Look at the short story and do the exercises to practise and improve your writing skills.

Preparation
Match the part of the story to what usually happens in it and write a–c next to the numbers 1–3.

1………. beginning  a. a problem or difficulty is introduced
2………. middle  b. the problem or difficulty is resolved
3………. ending  c. the characters and the situation are introduced

A short story

It was Katia’s 20th birthday and she was looking forward to seeing her friends. They were meeting at Mamma Mia’s, her favourite Italian restaurant, for a special birthday dinner. Katia was excited and got to the restaurant at exactly 7 o’clock, the time they had arranged to meet. She looked around for a familiar face, but no one had arrived yet. So she decided to wait outside and stood patiently in the warm evening sunshine.

The restaurant quickly filled up with customers, but none of them were Katia’s friends. ‘Where are they?’ she thought. At half past seven she was still waiting, so she called her best friend Isa. ‘Why doesn’t she answer her phone?’ Katia asked herself. Then she called Jonty, Alex and Yoko, but they didn’t answer either. ‘What’s going on?’ she wondered.

At 8 o’clock Katia went home. Her friends had forgotten her birthday and she felt lonely and miserable. She opened the front door and walked into the dark house. The living room door was closed. ‘How strange,’ she thought because she always left it open. Nervously, she opened the door. Suddenly the lights went on and all her friends jumped up and shouted ‘Surprise!’ So they hadn’t forgotten and in the end it was the best birthday ever.

When you write a story, use ...

- the past simple, past continuous and the past perfect.
- adjectives and adverbs.
- direct speech with reporting verbs and punctuation.
- discourse markers e.g. then, after that or in the end.
1. Check your understanding: multiple choice – choose a title
Circle the best title for the story.

a. The accident  
b. The surprise  
c. My lucky day

2. Check your understanding: true or false
Circle True or False for these sentences.

1. Katia didn't want to celebrate her birthday.  
   True  False

2. Katia was the first person to arrive at the Italian restaurant.  
   True  False

3. Katia waited outside the restaurant for 30 minutes.  
   True  False

4. Jonty is Katia's closest friend.  
   True  False

5. Katia went home after waiting for her friends for an hour.  
   True  False

6. Katia's friends hadn't forgotten her birthday.  
   True  False

3. Check your writing: matching – story structure
Match the parts of the story with the examples and write a–d next to the number 1–4.

1. beginning  a. ‘So they hadn't forgotten and in the end it was the best birthday ever.’

2. middle  b. ‘Then she called Jonty, Alex and Yoko, but they didn’t answer either. “What’s going on?” she said to herself.’

3. ending  c. ‘They were meeting at Mamma Mia’s, her favourite Italian restaurant, for a special birthday dinner.’

4. final line  d. ‘Suddenly the lights went on and all her friends jumped up and shouted “Surprise!”.’

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4. Check your writing: grouping – adjectives and adverbs
Write the words in the correct group.

| unexpected | freezing | quickly | nervously |
| sad | exciting | huge | quietly |
| slowly | enjoyable | unexpectedly | happily |
| strange | patiently | awful | fantastic |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>adjectives</th>
<th>adverbs</th>
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5. Check your writing: error correction – punctuation
Rewrite the sentences with the correct punctuation.

1. Where does he live she asked

2. I can’t believe what’s happened he said

3. Follow that car she shouted

4. Why doesn’t he call me back she asked herself

Discussion
Have you ever had a special birthday celebration?
Do you like writing stories?