

# **COMMENTING ON PICTURES**

## **(TIPS AND TERMS)**

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Here you have some techniques and exam tips I have put together to help you describe a picture or photograph. Study them carefully and decide on how to structure your picture description. Don't worry if you find it a bit difficult at first, we'll practise a lot to make things easier in time.

Waheed

*"A picture paints a  
thousand words"*

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## Commenting on pictures (Tips and terms):

The specific information required can vary from one photo to the next. But for most pictures a reader wants to know such things as:

- Who is that? (And, in most cases, identify people from left to right unless the action in the photograph demands otherwise.)
- Why is this picture in the paper?
- What's going on?
- When and where was this?
- Why does he /she/it/they look that way?
- How did this occur?

Here are some other sample phrases and expressions for describing a picture.

### What do you see in the picture?

There is a

There's a

There are some

There're some

Is there a . . . ?

Are there (some) . . . ?

### Locations

On the right/left

By the door

On the chair

Near the window

In the box

Under the table

### Actions

The man is \_\_\_\_\_ ing

The woman is \_\_\_\_\_ ing

### Clothing

What is the man/woman wearing?

She/He is wearing a  
some

### Opinions

What do you think

I think



**How would you *compare* these two photographs?**

These two photographs are

*similar....*

*alike...*

*comparable...*

*analogous...*

*parallel...*

They both show people enjoying themselves with music.

They both display people making music together.

**How Would You *Contrast* These Two Photographs**

These photographs are...

*different...*

*dissimilar....*

*divergent...*

These photographs display people from different cultures playing music.

The music played in the first photograph appears to be tribal while the second photograph is more likely to be classical music or jazz.

**Why do you think the music is important to the different groups of people?**

Music allows both sets of people to express themselves as individuals and as part of a group.

It also enables both groups to spend time with people of similar interests.

Music encourages both groups to engage with the cultural environment of their respective societies.

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The picture shows three boys in a small boat on a river. The river looks cold and wet and the water is moving fast.

One of the boys is holding a paddle or an oar. He is looking down at the water and he looks worried. Maybe he thinks that they are going to hit something or fall out.

The boy in the middle is smiling. He is enjoying the adventure! He's only wearing a teeshirt, so maybe it is not very cold. The third boy is looking at something up the river, near a bridge or a wall. There could be something coming, or maybe there are some others in a boat.

I think they are Arab students on a holiday or a summer school. I hope they are enjoying themselves!



The picture shows a family visiting their new baby in hospital. It's the evening, because the light is on, so the father must have brought his children after work or school.

There are two children beside the baby, a boy and a girl. The boy is a little older than his sister. He's about six or seven. He looks proud. The girl looks very excited to have a new sister.

The father has his arm around his children. He looks proud as well. The mother is sitting at the left. She looks happy but a little tired.

The baby is in the middle. I think it's a girl, because she is wearing pink clothes. The baby is sleeping despite all the noise and excitement.



The picture shows a big group of young people having a barbecue in a park. I think they are from Japan.

There are about 20 people in the group, and most of them are wearing jeans and blue or dark-coloured shirts. They are having a lot of fun, and some of them **are making faces** at the camera. Everybody is trying to get in the picture.

They are in some kind of a park or a forest. They could be on holiday, or it could be a school trip. I don't know what they are cooking. It could be hamburger, but it could also be some special Japanese food!



In this picture, a man is putting some **sausages** on a **barbecue**.

It's a warm sunny day and a lot of people are sitting having a barbecue outdoors in a park or some public area. There are some cars outside the fence, so it looks like they drove there.

The man is using a big gas-barbecue. He's turning the sausages with a **spatula**. He's holding a bun or some bread in his hand, so maybe he's going to make a burger or a hotdog. He's a little bit fat, so I think he likes barbecuing!



Behind him there is a young woman in a pink dress. Perhaps they are related. There are some other people at a big wooden **picnic** table. The barbeque looks like a nice thing for a family or friends to do on a long hot summer day.



The picture shows three girls waiting for a plane in the departure lounge at an airport.

They are laughing and having a lot of fun, even though I think they have been waiting a long time. I think they've been waiting a long time because they look tired, especially the girl on the left. She is leaning her head on her friend's shoulder. The girl on the right has finished reading a paper, and it looks like they have been drinking some Seven-Up while they were waiting. As well as that, the airport is crowded, and there are a lot of other people waiting for the next plane.

They all have some hand luggage, but I can't see any big bags, so they must have checked in their baggage already. They are wearing coats and hats and scarves, so the weather must be cold at the airport or where they are going .

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I think this is a sad or quiet picture. It shows two girls waiting at an airport. They are standing at a big window, looking out at the **runway**.

One of the girls, the smaller girl, has her hands against the window. The other girl, who is about eight years old, is also standing quietly looking out.

There aren't any planes on the runway, only some **service vehicles** and trucks bringing fuel or water or luggage.



I think the two girls have been waiting a long time for someone, maybe their mother or father, to come, but there has been some delay.

There must be someone else with them, because they are too young to be in the airport by themselves, so maybe the person who is taking the picture is also waiting **impatiently**.

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**DIRECTIONS: (5 SENTENCES, EACH SENTENCE IS WORTH 3 POINTS – A TOTAL OF 15 POINTS)  
LOOK AT THE PICTURES BELOW AND WRITE FIVE COMPOUND SENTENCES DESCRIBING THEM.  
USE CONNECTORS LIKE: AND, SO, BUT, YET, ETC**





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