



# Skills for Life

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## Writing Entry 2 Examination Report

2011 – Test 106

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## Skills for Life Writing Examination Report: Entry 2

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This report is based on candidate performance on one version of the Skills for Life Writing Entry 2 tests in 2010/11.

The report is intended as an aid to teachers and colleges in preparing candidates for future Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life Writing tests. It includes a number of sample candidate answers accompanied by examiner comments.

### Test 106

The three tasks in this test are: a message looking for someone to share a house, an email to a teacher about a missed class, and a description of a class trip for the college newsletter.

There are 33 marks available on the paper: 9 for Task 1, 9 for Task 2 and 15 for Task 3. The breakdown of marks available for each assessment focus (Text, Sentence and Word) is shown below.

	Text	Sentence	Word	Total
Task 1	3	3	3	9
Task 2	3	6	0	9
Task 3	6	6	3	15
Total	12	15	6	33

Scores were highest for Text focus and lowest for Sentence focus.

#### Task 1 Message for someone to share a house

There were some issues with this question.

Text focus: Though successful overall, the message board genre made this task a little problematic in places. Most candidates were able to address all the points. Many produced realistic notices, but others just wrote descriptions, a number of them overlong, of their house and its location. As a result fewer candidates than one would expect reached Band 3.

Sentence focus: It is often difficult to show the ability to form compound sentences in noticeboard messages; however, the first two points did give candidates the opportunity to do this. Points 3 and 4 rarely produced more than 'The rent is..' and 'Contact me on ..'.

Word focus: The task gave candidates the opportunity to use a wide range of vocabulary to describe the house and its location and most candidate scored well here.

#### Task 2 Email to teacher about missed class

This task worked well.

Text focus: Most candidates were familiar with the scenario and addressed the task well, although a small number failed to cover the third point. Candidates frequently gave medical reasons for absences and were usually able to explain these well. There were few issues with format and length.

Sentence focus: There were no problems here. The first point typically produced only one simple sentence of apology. The reason was usually well explained with even very weak candidates able to attempt a compound sentence.

### **Task 3 Description of class trip**

There were no major problems with this task.

Text focus: Candidates generally understood the scenario, although some trips appeared a little too extravagant. The final point was sometimes omitted (probably due to time constraints), and, as is typical with this type of task, a few candidates talked about a trip they were planning rather than ones they had been on. Such instances were not, however, unduly penalised.

Sentence focus: Candidates were successful in producing a range of compound sentences and tenses, with good use of adjectives to describe places and reasons for enjoyment. Good candidates scored well on this task and many weaker ones reached Band 2 comparatively easily.

Word focus: This was also successful. Candidates could write about something they knew and were able to write about shopping, travel and friends using appropriate vocabulary.

Overall this paper worked satisfactorily. Although the first task was quite difficult, the other two tasks were straightforward for candidates and the overall difficulty of the paper was comparable with earlier papers.

### **Recommendations for Candidate Preparation**

All Cambridge ESOL Skills for Life tests are based on the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum* and cover all the Basic Skills Standards in each mode at each level. Therefore, by following the *Adult ESOL Core Curriculum*, teachers will be preparing their students for the tests. Candidates will benefit from being reminded of the following Dos and Don'ts:

#### **Do**

- Do read all the task instructions carefully.
- Do make sure you know all the task types by looking at practice tests.
- Do make sure that your handwriting is clear and easy to read.
- Do read the task carefully and plan an answer which addresses all the content points of the task. Try to develop each point fully.
- Do consider who you are writing to and try to write in an appropriate style and tone.
- Do think carefully about whether the task requires you to ask, describe, invite, etc and make sure you do this in your answer.
- Do allow time to check through what you have written.

#### **Don't**

- Don't use a pencil.
- Don't worry if you make a few grammatical errors in tasks. Communicating the message is the most important thing.
- Don't write answers which are much shorter or longer than the recommended number of words.
- Don't spend too long on one answer.

- Don't write a full, rough copy of your answer. Just write brief notes to plan your answer.

## **Sample Scripts**

Sample scripts are provided for each task in the question paper. Please note that it is not possible to reproduce the candidate answers in the original handwriting, and so any references in the commentaries to quality of handwriting will not be reflected in the samples provided.

## Entry 2 (Test 106) Sample Scripts and Commentaries

### Entry 2 Script A Task 1

(About 10 minutes)

You want another person to live in your house.

Write a message for the college noticeboard. In the message:

- describe your house
- say where your house is
- say how much the rent is
- give your contact details.

Write about 50 words.

