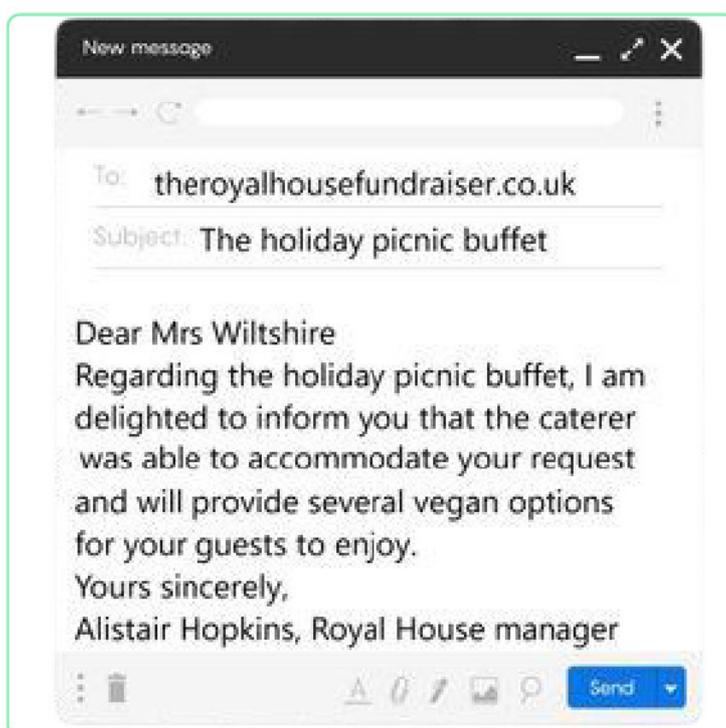
How to write a letter

A letter is a **written message** to one or more persons. Letters are usually mailed in envelopes. However, physical letters are becoming rarer and rarer as they are replaced by e-mails and other digital forms of communication. But many of the characteristics of letters also apply to e-mails.

Broadly speaking, two kinds of letters exist: personal and formal. The **personal letters** are those you write to someone you know very well. For instance, you can write letters to stay in touch with someone or share what you have experienced.

In a personal letter, the sender normally writes about experiences, thoughts, and feelings. These letters are written with an explicit first person narrator and personal comments. You can use interjections (such as: eww, aww, or argh) and you can use smileys :).

A **formal letter** can be an application for something, a complaint about something, or something else requiring a professional or formal tone. They are normally written to someone that you do not know very well. The two types of letters have very different purposes, which make their styles very different too.



In formal letters, the style is more objective and written concisely to make the purpose of the letter clear. Interjections and smileys are not very professional to use.

Before you begin

Before writing your letter, you should consider a few things. Among others, these are:

- **What?** Is your letter a personal or a formal letter? What is the occasion for writing it? And what is the topic?
- **From whom?** Consider your role as the sender of the letter.
- **To whom?** Who is the letter to? What is your relationship to that person? Letters are centered around the receiver. This means that the reader is very important. Consider which situation the reader is in when receiving and reading your letter.

Structure your letter

Formal and informal letters are not structured in the same way.

Formal letters are normally structured like this:

- **Sender and date:** At the top, you put your address. You can do this either to the left or to the right. Underneath your address, you write the date.
- **Receiver:** To the left under the sender and date, you write the recipient's name, title, and address. Underneath this, you address the recipient by "Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms Full Name".
- **Text:** Then you write the actual text.
- **Close:** End your letter with a complimentary close, e.g. "Yours sincerely".

Informal letters are normally structured like this:

- **Salutation:** Start your letter with a salutation like "Dear Name".
- **Text:** Then you write your text. Consider starting your text with a compliment like "I am very happy to hear from you again."
- **Close:** End with a complimentary close like the formal letter.

Pieces of advice

Here are some pieces of advice that might help you improve your letter:

- Adapt the style according to the purpose and the recipient.
- For **informal letters**, you can include details, personal language, and even jokes.
- For **formal letters**, you should do the opposite. Cut to the core and write in a concise and neutral style.
- Remember to mention your contact details if you want a letter in reply. In this way the recipient will know where to send his or her reply.



