

Cambridge Grammar and Writing Skills

Teacher's Resource 4-6

Stage 4

Unit guides: Stage 4

Unit 1: Writing to communicate: book blurbs

Learner's Book unit focus

This unit continues the category of **writing to communicate**, in the form of **book blurbs**.

Progress table for Stage 4: Unit 1

Category: Writing to communicate

Writing outcome: Book blurbs

A blurb is a few paragraphs on the back of a book to help readers decide if they would like to buy/read the book.

The unit introduces fiction and non-fiction book blurbs separately as, although they have many features in common, there are some differences that need highlighting:

- A fiction blurb gives a brief summary of the plot without giving away the ending.
- A non-fiction blurb gives readers the main aspects of the topic that the book covers.

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
	• interview questions	• personal letter	• book blurbs		• business/formal letter
<p>Cambridge Global English link: Stage 4: Unit 1: Family circles – sports and leisure Cambridge Primary English link: Stage 4: Unit 4: Just imagine</p>					

Resource list

- A variety of fiction and non-fiction books with short blurbs on the back.
- The book blurbs in this unit are for the following books:
 - *Leila's Game* by Spike Breakwell and Colin Millar (ISBN: 978-1-108-40820-2)
 - *Diving Under the Waves* by Andy Belcher (ISBN: 978-1-108-41164-6)

Unit teaching plan: fiction book blurbs

Warm up

- Explain to learners that they are going to read a book blurb for a book called *Leila's Game*.
- Have a variety of fiction books with short blurbs on the back covers to show them.
- Guide a discussion with learners as to:
 - *Why do books have blurbs?* [To let readers know what the book is about.]
 - *Who reads book blurbs?* [People who want to read/buy the book.]

- *Why is the blurb on the back cover and not inside the book?* [Lots of people opening the book to find out what it is about may damage it.]

Let's read

The blurb is an example for a story called *Leila's Game*.

- The blurb can be read:
 - by you to the class
 - by learners to the class
 - individually in silence.

- Elicit/explain the meaning of any unfamiliar vocabulary, for example:
 - basketball*: ball game with two teams of five players. Each team scores points by throwing a ball through a net
 - plan*: to think carefully about what you need to do to achieve something.
- You are in the best position to determine the vocabulary that will be unfamiliar to the learners.

Plenary

Based on the book blurb for *Leila's Game*, would learners like to read or *not* like to read the story? Encourage them to give their reasons.

Let's talk

Activity A: This section is to ensure learners have understood what they have read. It should be done orally.

Answers

- A**
- Leila loves basketball.
 - Leila cannot play basketball because she is in a wheelchair.
 - Miss Garcia is the basketball coach.
 - Every Saturday, Leila plays board games with her grandfather.
 - Leila's grandfather says he has a plan as to how he will play every game.
 - Leila tells Miss Garcia and the team about her idea.

Activity B: This section gives learners the opportunity to examine the content of the book blurb. It should be done orally.

Answers

- B**
- Books have blurbs to let readers know what the book is about.
 - The blurb for *Leila's Game* tells you about:
 - the main character – Leila/she is in a wheelchair/she loves basketball
 - the team – coached by Miss Garcia/always loses
 - Leila's discussion with her grandfather
 - Leila's plan.
 - The blurb does not tell you the ending/how Leila's plan turns out.

4 Example answer:

The blurb asks questions to make readers want to know what happens, so they will read the book to find out.

Activity C: This section is to draw learners' attention to features of book blurbs. It should be done orally.

Answers

- C**
- 1 present tense
 - 2 a short and simple
 - 3 b very short

Let's learn

This section provides learners with the 'tools' they need. It covers the main features of grammar, style and layout appropriate to the writing outcome. It:

- revises points learners have met earlier in the course
- introduces new work
- gives learners the opportunity to become familiar with particular features of the required writing in this unit, i.e. book blurbs
- gives learners the opportunity to practise what they have learned in focused activities before incorporating it into their free writing.

Sentences

Learners will be familiar with the term *sentence* from earlier in the course.

- Read the information box with the learners.
- Ask learners to pick out other short sentences from the blurb, for example:
 - She sits at the side.*
 - This gives Leila an idea.*
- When young learners are recounting details of a story, they tend to write very long sentences with 'and then' over and over again. Explain to learners that short sentences will be more accessible to the casual browser; reassure them that you are not trying to stifle their creativity.