**PERSON WANTED**

ONE ROOM TO LENT.  
I have dable badroom to rent. This room has big bad, wardrob, mirro and karpet on the floor. My house has 3 badroom, 2 bathroom and big kichen with dining area. In the front and back – beautiful garden with grill. Now live here only 2 people. Good area – Kingston. Near the train station, a supermarket and a restaurant. Rent – only £100 p.w. Contacts for me: Paula mobile: 073462778 e-mail: paula@hotmail.com

**YOU MUST SEE!!!**

**Entry 2 Script A Task 1**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	The candidate covers all the main points with expansion and the text is coherent. Attention is paid to organisation.	3	<b>3</b>
Sentence focus	Candidate shows evidence of control over basic verb tenses. However where candidate attempts sentences, word order is not controlled, e.g. 'now live here only 2 people'. Use of verb forms is repetitive, e.g. 'This room has...', 'My house has...'. For this reason it doesn't achieve Band 3.	2	<b>2</b>
Word focus	Although candidate spells some familiar common words incorrectly, e.g. 'bad' for 'bed', this is an ambitious attempt at a wide range of vocabulary appropriate to task including 'grill' and 'dining area'.	3	<b>3</b>

**Entry 2 Script B**  
**Task 1**

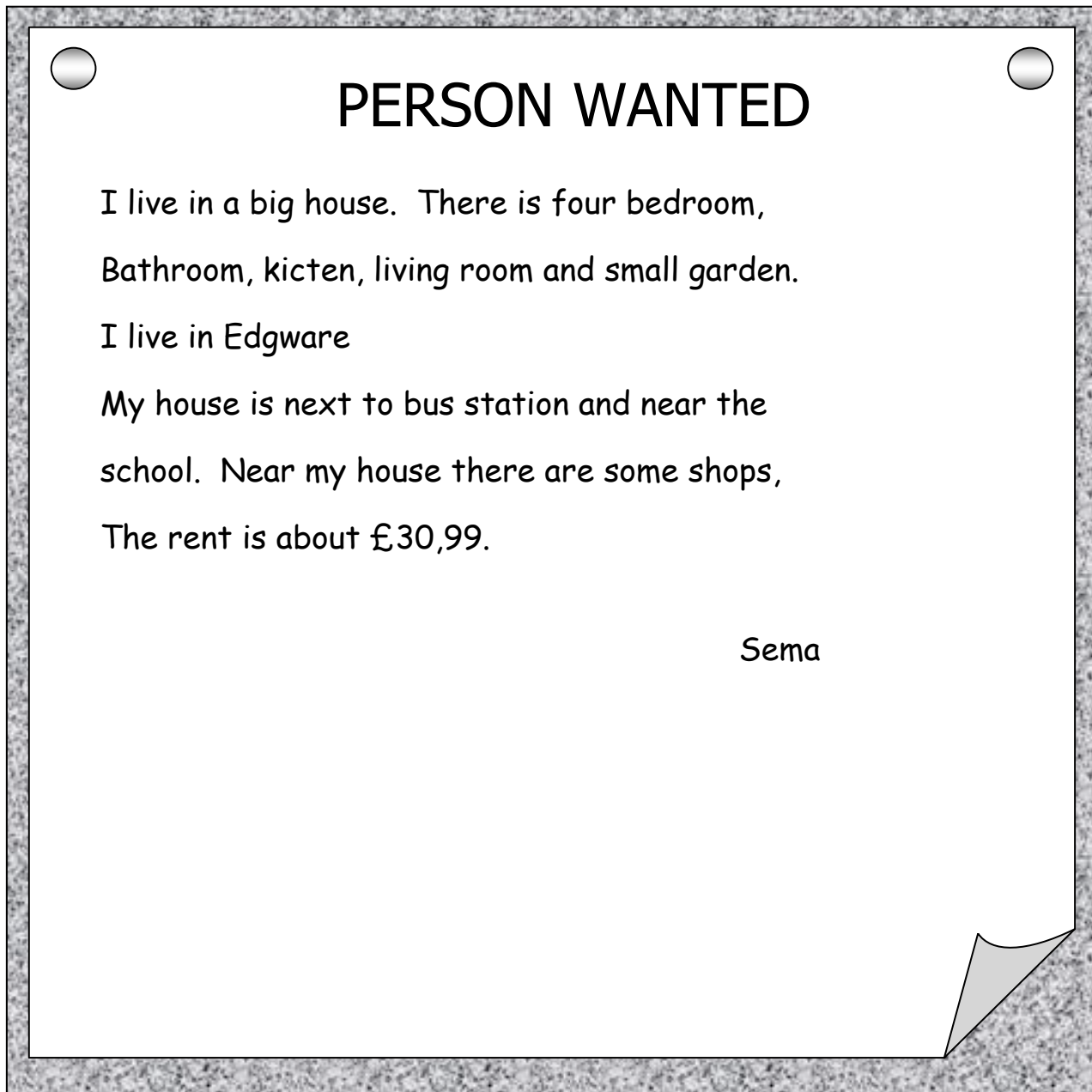
**(About 10 minutes)**

You want another person to live in your house.

Write a message for the college noticeboard. In the message:

- describe your house
- say where your house is
- say how much the rent is
- give your contact details.

Write about 50 words.



**PERSON WANTED**

I live in a big house. There is four bedroom,  
Bathroom, kicten, living room and small garden.

I live in Edgware

My house is next to bus station and near the  
school. Near my house there are some shops,  
The rent is about £30,99.

