



Teenage Life

Review: reviewing a student common room

1. Lead-in discussion

Talk with a partner before you write.

1. What would make a common room useful for teenagers?
2. Should students have more places to relax at school?
3. What problems can happen in shared spaces?

Exercise 6 at a glance

Write a review, often for a student magazine.

Use an engaging title.

Describe key features clearly.

Evaluate positives and negatives.

Make a clear recommendation.

2. Exam-style task

Your school recently opened a student common room. Your teacher has asked you to write a review of the common room for the school magazine.

Here are some comments about the student common room to help you:

'The sofas make it feel relaxed.'

'It gets noisy at lunchtime.'

'The games corner is popular.'

'There is not enough space for everyone.'

Now write a review of the student common room for your school magazine.

The comments may give you some ideas, and you should also use some ideas of your own.

Write about 120 to 160 words.

3. Model review

A Break Space That Almost Works

Do teenagers need a proper place to switch off during the school day? After visiting the new student common room, I would say yes, although it still needs some careful management.

The room is near the library and includes sofas, low tables, board games and a small noticeboard for student events. It feels warmer than a classroom, and the bright colours make it look more welcoming.

The sofas are the best feature because they make the room feel relaxed rather than formal. The games corner is also popular, especially with students who want something sociable to do instead of scrolling on their phones.

However, the common room gets noisy at lunchtime, and there is not enough space for everyone who wants to use it. At busy times, it can feel more chaotic than calm.

Overall, I would recommend the common room to students who want a friendly place to relax with friends. Clearer rules and a booking rota would help it work better for more people.

4. Explore the model: structure, content and tone

Work with the model review. Underline, label or make short notes.

Focus	What to find	Done?
Review structure	Find the title, hook, key facts, description, opinion and recommendation.	
Content point 1	Where does the writer describe the common room and its features?	
Content point 2	Where does the writer develop positive opinions from the comments?	
Content point 3	Where does the writer balance the review with space or behaviour problems?	
Audience and tone	Find two places where the review sounds lively or suitable for the reader.	
Development	Find one extra detail, example or personal reaction that improves the answer.	

5. Language from the task prompts

The task prompts can guide your grammar and content choices. Notice which language each prompt naturally needs.

Prompt	Useful language	Why it fits	Example from the model
what the room is like	descriptive detail + contrast	You are helping the reader picture the space.	near the library / warmer than...
evaluation of comments	evaluative language + contrast	You are explaining strengths and balancing them with drawbacks.	best feature / However...
recommendation	recommendation + audience	You are saying who would use the room well.	I would recommend... / students who want...

6. Build a clear review

Notice how review phrases help you move from the opening to the final recommendation.

Job	Useful review phrases
open with key details	Do teenagers need...? / near the library / includes sofas... / warmer than a classroom / welcoming
evaluate positives	best feature / also popular
balance negatives	However... / not enough space
recommend clearly	Overall, I would recommend... / to students who...

7. Vocabulary and useful review phrases

Use chunks that sound natural for this review. You can also upgrade your writing with precise words and phrases.

Purpose	Useful chunks / language	Add your own
describe the room	common room / sofas / low tables / games corner / noticeboard	
describe positives	relaxed / welcoming / sociable / popular	
describe negatives	noisy / not enough space / chaotic / busy times	
sound review-like	almost works / switch off / However...	
recommend	friendly place / relax with friends / clearer rules / rota	

8. Plan your own review

Use the same task, or change the details to a similar event, place, service or activity.

Prompt	My idea	Useful language
title and opening		
description / atmosphere		
positive points		
problems or limits		
recommendation		

