

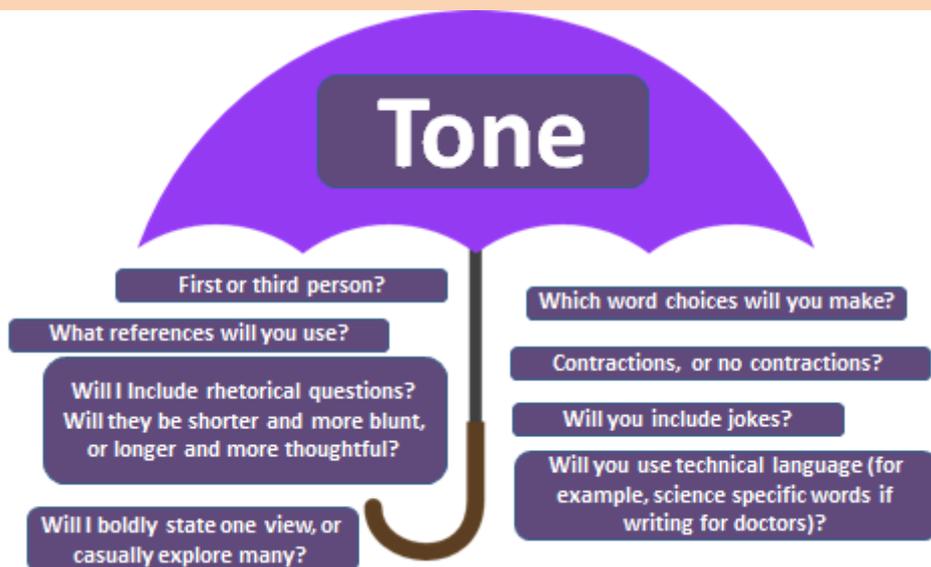
# Transactional Writing Skills: Language Paper 2

## #1: Tone

The 'tone' of your writing is the way your written voice sounds to the person reading it. This person is likely to be an educated adult, such as a parent, head teacher, editor, MP or perhaps someone your age.

You need to carefully choose and put across a particular tone of voice if you want your reader to trust in your writing. This could be friendly, helpful, serious, educated, reliable, humorous or even sarcastic, but you need to choose wisely.

Students often create an accidentally aggressive tone, which is likely to make your reader less willing to see your point of view, so that is one tone to try and avoid.



### Activity One

These short extracts are all taken from pieces of non-fiction writing. For each, decide on the tone of voice created and pick out two features of the sentence that creates the tone you've chosen.

#### Some tone words to help:

Angered	Concerned	Friendly	Doubtful/Dubious	Hopeful
Enthusiastic	Sarcastic	Humorous	Supportive	Aggressive
Thoughtful	Academic	Alarmed	Encouraging	Serious

1. Am I the only one who's terrified about the warm weather? The UK's unseasonable weather, dubbed 'glorious' by a complacent press, feels like a sign that something is horribly, horribly wrong.

**Tone:**

**Ways Tone is Created:**

a.

b.

2. Seven fire crews were tackling a huge blaze at Saddleworth Moor near Manchester last night. It started at 7.30pm and quickly spread to cover 247 acres, forcing the closure of the A62. Firefighters also battled a blaze in Ashdown Forest, East Sussex, yesterday as unprecedented February weather saw fires break out around the country

**Tone:**

**Ways Tone is Created:**

a.

b.

3. Ahhh, come here, my girl, let me give you a hug. And an ibuprofen. Science shows pain relievers work on emotional as well as physical pain. A glass of Moët is also effective, of course. There are only about 500 years of research proving that when love arrives, we *expect* champagne. When love goes, we *need* it.

**Tone:**

**Ways Tone is Created:**

a.

b.

4. **Hi there! We've been busy...** We have re-imagined, reconfigured and transformed the gym floor at Nuffield Health Guildford, investing in the latest state-of-the-art Technogym equipment to help you focus on your goals. Change the way you train forever and discover a gym built around you. Join us today and you'll get our best joiner offer.

**Tone:**

**Ways Tone is Created:**

a.

b.

**Activity Two** – for each tone, tick or cross whether you would use the features or words listed

	First person	Contractions like 'don't' or 'wont'	Jokes	References to a celebrity or new pop song	References to famous works of literature	Opinions phrased as facts	Quotations from others	The word 'hideously'	The words 'naturally' or 'of course'	Inclusive terms like 'we' or 'us'
Angry										
Educated										
Balanced										
Distant and serious										
Sarcastic										
Friendly										
Supportive										
Concerned										
Light-hearted										

**Activity Three** – sounding credible

Your credibility is your ability to sound convincing or make your reader believe and trust in you.

Use the table to make a list of things you think might improve or reduce your credibility.

A writer might appear more credible if they...	A writer might appear to be less credible if they...