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework.

Answers

- A**
- Sentence 1: The basketball team always loses.
 Sentence 2: They have no plan.
 Sentence 3: Leila has an idea.

Present tenses

Learners will be familiar with the term *present tense* from earlier in the course.

- Read the information box with the learners.
- Learners should be familiar with the *present simple* and *present progressive* tenses, for example, *I watch/I am watching*.
- Use examples of other regular verbs from the blurb for learners to put into different tenses, for example:

to play *she plays/she is playing/she played/
she was playing/she will play*

- Choose an irregular verb and repeat, for example:
to think *she thinks/she is thinking/she
thought/she was thinking/she
will think*

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework. For those learners needing more support, use resource sheet 1.

Answers

- A**
- 1 Leila talks/is talking to her grandfather.
 - 2 He gives/is giving her an idea.
 - 3 She tells/is telling Miss Garcia about her plan.

Questions

Learners will be familiar with the term *question* from earlier in the course.

- Read the information box with the learners.
- Write a large *question mark* on the board.
- Ask learners to name it, and explain when it should be used.
- Ask learners to find an example of a question in the extract.

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework.

Answers

- A**
- 1 Does Leila like watching basketball?
 - 2 Is Miss Garcia the team coach?
 - 3 Has Leila got a plan?

Activity B: The questions can be tackled as a class discussion before writing.

Answers

- B**
- 1 *Example answer:*
Leila's Game is about a girl in a wheelchair who loves basketball.
 - 2 Leila, Miss Garcia, Leila's grandfather

3 Example answer:

If the story ending is revealed in the book blurb, there will be no need to read the story.

4 Either one of:

- Will Leila's plan work?
- Will the team win their next game?

Let's practise

This section allows you to model the required writing outcome with input from the learners.

Before writing

- Ask the learners to summarise the story *Leila's Game*, as far as they know it, from the blurb.
- What part of the story don't they know?
- Read the story *The Mouse and the Lion* with the learners.

Shared writing activity

A Planning

- Explain that together you are going to write a blurb for a story called *The Mouse and the Lion*.
- Discuss each question in turn with the learners, writing the majority decisions on the board.
- For those learners needing more support, use resource sheet 2.

B Writing

- The learners can then use the notes/sentences on the board to write their own book blurb under your supervision.
- When the blurb is complete, ask the learners to read through the Writer's Toolbox, correcting any mistakes or omissions in their work.

Plenary

Learners can make neat copies of their blurbs with illustrations for display.

Let's write

The learners are asked to choose a story they like and know well. It would be helpful if they chose from a class library so the books are on hand as a reminder.

- The learners are given:
 - prompts to help them focus on the writing features
 - a Writer's Toolbox to help them edit/proofread their work.

Before writing

- Read through the independent writing activity with the learners.
- Allow time for learners to ask questions so they fully understand what is required.

Independent writing activity

- This section is designed for learners to work independently, putting into practice what they have learned in the unit.
- The planning and writing should be done independently, either in class or for homework.
- If, however, you feel further support is needed, encourage learners to share their work in progress with you so that, through discussion, they can improve their drafts.
- Remind learners to use the Writer's Toolbox to correct mistakes and improve their work.

Marking criteria

Technical aspects – 10 marks
Look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of present tenses • questions/question marks • mainly short sentences.
Content – 10 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the blurb a <i>short</i> summary? • Has the writer given an idea of what the story is about? • Are the main characters mentioned? • Has the writer omitted the ending?
Award a higher mark if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the writer has written an interesting blurb that would make a reader want to read the book.

Unit teaching plan: non-fiction book blurbs

Warm up

- Explain to the learners that they are now going to read a book blurb for a non-fiction book called *Let's Go Diving*.
- Recap: *What do you understand by the term non-fiction?* [fact, not imagined]
- Have a variety of non-fiction books with short blurbs on the back covers to show learners.
- Recap: *Why do books have blurbs?* [To let readers know what the book is about.]

Let's read

This blurb is an example for a non-fiction book called *Let's Go Diving*.

- The blurb can be read:
 - by you to the class
 - by learners to the class
 - individually in silence.
- Elicit/explain the meaning of any unfamiliar vocabulary, for example:
 - popular*: liked by a lot of people
 - marine life*: creatures that live in the sea
 - extreme*: very daring.
- You are in the best position to determine the vocabulary that will be unfamiliar to the learners.

