

Look at the report and do the exercises to improve your writing skills.

Preparation

Match the vocabulary with the correct definition and write a–j next to the numbers 1–10.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1..... a reminder | a. the act of being friendly and welcoming to guests and visitors |
| 2..... to converse | b. to be better than expected |
| 3..... to contact someone | c. food, especially food prepared in a particular style of cooking |
| 4..... a counterpart | d. to give someone a job |
| 5..... reluctant | e. a person who is similar to somebody but who is in a different place or situation |
| 6..... to exceed (someone's) expectations | f. to have a conversation with someone |
| 7..... hesitation | g. unwilling to do something |
| 8..... hospitality | h. a written record of what you have done each day and your experiences |
| 9..... a journal | i. something that helps you remember a particular event or situation |
| 10..... cuisine | j. the act of pausing before doing something |

Report on Year 12's trip to Madrid

Introduction

This report describes Year 12's recent trip to Madrid and its aim is to assess the success of the trip in order to recommend it to future Year 12 students of Spanish.

Host families

All students agreed that the hospitality of the host families exceeded their expectations. Not only did they make our students feel welcome in their homes, but they went out of their way to ensure that the British exchange students experienced the Spanish way of life, including the culture, language and cuisine. Many students commented that they showed exceptional kindness and generosity. However, some host-family homes were located great distances from the school and, as a result, they had to leave extremely early in the morning to guarantee they got to school on time. I propose that on future exchanges host families are selected within a 5-mile radius of the school.

Cultural activities

The Spanish school staff ensured that our students got the most out of each visit by contracting tour guides who were entertaining and spoke Spanish at a comprehensible level for our students. Consequently, the cultural activities were a resounding success. Not only were our students shown most of the city's main sights, they also had the opportunity to visit stunning nearby towns of historical interest, such as El Escorial, Segovia and Toledo. Unfortunately, the Spanish exchange students had to attend school while their British counterparts were sightseeing. This was a shame as they would have welcomed the chance to spend more time with the host students. I would suggest that next time the Spanish students are invited to go on the day trips.

Language

The majority of our students made the most of the opportunity to practise their Spanish with their host family and exchange partner. In addition, a few students made a real effort to converse with the tour guides during the day trips. However, some students were reluctant to speak Spanish with their exchange partners, who had to speak to them in English. On future exchanges I would recommend students complete a travel journal of their visit, as this would benefit their language development and provide a reminder of the trip.

Conclusion

On the whole, both Spanish and British students found the experience a positive one from a cultural and an educational point of view. Provided that opportunities to use Spanish are extended on future trips, I have no hesitation in recommending this language exchange for students taking Spanish at our school.

Top Tips for writing

1. Use formal or semi-formal language.
2. Inform the reader with positive points and make recommendations for improvements.
3. Include an introduction, two or three sections and a conclusion.
4. Give each section a clear heading.
5. State the reason for writing the report in the introduction, and include your overall evaluation in the conclusion.

1. Check your understanding: gap fill

Complete the notes with a point from the box.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| a. High standard and enjoyable. | b. Keep a written record of the trip in Spanish. | c. Some houses were far from the school. |
| d. Some students only spoke English. | e. The British students were well looked after. | f. Only involved British students. |
| g. Choose families that live nearer the school. | h. Allow Spanish students to accompany the British students. | i. Most students practised a lot of Spanish. |

1. Host families

Positive

Negative

Recommendation

2. Cultural activities

Positive

Negative

Recommendation

3. Language

Positive

Negative

Recommendation

2. Check your writing: gap fill

Complete the sentences with a word or phrase from the box.

propose that	as a result	describes	I would recommend
assess	would	would have welcomed the chance	most exceeded
On the whole	were reluctant to	resounding	have no hesitation in

Introduction

- This report _____ a recent school trip to Madrid.
- The aim of the report is to _____ the success of the trip in order to recommend it in the future.

Positive points

- Students agreed that the Spanish hospitality _____ their expectations.
- The cultural activities were a _____ success.
- Students made the _____ of the opportunity to practise their Spanish.

Negative points

- However, some homes were located great distances from the school and, _____, some students had to leave extremely early.
- This was a shame as they _____ to spend more time with the host students.
- However, some students _____ speak Spanish.

Recommendations

- I _____ on future exchanges host families are selected within a 5-mile radius of the school.
- I _____ suggest that next time Spanish students are invited.
- On future exchanges _____ students complete a travel journal.

Conclusions

- _____, they found the experience a positive one.
- I _____ recommending this language exchange.

3. Check your vocabulary: gap fill

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the word in brackets.

1. The quality of the hotel exceeded our _____. (expect)
2. The host families showed us incredible _____. (kind)
3. We really appreciated their _____ during the trip. (generous)
4. When people speak quickly I can't understand anything. It's totally _____. (comprehend)
5. We were hoping to visit more places of great _____ interest. (history)
6. I'm sure the trip will _____ their language development. (beneficial)
7. Some students did not _____ much with their exchange partner. (conversation)
8. He didn't finish his journal so it was _____ on his return. (completion)
9. It was an interesting day out from an _____ point of view. (educate)
10. The trip was a success and I have no hesitation in _____ it to future students. (recommendation)

4. Check your writing: multiple choice

Circle the option in the correct style to complete these sentences.

1. The hospitality of the host families **was way better than we thought it was going to be!** / exceeded our expectations.
2. Many students commented that the host families **showed exceptional kindness.** / were so amazingly sweet and kind.
3. The cultural activities were **totally awesome.** / a resounding success.
4. **Unfortunately,** / I was so sad that the Spanish exchange students could not go sightseeing with the British students.
5. Both Spanish and British students **found the experience a positive one.** / had the best time ever!

Discussion

Have you ever been on a language exchange with your school? What do you think are the most important things for a successful language exchange?