**Activity 4:** Read this excerpt from an open letter to Theresa May. It was written by an individual on their self-published blog.

1. How would you describe the general tone of voice they've created?
2. Highlight any points at which you feel their credibility has been reduced and annotate with why.

Dear Theresa,

One of the only arguments I've actually heard anyone actually make in favour of your last-minute shambles of a Brexit proposal is that we need to forget that you are a cold-hearted, ruthless, and self-serving Tory and back your Brexit proposal because it wouldn't be as economically damaging as a "no deal" flounce out of the EU.

This argument has a kernel of truth because the economic chaos of a "no deal" meltdown would undoubtedly be worse than the illogical and almost universally unpopular mess you and your Tory mates have cobbled together.

And we all know that under Tory rule it would be the poor and vulnerable who would be forced to suffer the costs of a "no deal" meltdown (while your mates Rees-Mogg, Redwood and mega-rich speculator class who bankroll your party would actually cash in on the crisis they created by speculating against Britain).

Just look at the way you lot callously loaded the burden of austerity dogma onto poor and ordinary people as you simultaneously lavished tax cuts and handouts on your mega-rich mates (you know the ones who bankroll your party).

But then there are four gaping flaws this argument that '*we should all pull together and back your rubbish deal because "no deal" would be worse*'.

**Activity Five: Writing in Different Tones**

Imagine you were going to write a letter to your parent or guardian suggesting they need to change their parenting style – either to become stricter or less strict.

1. What tone of voice would you need to use if speaking to your parent or guardian?
  
2. What kind of tone might a parent/guardian respond poorly to?
  
3. Circle any features you are going to use to create the perfect tone, and cross out any you would avoid. Yours might be different to other students' views as you do not have the same parent/guardian!

First person	Contractions like 'don't' or 'won't'	Jokes	References to a celebrity or new pop song	References to famous works of literature	Opinions phrased as facts	Quotations from others	Words like 'hideously' or 'ridiculously'	The words 'naturally' or 'of course'	Inclusive terms like 'we' or 'us'
Third Person	Anecdotes	Facts/ Stats	Thoughtful, well-chosen rhetorical questions	References to well-known figures like politicians	Attempts to see matters from their perspective	Bullet points or listing	Suggestions of solutions/ alternatives	References to recent news events	Repetition

4. Write the opening paragraph of your letter trying to use the tone, and some of the features, you suggested.

## #2: Friendly or Formal?

One of the key choices you have to make when establishing a tone is whether to sound friendly and conversational, or formal. This will depend on your audience, the type of text and what you're trying to achieve.

Friendly = pleasant, kind, relaxed

Formal = serious, clear and correct

### Activity One - Contractions

Contractions are a feature of a friendly voice, not a formal voice.

Turn these contractions into their full, formal forms.

Contractions	Formal
Don't	
Won't	
Can't	
Shouldn't	
Could've	
Might've	
That'll	

**Challenge: What other friendly contractions can you think of?**

## Activity Two – Punctuation

You can use some forms of punctuation to help change your tone of voice.

Brackets, question marks, semi-colons, dashes and exclamation marks all form part of the voice that comes across in your writing.

Complete the table to remind yourself of the purposes of each of these types of punctuation

<b><i>Punctuation Type</i></b>	<b><i>Uses</i></b>	<b><i>Example</i></b>	<b><i>More friendly, formal or both?</i></b>
<b>Brackets</b> ( )	Add additional information that isn't essential to the main sentence – perhaps examples or an opinion	I had never considered moving home (my family lived nearby and I could walk to all my friends) until it was time to apply for university.	
<b>Question Mark</b> ?	Used to indicate the end of a question (usually rhetorical in transactional writing)	How would you respond to the criticism that there weren't enough women in your writing?	
<b>Semi-Colon</b> ;	Used to mark a pause longer than a comma but shorter than a full stop. They link together two sentences that connect in some way.	The sky darkened; a storm was brewing.	
<b>Em Dash/Long Dash</b> —	To create a long break or dramatic pause in a sentence	One thing's for sure – he is not ready to face the consequences.	
<b>Exclamation Mark</b> !	Exclamation marks show shouting or excitement in writing.	What on earth!	

### Activity Three – Friendly Punctuation

You're more likely to include more rhetorical questions, exclamations and dashes in friendly writing because it helps you show your opinion. Brackets are often friendly too, if you're filling them with jokes, comments or opinions of your own.

Imagine you're writing an email to a friend. Try to sound friendly in each sentence.

1. Who are you going to write to?	
2. Ask a friendly question using a <b>question mark</b>	
3. Ask your friend for a favour, including <b>brackets</b>	
4. Explain you know it's a big thing to ask for, using a <b>dash</b>	
5. Give an opinion of your own, using an <b>exclamation mark</b>	

#### Example:

Hi Joe,

How's it going? I have a bit of a favour to ask you (I know, I know) and I'm hoping you'll give me a hand. I need you to help me write a resignation letter to my boss – the raging lunatic. After all, we both know he's not going to take it well!