Plenary

- Based on the book blurb for *Let's Go Diving*, would learners like to read or *not* like to read the book?
- Encourage them to give their reasons.

Let's talk

Activity A: This section is to ensure learners have understood what they have read. It should be done orally.

Answers

- A**
- 1 The book is about diving.
 - 2 You can see coral reefs, marine life and even shipwrecks.
 - 3 Divers used heavy diving suits in the past.
 - 4 Divers use scuba tanks today.
 - 5 Either *Exploring Shipwrecks* or *Extreme Diving*
 - 6 The author includes pictures and a glossary.

Activity B: This section gives learners the opportunity to examine the content of the book blurb. It should be done orally.

Answers

- B**
- 1 The blurb begins with the question 'Have you ever wondered what it would be like to dive under the sea?'
 - 2 *Example answer:*
The question will grab readers' attention and make them wonder what it would be like to dive under the sea.

- 3** Answers should include some/all of the following:
- what you can see when you dive
 - different ways of diving
 - equipment
 - history of diving
 - exciting and dangerous aspects of diving.

4 and 5 Learner's own answers

Activity C: This section is to draw learners' attention to features of book blurbs. It should be done orally.

Answers

- C 1** present tense
2 a short and simple
3 b very short

Let's learn

This section provides learners with the 'tools' they need. It covers the main features of grammar, style and layout appropriate to the writing outcome. It:

- revises points learners have met earlier in the course
- introduces new work
- gives learners the opportunity to become familiar with particular features of the required writing in this unit, i.e. book blurbs
- gives learners the opportunity to practise what they have learned in focused activities before incorporating it into their free writing.

Sentences

Learners will be familiar with the term *sentence* from earlier in the course.

- Read the information box with the learners.
- Ask learners to pick out other short sentences from the blurb, for example:
 Diving is a very popular sport.
 He describes the equipment you need.

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework.

Answers

- A** *Example answers:*
- Then this is the book for you!
 - Diving is a very popular sport.
 - He describes the equipment you need.
 - The book includes colourful, interesting pictures.

Present tenses

Learners will be familiar with the term *present tense* from earlier in the course.

- Read the information box with the learners.
- Use examples of other regular verbs from the blurb for learners to put into different tenses, for example:

to wonder *he wonders/he is wondering/he wondered/he was wondering/he will wonder*

- Choose an irregular verb and repeat, for example:

to see *she sees/she is seeing/she saw/she was seeing/she will see*

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework.

Answers

- A** Any three from: is, explains, describes, charts, use, show, includes, has

Questions

Learners will be familiar with the term *question* from earlier in the course.

- Read the information box with the learners.
- Write a large question mark on the board.
- Ask learners to name it and explain when it should be used.

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework.

Answers

- A** Have you ever wondered what it would be like to dive under the sea?

Non-fiction book blurbs

While fiction and non-fiction book blurbs share many common features, they also differ. Fiction blurbs must never give away the ending of the story while non-fiction blurbs must give an idea about the range of information the book gives on the topic.

The questions can be tackled as a class discussion before writing.

Activity A: Learners should work individually. This can be done in class or as homework.

Answers

- A 1** shipwrecks
2 heavy diving suits
3 scuba tanks
4 *Exploring Shipwrecks/Extreme Diving*

Let's practise

This section allows you to model the required writing outcome with input from the learners – a book blurb.

Before writing

- Read the contents page from *Everything You Need to Know About Cricket* with learners.
- What do learners know about cricket? Elicit / explain:
 - 1 Cricketers wear long trousers to play. In Test matches they all wear white but in other forms of the game they have a coloured strip.
 - 2 Batsmen wear a helmet for protection.
 - 3 Test matches can last up to 5 days. Any number of balls can be bowled.
 - 4 One-day games last one day. Each side can bowl 300 balls.
 - 5 Twenty20 games last about 4 hours. Each side can bowl 180 balls.
 - 6 Sarfraz Ahmed is the Pakistani cricket captain (2018). He is a batsman.
 - 7 Sachin Tendulka is a former captain of the Indian cricket team and one of the greatest batsmen in the world.
 - 8 Alstair Cook is a former captain of the English cricket team.
- Lead a discussion about what learners think might be included in each chapter. Write notes from their suggestions on the board.