How to write a poem

A poem is a text which is usually written in stanzas. Some poems have plots like short stories or novels. These are called **epic poems**. Other poems do not tell a story in itself. They rather describe a moment of certain moods and emotions. These poems are called **lyrical poems**.

Poems are often written in a way that creates images in the reader's mind. The poems have rich descriptions so that the reader is able to feel the mood or emotion that the poem conveys.

Song lyrics are also a kind of poem. You can sing the song lyrics because they use **rhythms and rhymes**. You can rhyme in many ways. The most common way is called end rhymes, because the ends of the lines rhyme. Here is an example from the famous poem *Annabel Lee* by Edgar Allan Poe, where *ago* rhymes with *know* and *sea* rhymes with *Annabel Lee*:

It was many and many a year ago,

In a kingdom by the sea,

That a maiden there lived whom you may know

By the name of ANNABEL LEE;--

Another type of rhyming is alliteration where several words in a row all begin with the same letter. But other poems do not rhyme at all. Here is an example with the letter B from the **nursery rhyme** *Betty Botter*:

Betty Botter bought some butter, but, she said, the butter's bitter;

Before you begin writing your poem

Before you start writing your poem, you should think about what type of poem you want to write. For instance, you can make a mindmap where you write down all your ideas. Consider the following:

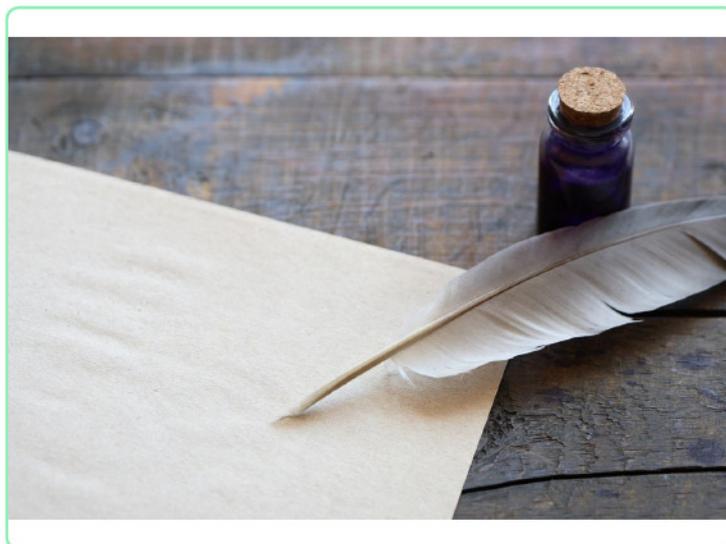
- **Type of poem:** Will you write an epic poem that tells a story or a lyrical poem that conveys a mood or an emotion?
- **Topic:** What should the topic of your poem be? Should it be a love poem, or maybe a random everyday situation?
- **Structure:** How many stanzas will you have in your poem? How many lines in each stanza?
- **Rhymes:** Should your poem rhyme? In what way?
- **Composition:** Should the poem have a narrative that moves forward? Should the poem mention place and time explicitly? Or should it be more abstract?
- **Theme:** Is there a certain message that you would like to convey in your poem?

Many of the above points are intertwined. You can also use figurative language, such as metaphors, but it all depends on the specific style of the poem.

Pieces of advice

Here are some pieces of advice that may help you improve your poem:

- Remember that you can play with language in a poem. Think creatively! Use the words in a different way than you normally do.
- Remember rhythm. Regardless of whether you use rhymes or not, the syllables in each line should fit in with a certain rhythm. Read your poem aloud to yourself. If it is difficult to read, you should probably change or delete some words to make the flow easier.
- Every line in the poem should matter. A poem is a short text, so you need to communicate in a clear and concise manner.



How to write a blog entry

A blog is **a sort of online diary**. It is a web page where the person behind (known as the blogger) writes entries that everyone can read. The entries are **small and short texts**, and one or more persons can write entries for a single blog.