Hope you can help!

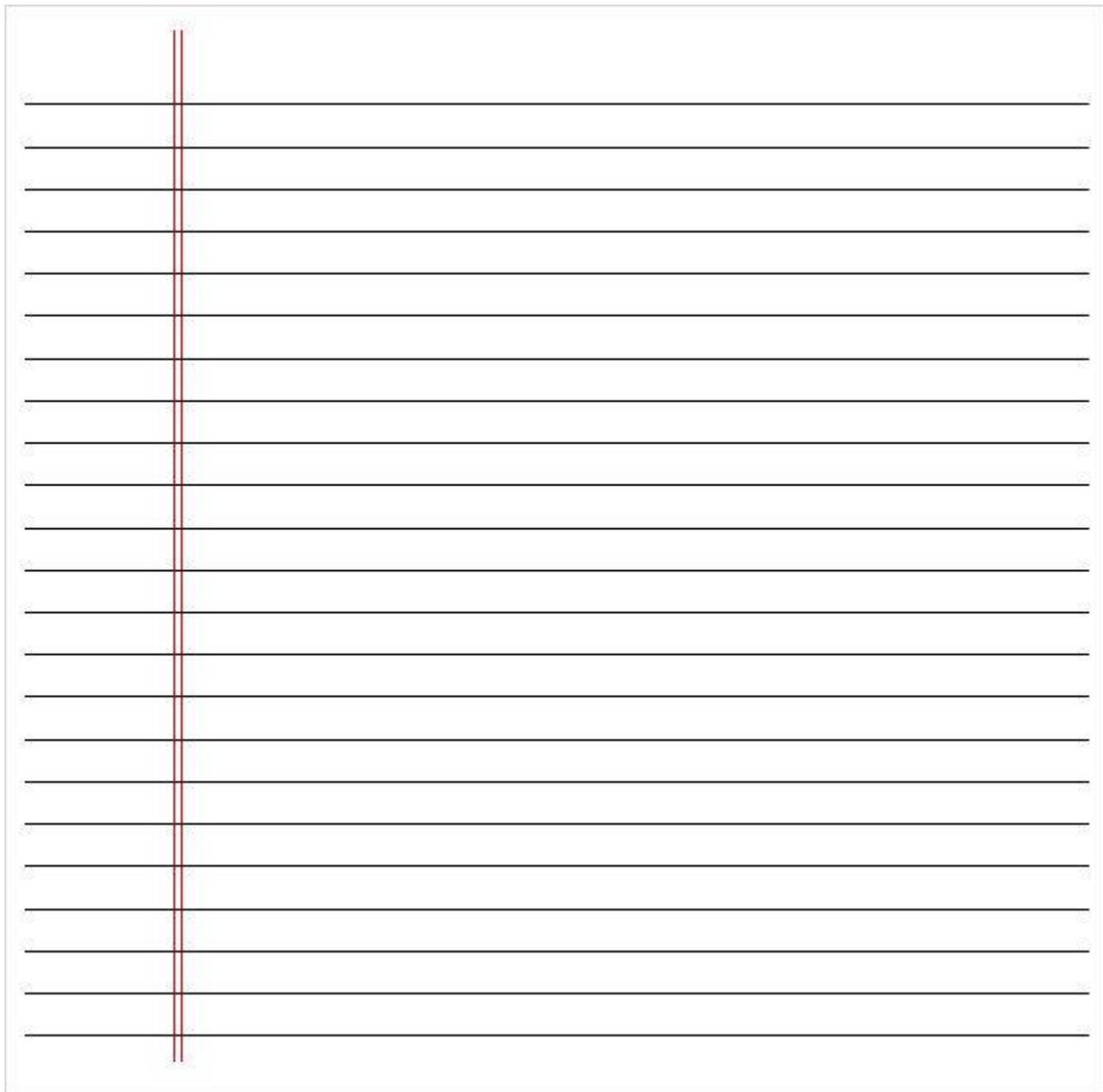
Jeff

**Activity Four – Making Yourself More Formal**

When being formal you need to take away some of the punctuation and personal expression you would use in a more friendly piece of writing.

Look back at the example. Imagine you're Jeff and Joe is not your friend, but the head of a recruitment agency – how would you need to change this email to make it more formal? Annotate the example.

**Rewrite your email here:**

A large rectangular area with horizontal lines for writing. A vertical red line is positioned on the left side, approximately one-fifth of the way across the width. The area is intended for the student to rewrite the email to be more formal.

**Activity Five – Should I use first person or third person?**

First person can often be less formal and more friendly, but that is not always the case. You need to use a person appropriate to the context of what you're writing.