Shared writing activity

A Planning

- Explain that together you are going to write a blurb for the non-fiction book *Everything You Need to Know About Cricket*.
- Discuss each question in turn with learners, writing the majority decisions on the board. For example, for planning question A1:

Do you find cricket confusing?

Do you love to watch/play cricket?

B Writing

- The learners can then use the notes/sentences on the board to write their own book blurb.
- When the blurb is complete, ask the learners to read through the Writer's Toolbox, correcting any mistakes or omissions in their work.

Plenary

Learners can make neat copies of their blurbs with illustrations for display.

Let's write

The learners are asked to choose a non-fiction book they found interesting. It would be helpful if they chose from a class library so the books are on hand as a reminder.

- The learners are given:
 - prompts to help them focus on the writing features
 - a Writer's Toolbox to help them edit/proofread their work.

Before writing

- Read through the independent writing activity with the learners.
- Allow time for learners to ask questions so they fully understand what is required.

Independent writing activity

- This section is designed for learners to work independently, putting into practice what they have learned in the unit.
- The planning and writing should be done independently, either in class or for homework.
- If, however, you feel further support is needed, encourage learners to share their work in progress with you so that, through discussion, they can improve their drafts.
- Remind learners to use the Writer's Toolbox to correct mistakes and improve their work.

Marking criteria

Technical aspects – 10 marks
Look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of present tenses • use of questions/question marks • mainly short sentences.
Content – 10 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the blurb begin with a question to grab the readers' attention? • Is the blurb a short summary? • Has the writer given details of the sort of information the book includes? • Are particularly interesting chapters mentioned?
Award a higher mark if:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the writer has written an interesting blurb that would make a reader want to read the book.

Resource sheets

The resource sheets for Unit 1 provide practice and reinforcement for:

- 1 present tense verbs
- 2 creating a book blurb.

Resource sheet 1: Book blurbs: present tense verbs

Resource sheet 1 covers:

- recognising and underlining present tense verbs in sentences
- forming the present simple and present progressive from infinitives
- using present simple and present progressive verbs in sentences of their own.

Answers

- A**
- 1 Leila loves basketball.
 - 2 The team is losing!
 - 3 Grandfather plays board games.
 - 4 She is turning the pages.
 - 5 I understand the game.
- B**
- | | | | |
|---|----------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 | to sit | she <u>sits</u> | she <u>is sitting</u> |
| 3 | to cheer | they <u>cheer</u> | they <u>are cheering</u> |
| 4 | to tell | you <u>tell</u> | you <u>are telling</u> |
| 5 | to think | we <u>think</u> | we <u>are thinking</u> |
- C** *Learner's own answers*

Resource sheet 2: Book blurbs: creating a book blurb

Resource sheet 2 covers:

- writing in short sentences
- adding a relevant question.

Answers

A *Example answer:*

There was once a strong lion who caught a tiny mouse. Lion was going to eat her. Mouse said that if Lion let her go she might be able to help Lion someday. Lion thought this was funny. He let Mouse go. Lion was caught by hunters who tied her to a tree. Mouse heard Lion roar. She went to see what was the matter. Mouse saw Lion was in trouble.

B *Example answers:*

- Does Mouse help Lion?
- Does Mouse free Lion?
- Do the hunters return?

Assessment

The assessment sheet for this unit, 'Book blurbs: my favourite story', is on page 110 of Learner's Book 4. Given that it is impossible to suggest a specific story that all learners will have read, they are free to choose their own story. Ensure that they do not choose the same story for which they wrote a book blurb in Unit 1.

- Learners are given:
 - space to write the title of the story
 - a Writer's Toolbox of grammar and style features to include.
- Read the scenario box with learners to ensure they have understood the writing task.
- Encourage learners to spend some time planning, making notes on what happens in the story and who the main characters are.
- Before they write their first draft, read through the Writer's Toolbox with them to remind them what they need to include in their book blurb.
- After they have produced a first draft, learners should go back to the toolbox and tick the 'tools' they have used.
- Encourage the learners to do further work on their draft to include more 'tools'.
- Learners should then produce a final copy.
- Use the marking criteria on page 33 of this Teacher's Resource.

Unit 2: Narrative writing: characters in stories

Learner's Book unit focus

This unit consolidates and extends the work done on **narrative story writing** in Stages 1 to 3, within the context of **characters in stories**.

