



English

Level 2

Challenge: Home Sweet Home

Solutions

Task 1

The estate agent has sent you details of two houses, as shown on the next page. Once you have read them, you realise that they are both describing the same house but that they are written in totally different styles.

Read the descriptions fully and use the blank sheet on the following page to write a combined summary of the main factual points from both.

Summary

Summary of main factual points

- Period semi-detached house built in stone
- Located close to the town centre on a busy main road
- The property comprises of:
 - entrance hall
 - lounge with walk-in bay windows
 - dining room
 - fitted kitchen
 - three bedrooms
 - one walk-in dressing room
 - two en suite bathrooms
 - one fully tiled main bathroom with sunken bath and shower
 - boarded loft space
- Fully centrally heated with combination boiler
- Sash windows throughout the property
- Wooden floorboards throughout the property
- Gardens to the rear and side



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English

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Solutions

Feedback

This is how you might have summarised the two different descriptions. You may not have used exactly the same words but you should have included all these points.

Helpful tips for summarising information

- when summarising information you should look for main ideas
- a summary should concentrate on the main points of the text and not include the minor points
- carefully read the text so that you understand the content fully
- remember to read through your summarised version to make sure you haven't missed anything or distorted the meaning
- a summary should be written in your own words not just copied
- if you are unsure of unfamiliar words or terms, either ask a reliable source or use a dictionary to look up the meanings
- when you read through the original text, highlight the main points, this makes them easier to identify when you are writing your summary



English

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Solutions

Task 2

The first description is written in a more persuasive style but contains a lot of personal opinions. Read the text again and then highlight the words and phrases you think are opinions rather than facts.

Description 1

A **beautiful** period stone semi-detached house located near to the town centre. The entrance comprises an **exquisite** leaded light feature door with matching stain glazed windows and **gorgeous** exposed polished floorboards.

The ground floor comprises:

- a **delightfully airy** lounge with walk-in front bay windows. **Your eye is naturally drawn** to the carved feature fireplace with its **striking** tiled interior
- an **impressive** dining room with matching floor boards and French doors leading to the rear south facing, **picturesque** garden
- an **extraordinary well presented** kitchen, featuring an integrated fan assisted oven incorporating a four ringed hob and chrome hood

The first floor landing comprises three **spacious** bedrooms, two with en suite bathrooms, and one with a **well placed** walk-in dressing room. This floor also includes a fully tiled bathroom with a **large** shower and sunken bath.

To complete the picture, there is a concealed walled garden to the side of the property. It includes a shaped lawned garden with **colourful** flower beds, shrubs and a maturing tree.

All in all, an offer not to be missed.



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Solutions

Feedback

- Identifying the difference between fact and opinion will help you to make decisions and judge situations.
- An opinion is a personal view or belief and can show the writer's bias. A fact is something that can be proved and backed up with evidence. For example:
 - **Fact:** the property has a 'lounge with walk-in front bay windows'.
 - **Opinion:** the lounge is 'delightfully airy'.
- Writers sometimes mix fact and opinion, which often makes it difficult to identify if the information is verifiable or if it is just the writer's point of view.
- One way to tell if information is fact or opinion is to look at the language the writer uses. In this example, the writer uses descriptive words to convey opinion; beautiful, exquisite, impressive. This type of language is often used in advertising or sales to create a specific picture in the reader's mind to make the thing being sold look more attractive.
- Look back at the two descriptions in Task 1. Description 1 uses a lots opinions and description 2 is written in a factual way.

Remember

When text is explicit, the meaning is clear and fully explained, and there should be no doubt or confusion. Implicit text is less clear, and ideas are suggested by more subtle use of language. Implicit text may lead the reader to a conclusion that is not fully expressed in the text.



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Task 3

You're not particularly interested in the first house the estate agent has sent you so you ask for details of more properties. They send you the details of four more houses.

Read through the descriptions and tick the boxes next to the two houses that sound the most attractive. When you have finished, use the blank space below to write a short explanation of why you chose those particular properties.



Location: Nottinghamshire

Price: £205,000

Ref: AS/98543

Luxurious four bedroom detached property situated in the extremely picturesque Nottinghamshire countryside.

The property comprises an immaculately presented landscaped garden, a spacious south facing sun terrace and many unique period features.

The interior has an open-plan layout with three well appointed bedrooms all with en suite bathrooms. The property also includes security gates, a private drive and ample parking.

A property guaranteed to please.





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Solutions



Location: Nottinghamshire

Price: £196,500

Ref: AS/009456

A well-established stunning three bedroomed terraced house with accommodation spread over three floors. Located in a very desirable part of town.

The property includes ornate original features, strikingly beautiful tiled flooring and a richly colourful garden that can be enjoyed all year round.

Situated just a short distance from extensive amenities, including an excellent choice of shops, fashionable bars and restaurants.

A magnificent find, certain to please those with more discerning tastes



Feedback

Which properties did you choose? As the choice is based on your own opinion, there isn't a right or wrong answer but was it the two shown above? If it was, it was probably because of the persuasive language used, for example: 'stunning', 'luxurious', 'desirable' and 'picturesque'. All these words are used to create a specific picture in the reader's mind.

Persuasive techniques

- use adverbs instead of verbs to stress the meaning, for example, very and extremely
- use words that invoke feelings, for example, certain and guaranteed
- use short sentences to make a point
- put the main impact at the end of the text to leave the reader wanting more. For example, 'a magnificent find' and 'a property guaranteed to please'

The other two descriptions used words like 'modest', 'cosy', 'compact' and 'well maintained' to disguise any bad points. In this type of text the meaning is implied, so the reader may conclude that things are less than perfect but it is not actually stated in the text.