Read each text and decide:

- a) first or third person?
- b) friendly or formal?
- c) what tone of voice you'll try to create

Task	First or Third Person?	Friendly or Formal?	Tone of Voice?
Write a speech to give in the Houses of Commons advising them about the biggest problems facing young people today.			
Write a newspaper article for a national newspaper giving your view on the cost of living.			
Write a newspaper for a local newspaper encouraging people to spend their money with local businesses rather than chains.			
Write a report for your MP that explores the mental health support available for young people.			
Write a review of a local restaurant for a food website giving your view on your experience there.			
Write an advice column for young people about how to deal with exam preparation and exam stress.			
Write the words of an advice leaflet for local parents who are trying to make their family healthier.			

## #3: Adding Convincing Details

Using details increases your **credibility** because it suggests you are widely researched or are an expert in the subject you are talking about.

If your main concern is the exam, it is worth noting that the examiners actively look for and tick every detail you include – so it will improve your mark.

**Details = the small and specific features or qualities of something.**

In writing this might include names of places, prices, recommendations, references to celebrities/literature/culture, using the right words for the subject you're talking about, or including quotes/views from others.

**Activity 1** – Look at this screenshot from 'About Guildford – Winter 2018.' Skim-read the article and highlight every single detail the writer has included to improve their credibility.

### Transforming Guildford's town centre and future continues

Guildford is one of the most vibrant places outside London, featuring regularly in the top five in various economic league tables particularly around innovation, entrepreneurship, access to investment and the number of start-up businesses.

Our town has a thriving day and night time economy and we're currently bucking the trend of retail vacancy rates with a lower 7.2% against a national average of 9.2%.

#### We are now starting work to review and update our Town Centre Regeneration Strategy.

This long-term, flexible approach continues to evolve and making our ambitious vision a reality will take time and appropriate investment.

Regular review allows us to update how we could deliver significant, integrated and meaningful improvements in public spaces, homes, transport, shopping and leisure, balanced with protecting Guildford's unique character.

Current town centre projects include:

- **North Street development** - the long stated aim to re-develop this

- **New Walnut pedestrian and cycle bridge** - replacing the existing bridge with a new, wider one will allow two-way cycle flow and provide an improved, sustainable link between the station and town centre.

- **Bedford Wharf and Mary Rd area redevelopment** - we are looking at the different potential uses for this area to provide a significantly enhanced environment.

- **Guildford West Railway Station** - this proposal will provide a vital rail link for one of our most economically active areas. Serving the Royal Surrey County Hospital, University of Surrey and the Surrey Research Park, it will also help to regenerate the Park Barn area of the town.

There will be various consultation opportunities during the next stages of this important regeneration work and

### A day in the life of...



#### FAY LAMPH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

##### WHAT DOES YOUR ROLE INVOLVE?

I spend the majority of my time carrying out food hygiene inspections in food businesses throughout the borough. I also respond to food complaints, carry out health and safety accident investigations, monitor health and safety at large public events, investigate

##### WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

It can be very hot in a kitchen particularly when we've had a hot summer and it's 30 degrees outside!

##### WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO YOU NEED FOR YOUR ROLE?

A degree in environmental health followed by professional exams and portfolio.

**Activity 2** – Look back at one of the questions we considered earlier:

Write the words of an advice leaflet for local parents who are trying to make their family healthier.

**Make a list of details you know (or could make up!) and could include in your leaflet.**

Places parents could take their children in your local area	Examples of food or drink swaps they could make	Local charities/ causes that are trying to help family health	Prices of particular health items or sports facilities in the local area	Facts or statistics about how the health of older people in our society	Facts/stats about the health of younger people in schools	Local or famous celebrities, TV programmes or books parents could use as inspiration or support

## #4: Arguments and Counter-Arguments

The arguments you make will be more credible if you:

- a) Use a variety of detail
- b) Use examples that support your ideas
- c) Give suggestions and solutions rather than just posing problems
- d) Reference relevant literature, places, cultural events or key figures in the area you're talking about
- e) Pre-empt counter-arguments
- f) Show understanding of views rather than your own – this makes you seem more rational

### Activity 1:

Look at these two examples of an argument written in response to the task:

Write the words of a speech to give to your teachers about ways the school behaviour system should be changed.

**For what reasons is Example Two more credible?**

#### Example One:

I believe that we should change the 1 to 5 system we have at school. How would you feel if you were kept here against your will for so long after the end of the day? I think you probably wouldn't like it. It isn't fair that hardworking young people like us are punished so severely for just having an "off" day or doing one little thing that's bad when other people have done much worse. I think the teachers haven't considered our feelings or stress in this and it's not good for our mental health so we should make it shorter.