A blog can have **different topics**. Some write about their interests, e.g. cooking, fashion, or computer games, while others may write about politics or society. Often, readers have the opportunity to write **comments**, and in this way a blog can create a debate or a dialogue.

Before writing

Before you start writing your blog entry, you should consider a few things, namely:

- **What?** Consider the topic of your blog entry. The topic is important for your style of writing. For instance, if you write about a political topic you should write in a serious language. But if you write a recipe for a cake, you can use a more informal style.
- **Who?** Who is the target group for the blog that you are writing an entry for? Knowing the target group is important for catching their interest. Perhaps, encourage them to comment on your blog.
- **How?** When you know the topic of your blog entry and the target group of the blog, it will be much easier to decide on the style of writing. What language will be appropriate? How long should your entry be? Should it have illustrations?

Structure your blog entry

A blog is often a short text. However, it can be useful to divide it into sections:

- **Introduction:** Present the topic. You can address your reader directly.
- **Body:** This is where you write your important content.
- **Ending:** Sum up your main points. If you wish to start a dialogue with your reader, it might be a good idea to end with a question.

Pieces of advice

Here are some pieces of advice that can help you improve your blog entry:

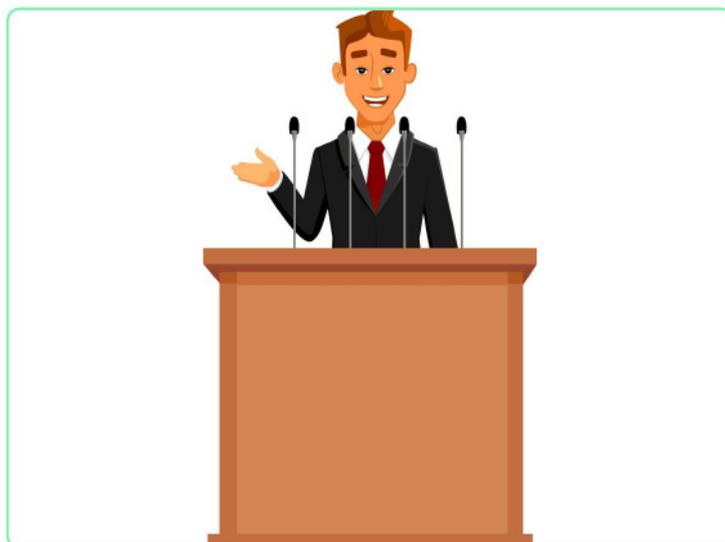
- Give it a catchy title. This will catch the reader's attention.
- Write in a language that is easy to understand.
- End with a question to start a debate.
- Divide your text into sections if it is long.
- Remember to proofread for errors.



How to write a speech

A speech is an oral presentation of something. Speeches come in many forms depending on the occasion. Speeches held at festivities like birthdays or weddings are **personal** and address only one or a few people that the speaker knows very well. Other speeches are about **professional** topics such as politics. Such speeches are not necessarily for people that the speaker knows personally. The different types of speeches have **different purposes:**

The personal speech often seeks to tell something about the person who is the centre of attention of the day. On the other hand, **a political speech** typically seeks to persuade the audience to join the political opinion that the speech conveys. If you give a speech or a lecture on a professional topic, the purpose is often to share knowledge with the audience.



Before you start

Before you start writing your speech, you should consider the following:

- **What?** First you should consider the topic and purpose of your speech. Should you give thanks to someone or inform about a certain topic? It is always important that you know the topic well. Before you start writing, you should investigate the topic to get to know it well.
- **To whom?** Consider who the speech is for. It is important for what you are allowed to say and how you can say it. Consider what your audience already knows, and what their opinion about it is. Should you convince them of something? Can you use technical terms or is it better with a simpler language? Is it okay to use humour?
- **Where and how?** Think about where and how your speech will be presented. All elements matter as to how you should do your speech.

All of the above elements are intertwined and affect each other. When you write and give your speech, it is your task to adjust it to make everything come together.