Progress table for Stage 4: Unit 2					
Category: Narrative writing					
Writing outcome: Characters in stories					
Characters have to be more than just a name. Authors develop characters in stories by describing their appearance, and revealing personality by their actions and speech.					
Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5	Stage 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> captions sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> sequencing narrative speech bubbles characters setting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> dialogue plot: beginning/middle/end story openings continuing a story 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> characters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> physical appearance/personality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> stories teaching lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> story endings
Cambridge Global English link: Stage 4: Unit 2: Stories					
Cambridge Primary English link: Stage 4: Unit 1: Storybook					

Unit teaching plan

Warm up

- Explain to the learners that they are going to read an extract from a story called *Rescue!*
- In the extract, Len – a fireman – is having a day off and working in the garden.
- Discuss the work of firefighters:
 - What do you know about a firefighter's job?
 - Do you think their job is dangerous? Why? Why not?
 - Would you like to be a firefighter? Why? Why not?

Let's read

The extract is an example of how a reader gets to know a character in terms of *physical appearance* described by the author, and *personality* through what the character says and does.

- The extract can be read:
 - by you to the class
 - by learners to the class
 - individually in silence.

- Elicit/explain the meaning of any unfamiliar vocabulary, for example:
 - overgrown*: covered with weeds and plants that have not been looked after
 - determined*: not letting anything stop him from what he wanted to do
 - politely*: with good manners.
- You are in the best position to determine the vocabulary that will be unfamiliar to the learners.

Plenary

In groups, ask the learners to discuss ways in which the story might end.

Let's talk

Activity A: This section is to ensure learners have understood what they have read. It should be done orally.

Answers

- A 1** Saturday
2 Len decides to work in his garden.

- 3 Len keeps his gardening tools in the shed.
- 4 Len takes a large rake from the shed.
- 5 Grace brings Len a cup of tea.
- 6 Len is making a pond.
- 7 Mrs Brown comes into the garden.
- 8 Saska is stuck up a tree.

Activity B: This section focuses learners' attention on what they find out about the main character through what the author tells us and what the character does and says. It should be done orally.

Answers

- B 1** Len is wearing patched jeans, an old T-shirt, muddy boots, gardening gloves and a baseball cap.
- 2** You can tell Len is a tidy person because his tools are hanging neatly on hooks or lined up on the workbench.
- 3** Len could clear the weeds and rubbish quickly because he is fit and strong.
- 4** The sentence 'Len worked steadily as he was determined to finish the hole before he went in for lunch' tells us that Len always finishes what he starts. He works hard to get the job done.
- 5 a** We know that Len likes working in the garden because he is humming happily to himself as he works.
- b** We know that Len is kind and helpful because as soon as Mrs Brown called his name he:
- put down the rake and jumped quickly out of the hole
 - asked "What's the matter?"
 - agreed to help Mrs Brown: "Of course I'll help."
 - told her not to worry: "Don't worry. I'll soon have her down."

Activity C: This section draws learners' attention to the features of stories, for example, past tense verbs, setting, characters and plot. It should be done orally.

Answers

- C 1** They are written in past tenses.
- 2** The story is set in Len's garden.

- 3 The main characters are Len, his wife Grace, and Mrs Brown.
- 4 14 paragraphs
- 5 *This is how the story progresses. Learners do not have to use these exact words as long as they get the action of the story in the correct order.*

- Paragraph 1 Len gets dressed for gardening on his day off.
- Paragraph 2 Len gets a rake from the shed and begins to clear the garden.
- Paragraph 3 Grace brings him a cup of tea and they talk about the pond.
- Paragraph 4 Len asks Grace what she is doing.
- Paragraph 5 Grace tells Len she is marking Year 4's stories.
- Paragraph 6 Len tells Grace to 'have fun'.
- Paragraph 7 Len decides it is time to dig a big hole.
- Paragraph 8 Len gets a wheelbarrow. He digs the hole. He empties the wheelbarrow behind the shed.
- Paragraph 9 Mrs Brown appears and calls to Len.
- Paragraph 10 Len wants to know what is the matter.
- Paragraph 11 Mrs Brown tells Len about Saska and asks for help.
- Paragraph 12 Len agrees to help.
- Paragraph 13 Grace comes out to see what is going on. Len goes to get his ladder.
- Paragraph 14 Grace says, "No rest for heroes!"

Let's learn

This section provides learners with the 'tools' they need. It covers the main features of grammar, style and layout appropriate to the writing outcome. It:

- revises points learners have met earlier in the course
- introduces new work