#### Example Two:

The 1 to 5 system we use currently in school is not fulfilling the mental health or behavioural needs of our most complex students. Think of a student you tutor or teach who has had a number of behavioural struggles this academic year. Do you feel that the use of the 1 to 5 system has improved the behaviour of that student? Or is it in fact the hard work of the teachers and staff building relationships with that student that has really made a difference? We have all seen the inspiring practice occurring in places like Educating Essex or Educating Yorkshire every day in England, but the reason they are so inspiring is because they use their relationships with students to help solve their issues and make their mental health better, which is the main reason behaviour improves. I am aware that some teaching staff might be concerned that without a sanction, students will behave poorly in lesson, but I am not proposing a removal of the system all together. What I am proposing is that we use 1 to 5 to help students deal with the issues behind their behaviour, employing psychological, mindfulness or behaviour experts to work with these young people and solve their problems from the core outwards – rather than simply leaving them to sit in silence.

## Activity Two – What references could I use to support my arguments?

Fill in the table to show yourself the variety of different references you know and could use to illustrate an argument. Sometimes these can be used to replace an anecdote, and references are often useful for helping an audience understand an idea they may not be familiar with.

<b>Books I have read</b>	
<b>Places I have visited</b>	
<b>Famous figures I follow/know about</b>	
<b>Films or music I love/know well</b>	
<b>Charities I know something about</b>	
<b>Jobs I have experienced/have knowledge of</b>	
<b>Facts I know about teenage life now</b>	
<b>Hobbies I am passionate about</b>	
<b>Apps, websites or technology I use often</b>	

### Activity Three – Considering others' points of view

Often in transactional writing you have to consider many points of view. Even if you're writing persuasively you will need to keep in mind that the people you're persuading might not agree with you.

Read the statements and write down one view you have, and one view others might hold, for each.

Statement	My view...	Another person might believe...
Homeless people are our responsibility as a society.		
We need to protect children from the internet.		
It is unreasonable to say teenagers are lazy and materialistic.		
Exams do not reflect real life and so aren't a good measure of skill.		
Books are no longer needed in the world because we have better ways of accessing stories.		
True love is life-long; people don't try hard enough to stay together.		
Obesity is on the rise because people now are incredibly lazy.		
Religions are not relevant to life now – they were more suited to previous time periods.		

Challenge: Can you think of any other alternative views you could add to the final column?

#### Activity Four – Write a Developed Paragraph

One of your teachers recently said, “Books are no longer needed in the world because we have better ways of accessing stories.”

Write a paragraph arguing your view of this situation.

State your main argument/view	
Ask a thoughtful question that makes your audience consider the issue in relation to their own lives	
Address a view another person might have 'Some might believe that...'	
Argue against the other view by giving an alternative perspective	
Add in a reference that illustrates your view argument	
Give a solution or suggestion of what should happen next in society that links to your view Start: 'What I am proposing is that...' or 'As a society we need to...'	

## #5: Adverbs and Adverbial Phrases

Adverbs, or adverbial phrases, can make you sound more confident and increase your credibility even more.

They can be used in most formal or friendly writing – the only places they might not be appropriate is in a formal report or in a news article that is not opinion-based.

**Activity 1:** Here is a list of adverbs or adverbial phrases you might like to include in your writing – can you think of any others?

Of course  
Naturally  
As might be expected  
Arguably  
Conceivably  
Perhaps  
Controversially  
In opposition  
Still  
Yet  
Justifiably  
In truth  
Truthfully  
Without question  
It is evident that  
Clearly  
Nonetheless  
On the contrary

Notes/Other Adverbial Phrases

## #6: Introductions

Your introduction is your opening paragraph. It needs to:

- a) Introduce your issue and position on the issue very clearly
- b) Present, for the reader, the “big picture” of the issue
- c) Provide a ‘hook’ that draws in your reader and makes them feel your piece is worth reading

**Activity 1** – Read these introductions. How does each hook in the reader?

### **Introduction 1: Guardian Opinion Article about young people needing a mental health safety net.**

If ministers wish to understand a changing Britain, they would do well to talk to Jess.

As a teenager in the early 2000s, life with her parents was hard. By the age of 15, Jess was homeless and sleeping anywhere she could: her gran’s, a canal boat, even a shopping centre fire escape. The trauma of it all triggered severe mental health problems and soon she was regularly self-harming. In the end, she tried to take her own life. Ask Jess what caught her and it can be boiled down to a safety net: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (Camhs) for mental health support, and a place at a specialist youth hostel.

### **Introduction 2: Government report examining speeding tickets in the UK**

## 1 Summary and conclusions

### 1.1 Context and objectives

Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) for careless driving came into effect on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2013. This intervention granted the police autonomy to respond to predominantly (but not exclusively) low level driving offences which may have previously been referred to the courts. It has expanded the scope of FPNs to a greater range of driving offences (previously applied to offences such as speeding, parking offences and seat belt offences). The broad policy objectives of the reformed framework were:

- To increase the effectiveness of enforcement of penalties for careless driving offences.
- To increase take-up of remedial driver training courses among offenders.
- To reduce careless driving offences through increased enforcement and thus improve road safety.
- To reduce administrative and time and cost burdens for the police and court services in enforcing sanctions for careless driving offences<sup>1</sup>.