Forms of appeal

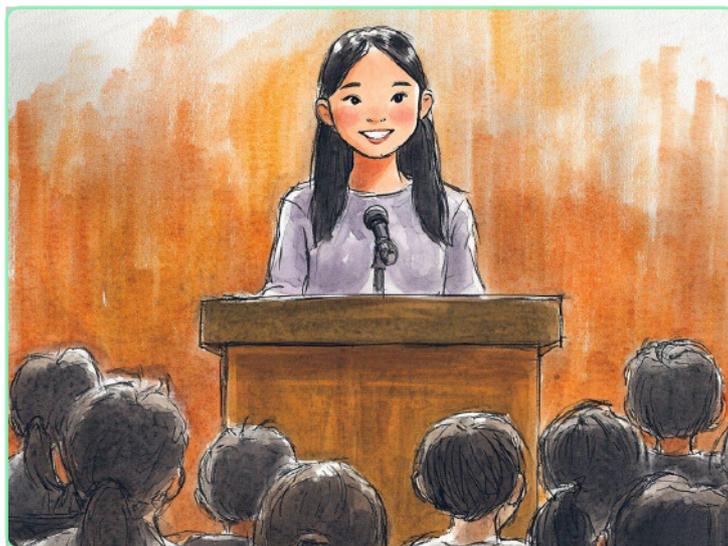
When you have considered the what, who, where, and how of your speech, it is time to start writing. In the writing phase you should consider how you want to connect with your audience. For instance, you can use different forms of appeal. A form of appeal is a way of persuading your audience of the truth in what you are saying. You can use one or more of the following forms of appeal:

- **Logos:** Logos means reason. This form appeals to the reason and logic of the audience. It might be a good idea to use facts, statistics, expert opinions, and the like. This form of appeal is often used in political speeches, where you try to convince the audience of something.
- **Ethos:** This appeals to your own credibility. As a speaker you need to appear trustworthy. Think of your appearance: Have a straight posture, wear nice clothes, and try not to appear nervous.
- **Pathos:** When you use this form of appeal, you speak to the emotions of the audience, e.g. by offending or evoking sympathy. You can do this by speaking about something that the audience can relate to.

Structure your speech

When you write your speech, you can structure it like this:

- **Introduction:** Your opening should be catchy and interesting, and it should clearly state the topic and purpose of your speech. If you give a longer speech or lecture, it may be a good idea to present the structure of your speech for your audience.
- **Main part:** In the main part, you get to the important content of your speech. Remember to have a common thread in your speech with smooth changes between the different sections. Depending on the topic, it may be a good idea to include small anecdotes, surprising information, or humour to maintain the attention of the audience.
- **Ending:** End by summing up the main points of your speech.



Performing your speech

When you have written your speech, the next step is to practice it. Read it thoroughly several times and try it out in front of a family member, a friend, or in front of the mirror. It is important that you know your speech well. It is a good idea to have flash cards with notes. But only notes - you should never read aloud word for word from a full text.

It is also important to be aware of your body language and appearance when you speak. Pay attention to:

- **Facial expressions:** You do not only communicate with words. Your facial expressions should agree with what you say. If you are speaking about something serious, you should not smile at the same time. Remember to keep eye contact and do not look down too much.
- **Voice:** The way you use your voice also matters for how other people perceive what you say and how interesting it will be. Speak loud and clear. Avoid talking too fast. If you talk too fast, you might lose your audience.
- **Body language:** How you stand has a huge impact on how the audience perceives you. Avoid standing with your arms crossed or with your hands in your pockets. You should appear open and forthcoming. Have a straight posture to appear more confident.

Pieces of advice

Here are some pieces of advice that can help you improve your speech skills:

- If you have your entire speech in writing, make sure to avoid long and complex sentences. Long and complex sentences can be difficult to understand when listening.
- Be careful with long speeches. Cut to the chase and let go of unnecessary information.
- It is okay to be nervous. Most people are nervous when they speak in front of a crowd.
- Free yourself from your paper. Improvising can be a good idea.
- Consider whether your audience can ask questions. If they can, make sure to be very well prepared to answer them.
- Smile and enjoy giving your speech.