

Exercise 5

Read the following article about setting up a storytelling night.

Write a summary about how to arrange a successful storytelling night.

Your summary should be about 100 words long (and no more than 120 words long).

You should use your own words as far as possible.

You will receive up to 6 marks for the content of your summary and up to 5 marks for the style and accuracy of your language.

Start up your own story night

I've always enjoyed hearing people tell stories. So when I heard about The Moth, I was inspired. This is an organisation in the USA which holds regular storytelling events, giving ordinary people as well as literary and cultural personalities the chance to tell a tale in front of a live audience.

I decided to start my own storytelling night, and hosted my first one about eight years ago. It is a fantastic way to meet new people and learn more about old friends. Most of all though, it is great fun, and it is easy to set up your own.

The first consideration is the venue. If you are prepared to make space in your living room, that is fine. Otherwise, the best thing to do is to rent a room in a hall or community centre, or even in a café. This last option can be very cheap, or may even be free if people buy food and drink when they are there. The next thing to do is persuade a few friends to tell stories. Anyone who loves being the centre of attention will jump at the chance, so get them involved. You might also find that your quieter friends have brilliant stories to tell too, especially when they have been inspired by a few other people. But don't just focus on who can tell stories – you need an audience as well, so invite plenty of people. Nothing draws people together like sharing stories, so these evenings become networks. People come back month after month, bringing friends who have their own stories to tell.

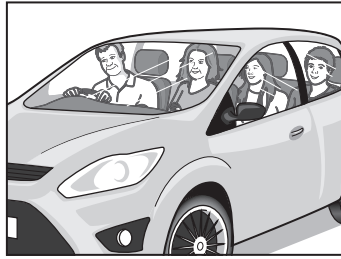
From my experience, having a theme for the night helps, but it shouldn't be too narrow or too wide. A theme gives storytellers something to work with and gives the audience a better idea of what to expect. Something too narrow like 'surprise parties' will give you a set of nearly identical stories. And if the theme is too wide, you may as well not bother with one at all. Themes that have worked well include 'lost and found', 'guilt' and 'fame'. One man told us a story about receiving fan mail for a celebrity who had the same name as him. Someone else told us about arriving late for her friend's wedding. The stories don't have to be action-packed, but it is worth pointing out to participants that their stories should be told with honesty.

To stop people from talking at length or taking over the evening, set a time limit for each story – five to ten minutes is usually enough. To decide on a suitable order, find out roughly what each story is about in advance. This will help to make the evening a success.

It is worth advising those who are new to storytelling to think carefully about their opening sentences. If they want to grab the audience's attention, they shouldn't start with 'Well, I woke up one morning and my friend called me and asked if I would like to go for a walk up the mountain.' Instead, it is better to begin with 'The mountain suddenly appeared from behind the cloud ...', and then the audience will want to find out more. Just as important is not to let people use a script. Reading a story aloud that has been written down sounds just like someone reading aloud – it's not storytelling. Storytellers connect best with their audience when there isn't a piece of paper between them.

Go ahead and arrange a storytelling night wherever you are. You won't be disappointed!

There are several tips to follow to conduct an effective storytelling night. First, consider the location of the gathering and choose a theme for the night that is neither too specific nor too general. Also, invite a sizeable audience and convince some friends to share stories. Not only should the storytellers be advised to begin with introductory sentences that hook the audience, but they should also be prohibited from utilizing a script and informed about the necessity of presenting their stories authentically. Finally, determine an appropriate sequence for the narrative and assign a time limit of 5 to 10 minutes for each.

Exercise 6

Last month, you and your family went on a day trip to a place in the countryside.

Write an email to your friend about the trip.

In your email, you should:

- explain why you went to this place
- describe what you did on the day
- offer to take your friend there next time

The pictures above may give you some ideas, and you should try to use some ideas of your own.

Your email should be between 150 and 200 words long.

You will receive up to 10 marks for the content of your email, and up to 9 marks for the style and accuracy of your language.

Dear Mark,

How have you been? It's been a while since we last spoke. I just wanted to share this fantastic experience my family and I had recently.

As you know, my exams ended a month ago, so my father suggested we go on a one-day trip to the countryside to unwind. All we saw was a perfect opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and recharge our batteries. Plus, we'd spend some quality time as a family and strengthen our bond.

The day was absolutely incredible! We hit the road by dawn and had a leisurely drive through the picturesque countryside, drinking in the splendid views of rolling hills, lush green fields, and quaint little villages. Upon arrival, we went for a hike along a woodland trail and spotted some adorable wild rabbits and even a couple of deer! We also stumbled upon a picnic spot by a babbling brook, where we relished some scrumptious food as we exchanged chatter.

And that brings me to my next point — why don't you come with us next time? I know you're a nature lover and wouldn't want to miss this opportunity to feast your eyes on the stunning views there and spend some time together.

Let me know if you're game. Must dash now.

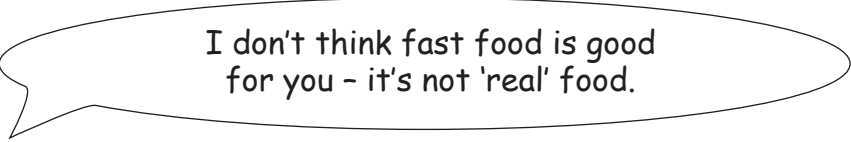
Love,

[your name]

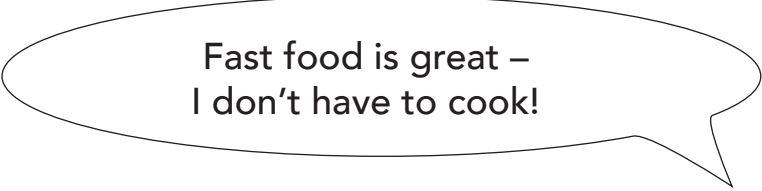
Exercise 7

In your English class, you have had a discussion about fast food.

Here are two comments from your friends:



I don't think fast food is good
for you - it's not 'real' food.



Fast food is great –
I don't have to cook!

Write an article for your teacher, giving your views.

The comments above may give you some ideas, and you should try to use some ideas of your own.

Your article should be between 150 and 200 words long.

You will receive up to 10 marks for the content of your article, and up to 9 marks for the style and accuracy of your language.

Nowadays, fast food has become ubiquitous in our daily lives. But are the advantages of fast food worth the potential risks? Many people believe so; others couldn't argue more. And the conflict is still standing.

On the one hand, fast food is quite appealing for being convenient. In today's fast-paced society, people often find themselves pressed for time, and fast food provides a quick and reliable solution, with establishments on nearly every corner and street in the city. Moreover, fast food is relatively inexpensive compared to homemade meals and dine-in restaurants. Therefore, it offers significant financial savings for large families, students, and anyone on a budget.

On the other hand, fast food has detrimental consequences in the long run because of its poor nutritional value and unhealthy ingredients. Recent studies have shown that regularly consuming fast food increases the risk of obesity, cardiovascular diseases, and diabetes due to the high amount of unwanted nutrients such as salt, saturated fat, and additives. In addition, the massive amount of single-use packaging and plastic waste generated by fast food chains exacerbates the global pollution crisis.

In conclusion, it is evident that fast food is a double-edged sword; thus, I strongly believe we should strike a balance between eating fast food and incorporating other healthier options in our diet to mitigate its negative effects.