The overall aim of this evaluation is to understand and measure the effectiveness of the Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for careless driving offences since its introduction. In particular, the evaluation focuses on the impact on the police, the courts, road users and offenders.

### **Introduction 3: Mindfulness Leaflet**

#### **What is mindfulness?**

Mindfulness is a technique you can learn which involves making a special effort to notice what's happening in the present moment (in your mind, body and surroundings) – without judging anything. It has roots in Buddhism and [meditation](#), but you don't have to be spiritual, or have any particular beliefs, to try it.

It aims to help you:

- become more self-aware
- feel calmer and less stressed
- feel more able to choose how to respond to your thoughts and feelings
- cope with difficult or unhelpful thoughts
- be kinder towards yourself.

Many people find practising mindfulness helps them manage their day-to-day wellbeing, but it doesn't always work for everyone (see our page on [is mindfulness right for me?](#))

### **Introduction 4: A review of 'The 1975's most recent album**

The 1975 emerged in 2011 as the third-wave emo band the Slowdown, then quickly disappeared. A couple years later, the rebooted Manchester group's spit-polished self-titled full-length aims for the gleaming synth rock of Phoenix and M83.

The saga of The 1975 is odd and protracted: Once upon a time, in 2011, there was a perfect Jimmy Eat World mall-emo anthem called "Sex" by a Manchester band called the Slowdown. The black-and-white video showed four telegenic people with perfect haircuts performing near a carefully placed Johnny Cash poster, clearly a month or two away from fulfilling their destiny on the cover of several American magazines.

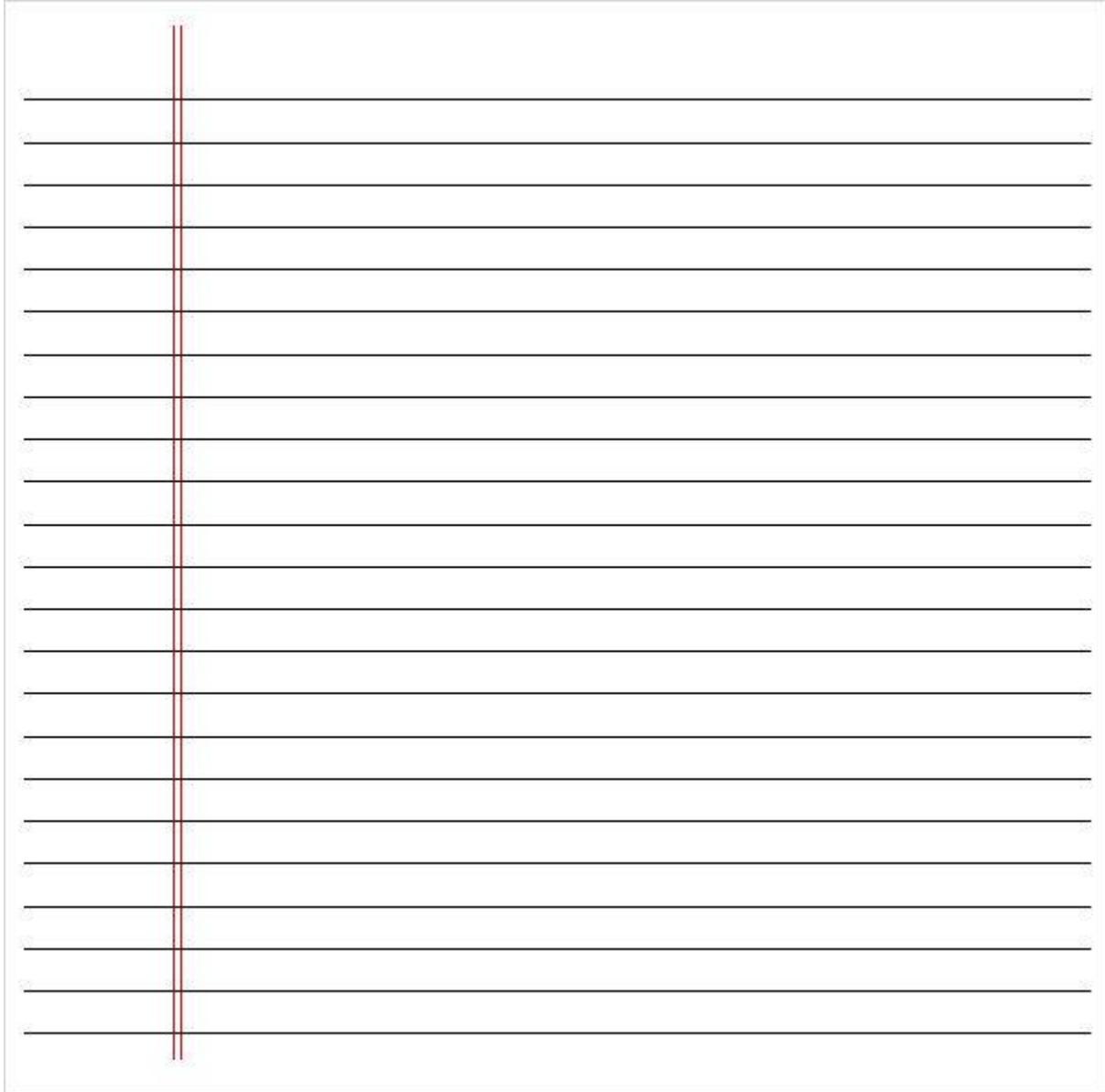
Except, that never happened, and in fact it seemed that someone had made a number of mistakes – the band may have actually been called Drive Like I Do, or maybe the Big Sleep, and in fact might not be called the Slowdown anymore. Anyway, they disappeared immediately – their Soundcloud, their Bandcamp, and even that video came down unceremoniously, all before they had begun to assume their rightful one-hit wonder status.

