



Magazine Article

Scaffolded Assignment

IGCSE English

Tr. Darren

2. IGCSE 2027-STYLE WRITING PROMPT (Magazine Article)

Question 1 (Directed Writing)

Scenario:

A student climber became separated from his group during a mountain expedition in the Swiss Alps after sudden extreme weather conditions. He was later rescued after spending several hours alone on the mountain.

Task:

Use information from the source texts below to write a **magazine article** about this incident.

In your article, you should:

- describe the experience of being lost on the mountain
 - explain the dangers faced and how they were overcome
 - explore what this experience teaches about survival and human resilience
-

Write 250–350 words.

Source Text A: Witness Account (Survivor Interview)

Interview with Daniel Weber, Survivor of the Swiss Alps Avalanche

“I remember how quiet it was just before it happened,” Daniel recalled. “We had been skiing along a narrow ridge, and everything felt calm—almost too calm.”

Daniel was part of a group of six international skiers exploring an off-piste route near the Matterhorn. The group had set out before sunrise, hoping to enjoy untouched snow conditions. However, recent heavy snowfall had created unstable layers beneath the surface.

“At first, I didn’t even realise what was happening,” he said. “There was a deep rumble, like distant thunder, and then the ground just shifted beneath us.”

Within seconds, a powerful avalanche swept down the mountainside. Daniel described how he was thrown off his feet and dragged several metres through the snow.

“I couldn’t see anything. It was completely white—like being inside a storm,” he explained. “When it stopped, I was buried up to my waist. I tried to move, but the snow was so heavy.”

Several members of the group were trapped beneath the snow. Despite the chaos, the skiers began calling out to each other and attempting to dig themselves free.

“The scariest part wasn’t the avalanche itself,” Daniel added. “It was the silence afterwards. You don’t know who’s okay and who isn’t.”

Daniel managed to free himself after several minutes and helped locate the others. However, the freezing temperatures and unstable conditions made it difficult to move safely.

“You realise very quickly how small you are compared to the mountain,” he said. “At that moment, survival is all you can think about.”

Source Text B: Rescue Team Report (Official Statement + Data)

Swiss Alpine Rescue Service: Official Incident Report

On April 7th, at approximately 05:10 a.m., emergency services received reports of an avalanche near an off-piste route above Zermatt. The affected group consisted of six international skiers accompanied by a certified guide.

According to Chief Rescue Officer Lukas Meier, the response was complicated by both terrain and weather conditions.

“Visibility was extremely poor due to airborne snow particles, and the slope remained unstable even after the initial avalanche,” he stated.

Rescue teams were deployed by helicopter and arrived on-site within 35 minutes of the initial call. Due to the steep gradient and risk of secondary avalanches, responders were lowered onto the mountain using harness systems.

“Time is critical in avalanche situations,” Meier explained. “Survival rates drop significantly after the first 15 minutes if victims are completely buried.”

Key Data and Statistics

- Approximately **90% of avalanche victims survive** if rescued within the first 15 minutes
- Survival rates drop to **30% after 30 minutes of burial**
- Over **60% of avalanche incidents occur off-piste**
- The majority of accidents are linked to **unstable snow layers following fresh snowfall**

Rescue teams utilised specialised equipment, including avalanche transceivers and trained search dogs, to locate the victims.

“All six individuals were located within 50 minutes,” Meier confirmed. “Three required immediate medical attention for hypothermia and respiratory distress.”

Medical responders noted that exposure to extreme cold and restricted airflow were the primary risks.

“Even partial burial can lead to breathing difficulties and rapid heat loss,” said paramedic Elise Braun.

Authorities have since issued renewed warnings regarding off-piste skiing.

“We strongly advise all skiers to assess weather conditions carefully and carry proper safety equipment,” Meier added. “Preparation can mean the difference between life and death.”

3. Magazine Article Scaffold (Same Structure)

Step 1: Planning Grid

Element	Notes
Who	Student climber (Daniel), rescue team
What	Lost on mountain
Where	Swiss Alps
When	During sudden storm
Why	Lost visibility, separated
How	Wind, snow, poor visibility

Step 2: Structure Scaffold

Paragraph 1 – Hook (MANDATORY)

Sentence starters:

- Imagine being...
- One moment..., the next...
- What would you do if...

Must:

- engage reader
 - introduce situation
-

Paragraph 2 – Development

- explain what happened
- include key details

Sentence starters:

- The situation began when...
 - As conditions worsened...
-

Paragraph 3 – Human Experience

- thoughts, fear, confusion

Sentence starters:

- At this point...
 - He later described...
-

Paragraph 4 – Challenges / Danger

- environment
- survival difficulty

Sentence starters:

- Conditions became increasingly dangerous...
 - The biggest challenge was...
-

Paragraph 5 – Resolution

- rescue
- survival

Sentence starters:

- Eventually...
 - Rescue teams...
-

Paragraph 6 – Reflection (CRUCIAL FOR BAND 6)

- meaning
- lesson

Sentence starters:

- This experience highlights...
 - It shows that...
 - Perhaps the most important lesson is...
-