Sema

**Entry 2 Script B Task 1**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Candidate has attempted to cover the task although contact details are not covered. Text is largely coherent.	2	<b>2</b>
Sentence focus	Sentence grammar is sufficiently controlled for the message to be communicated. Sentence boundaries are marked.	2	<b>2</b>
Word focus	Although the candidate does not use a wide range of vocabulary, he/she selects vocabulary appropriate to task and makes only one spelling error, 'kicten'. This only just makes the top band.	3	<b>3</b>

**Entry 2 Script C**  
**Task 2**

**(About 20 minutes)**

You couldn't go to class yesterday.

Write an email to your teacher, Mr Jones. In your email:

- apologise for not going to the class
- say why you couldn't go to the class
- ask Mr Jones what he did in the class.

Write about 50 words.

<b>To....</b>	mjones@swmc.ac.uk
<b>Subject:</b>	missed class

*Dear Mr Jones*

*I'm so sorry. I couldn't go to class yesterday because I was ill very very and I had heached then I went Hospital, then docter said stay one night hospital. Now I feel better. I can come tomorrow a college.*

*See you soon*

*Badia*

**Entry 2 Script C Task 2**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Only two points are covered so teacher would only be partially informed. Text is largely coherent.	2	2
Sentence focus	Candidate shows some evidence of ability to construct compound sentences. There are problems with word order, e.g. 'I was ill very very'. Sentence boundaries are not consistently marked.	2	3
Word focus		<b>Not assessed in this task</b>	

## Entry 2 Script D Task 2

(About 20 minutes)

You couldn't go to class yesterday.

Write an email to your teacher, Mr Jones. In your email:

- apologise for not going to the class
- say why you couldn't go to the class
- ask Mr Jones what he did in the class.

Write about 50 words.

<b>To....</b>	mjones@swmc.ac.uk
<b>Subject:</b>	missed class

Dear Mr Jones,

I'm extremely sorry, because I was absent yesterday. My mother was very sick yesterday so my dad bring her to the hospital, and you know, I have two little sister and brother, so I had to look afther them.

I'm realy very sorry, I know it's not an available reasen to missed the class.

Next time, I will come to the class. Couilde you please tell me about the lesson, you have done in class when I wasn't there. I would not to be late in my lesson.

Thank you very much, sir, and sorry again.

**Entry 2 Script D Task 2**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Candidate has covered all three points with appropriate expansion. Text is organised and coherent and register is appropriate.	3	<b>3</b>
Sentence focus	Candidate uses compound sentences with a range of conjunctions. Ambitious range of tenses and good use of adjectives.	3	<b>6</b>
Word focus		<b>Not assessed in this task</b>	

**Entry 2 Script E**  
**Task 3**

**(About 20 minutes)**

Last week your class went on a trip. Write about this trip for the college newsletter.

Write about:

- where you went
- what you saw
- what you enjoyed
- where your class is going to go on the next trip.

Write about 80 words.

Last week me and my class went to Manchester City Centre. We visited University of Manchester, Museum of Science, Museum of War and Art Gallery. The most interesting place was University of Manchester. It is a very big place, many amazing buildings and a lot of young people. In both museums, I saw a lot of interesting things, but more I like Museum of Science. At last we visited Manchester Art Gallery. It was exhibition about aliens and live on others planets. It was the funniest part of trip. In next week we going to York.

**Entry 2 Script E Task 3**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Candidate has covered the main points of the task with expansion and the intended audience would be informed. Text is coherent and well organised.	3	<b>6</b>
Sentence focus	Candidate shows ability to construct compound sentences and sentence grammar is sufficiently controlled for message to be communicated. Candidate has made effective use of common adjectives.	3	<b>6</b>
Word focus	Candidate has used a range of vocabulary appropriate to task and spelling is generally correct. Handwriting is consistently legible.	3	<b>3</b>

**Entry 2 Script F**  
**Task 3**

**(About 20 minutes)**

Last week your class went on a trip. Write about this trip for the college newsletter.

Write about:

- where you went
- what you saw
- what you enjoyed
- where your class is going to go on the next trip.

Write about 80 words.

*Last week my class went to the London. I saw every thing. I saw supermarket and shopping center. London is very big city and very beautiful city. I am gowing to shopping center. shopping center is very beautiful I bay some clothes and some books I am walking to supermarkets. I am enjoyed walking with teacher and my friends. I am gowing to next trip to Blackpool. Last week I am very happy for this trip.*

*Thank you teacher.*

**Entry 2 Script F Task 3**

Commentary		Band	Mark
Text focus	Although the candidate has covered all the points the text is repetitive which means there is limited expansion.	2	4
Sentence focus	Although there is some evidence that the candidate can use simple conjunctions, some sentences are short and staccato. Sentence boundary markers are not consistently used.	2	3
Word focus	Candidate can spell correctly most familiar common words but only uses a limited range of appropriate vocabulary which is often repetitive. Handwriting is legible.	2	2