**Activity 2** – Based on our analysis of the introductions you’ve seen, make a list of what makes a successful or unsuccessful introduction

Successful Introductions 	Unsuccessful Introductions 

**Activity 3** – Using your list, write an introduction that hooks your reader for the task:

Write the words of a speech encouraging your local MP to offer more job opportunities for young people

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WWW =

EBI =

## #7: Conclusions

Effective conclusions don't only summarise your main points. A conclusion will offer solutions or suggestions for next steps, and leave the reader with a 'call to action' (something they need to do next). They give you a chance to echo the main point you made in your introduction with new words.

**Activity 2** – Read these conclusions. How does each motivate, inspire or sum up for the reader?

**Conclusion 1** – Lena Dunham Essay about why she chose to have a hysterectomy

I may have felt choiceless before, but I know I have choices now. Soon I'll start exploring whether my ovaries, which remain someplace inside me in that vast cavern of organs and scar tissue, have eggs. (Your brain, unaware that the rest of the apparatus has gone, in theory keeps firing up your eggs every month, to be released and reabsorbed into the cavern.) Adoption is a thrilling truth I'll pursue with all my might. But I wanted that stomach. I wanted to know what nine months of complete togetherness could feel like. I was meant for the job, but I didn't pass the interview. And that's OK. It really is. I might not believe it now, but I will soon enough. And all that will be left is my story and my scars, which are already faded enough that they're hard to find.

**Conclusion 2** – Dogs Monthly article about viewer fury over Emmerdale dog-napping storyline

DogLost, who aim to reunite dogs with their owners, made this statement:

"Whilst DogLost would encourage raising the awareness of dog theft through the serious and sensitive inclusion of the subject in a drama, it cannot condone its trivialisation in a current story line in Emmerdale.

Thousands of dogs a year are stolen in the UK and DogLost works hard to support owners subjected to this crime. We work closely with police forces up and down the country and are campaigning with the Stolen and Missing Pets Alliance for tougher sentencing.

DogLost has made representations to the executive producer at Emmerdale asking for the story line to be amended with an appropriate outcome.

In response to the comments, an ITV spokesperson said:

"Charity and Ross are well established as characters who are capable of illegal and sometimes downright evil acts.

"As the programme makes very clear, their plan to steal a dog is both ill-judged and criminal and it will plainly be seen to backfire on them."

**Conclusion 3** – Unicef guide to bottle-feeding your baby

**Published by the Department of Health and the Baby Friendly Initiative, this leaflet provides families and health professionals with key information about bottle feeding.**

It is intended to be used as a teaching aid when health professionals are explaining how to make up feeds as safely as possible to parents who have chosen to bottle feed.

Parents may also find [our guide to infant formula and responsive bottle feeding](#) useful.

For further information on infant milks in the UK, see the [First Steps Nutrition Trust website](#).

[Further information for health professionals on working within the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes](#)

#### **Further reading**

[Infant formula and responsive bottle feeding](#): a simple, concise introduction to formula feeding

[Guidelines on providing information for parents who formula feed](#)

[How the Baby Friendly Initiative supports parents who formula feed](#)

**Conclusion 4** – New York Times article about the difficulties of defending Donald Trump in court

While all this was going on, the president was in Asia, dining with Kim Jong-un of North Korea. Previous negotiations with Kim have produced monster publicity and very little in the way of nuclear disarmament.

Nevertheless, Trump seems to believe this may get him a Nobel Peace Prize. He really seems to want that a lot. Maybe if the Nobel committee offered to trade it for his tax returns ...

**Conclusion 5** – The Scientist magazine article about the United States Department of Agriculture saying there were 60% fewer animal rights violations last year

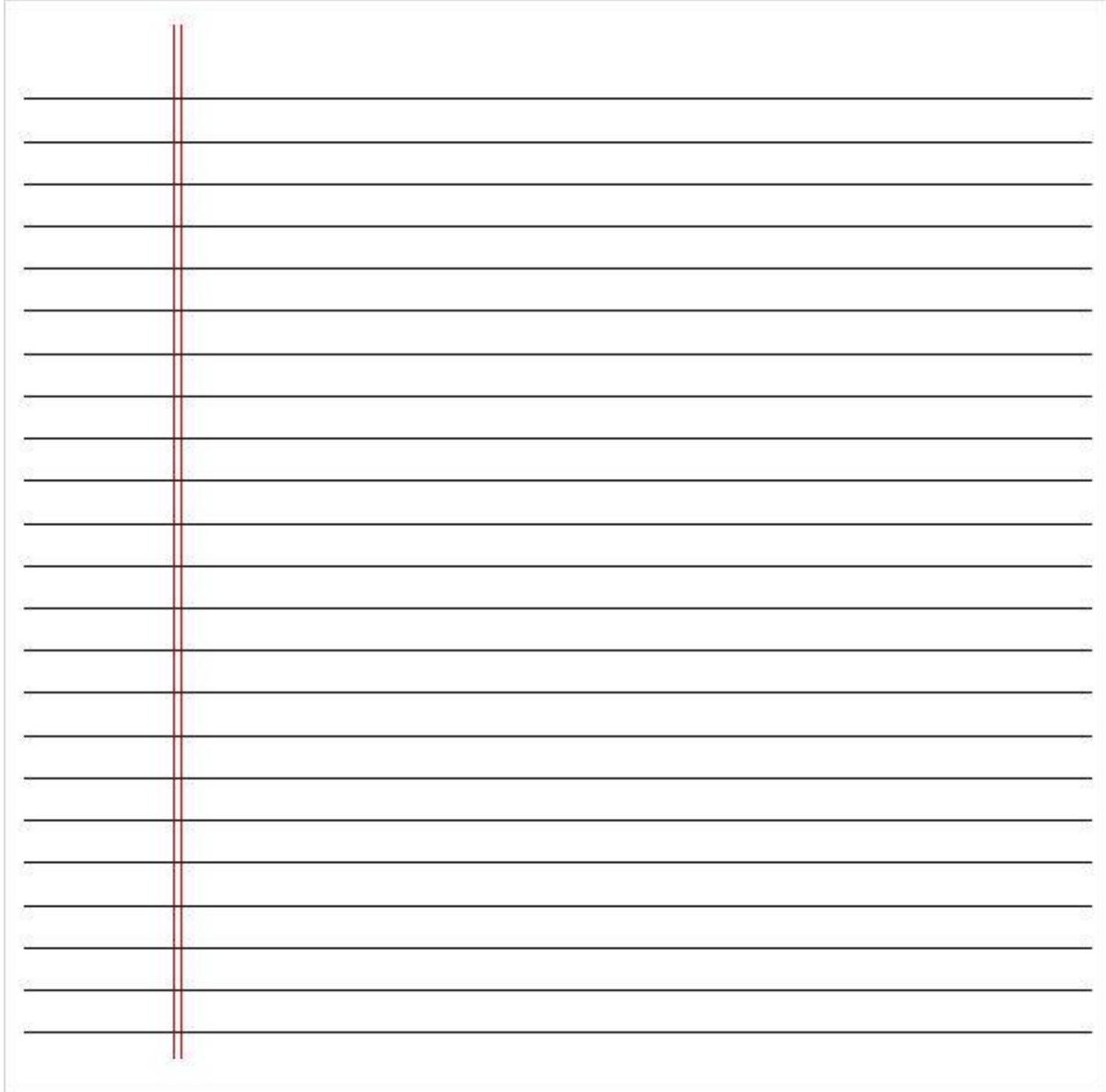
Animal protection groups and Congress have increasingly scrutinized the USDA's actions regarding animal welfare after the agency [removed records](#) from a publicly available online database in early 2017. While animal advocates argued that these records help keep the USDA and licensed operations accountable, some facilities felt that the records allowed them to be targeted by activists. The USDA restored some of the records, though many were redacted, while others must now be requested from the agency, according to the *Post*.

**Activity 2** – Based on our analysis of the conclusions you’ve seen, make a list of what makes a successful or unsuccessful conclusion

Successful conclusion 	Unsuccessful conclusion 

**Activity 3** – Using your list, write a conclusion that offers a summary and next steps for your audience for the question:

Write the words of a speech encouraging your local MP to offer more job opportunities for young people



WWW =

EBI =