Klaipeda “Vetrunge” gymnasium

Practice with informal letters and e-mails

Slide Show lesson for the 9th - 12th forms

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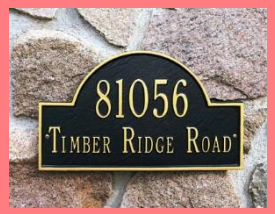
dreamstime.com

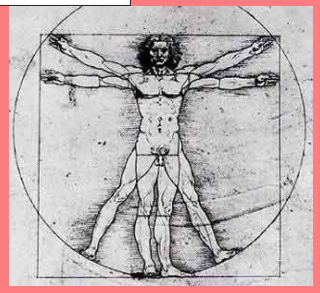
Plan and structure of the letter:

1) Address



2) Greeting, salutation

3) § 1 Introduction: (reason for writing, polite questions, reaction to the previous letter)



4) § 2,3… Main body: development of subject

a) topic sentence (what about a paragraph is)

b) topic sentence…

5) § 4 Conclusion: final paragraph, closing remarks (summing up what we talked about before or we express our wish for sth to be done; ending phrases)

6) Full name

Useful Phrases for Informal Letters

Greetings:

Dear Jim / Hello Jim / Hi Jim / Hi there

Introduction. Starting your letter (Paragraph 1)

Thanks for your letter.
Lovely to hear from you.
How are you?
How are things?
Hope you're well.
How have the family been?
Thank you for the letter and parcel which arrived this morning .
It was great to hear from you again after such a long time.
•I was so surprised to hear that you are going to university in America!
•Anyway, the reason I'm writing ...
I thought I'd write to tell/ask you…

Sorry, I haven't written for ages.
Sorry, it's taken me so long to write.
How's it going?
How are things with you?

Useful Phrases for Informal Letters

Introduction. Commenting on something (Paragraph 1)

Referring to good news

I'm so pleased to hear ...
It's great to hear ...
What wonderful news about ...
I have so much to tell you.
Glad to hear about…
I'm really glad to hear about…
I'm very happy to hear about…
I was very happy to read about…
Great news about your…

Referring to bad news

I'm sorry to hear/learn ...
I'm extremely sorry to hear about…
I'm very sorry to hear about…
Sorry to read about…
It's very sad to hear about your…
I can't tell you how sad I am that…

Main body. Moving the topic on (Paragraph 2)

Anyway, I was wondering ...
By the way…
Did you hear about…
Did you see…
Have you seen…
Tell me about…
Oh, another thing…

Conclusion. (Paragraph 3)

Well, that's all for now.
Write back soon.
Looking forward to hearing from you again.
Well, time to go.
Well, it's time to go.
Well, got to go.
Well, time to close.
I've got to leave off now.
Write soon.
Make sure you write soon.

Ending your letter

All the best .
Best wishes.
See you soon .
Take care.
Yours.
Love.
Lots of love.
Love.
Lots of love.
All my love.
Will write again soon.
Look after yourself.
Take care of yourself.
All the best.
Everything good.

Using informal language

Use intensifying adjectives and adverbs to show enthusiasm:
I've got a fantastic new job. | My new boss is an absolute nightmare.

Use idiomatic language:
Things have been getting on top of me at work lately.
| It's been ages since we last managed to meet up. | What have you been up to lately?
| Let me know what you think. | I'll fill you in when we next meet.

Use question forms to make the letter read more like a conversation:
How are your studies going? | How does that sound to you?

Use informal vocabulary: use get instead of receive, I guess instead of I think

Use phrasal verbs and phrases: we get on well, write back soon, get in touch

Use contractions: I can't help thinking I should've told you sooner.

Use the present perfect progressive to give news:
I've been helping my parents out at their shop

Use a future progressive for future plans:
I'm going to be staying at my grandmother's house all summer.

Using informal language

Use conditional sentences to make suggestions:
If you let me have your number, I'll give you a call at the weekend.

Use polite question forms for requests:
Do you think you could send me a copy of the photos? |
Would you mind if we didn't go camping?

Use question tags to check information:
Nobody else knows, do they? | You don't mind, do you?

To introduce a topic: Well, you'll never guess who I bumped into yesterday.
| I know how much you love tennis, so I've got us some tickets to Wimbledon.
| By the way, did you know that John's got a new job?

To go back to a previous topic: Anyway, as I was saying earlier, I really wasn't very happy there. | Now where was I? Oh yes, I nearly forgot, Mary asked me tell you about the cinema.

To introduce surprising or bad news: Actually, he came to the party after all.
| I'm really sorry but I can't make it. | To tell you the truth, I don't really like sports much

Using informal language

To summarise what you've already said: Anyway, we had a really nice time in the end. | Well, to cut a long story short, we didn't get there on time.

Give a reason why you're ending the letter: Anyway, I must go and get on with my work! | I guess it's time I got on with that studying I've been avoiding.

Make a reference to future contact: Anyway, don't forget to let me know the dates of the party. | I'll try and phone you at the weekend to check the times. | We must try and meet up soon. | I can't wait to hear from you.

GROUP WORK

Task 1 Look at the phrases 1-11 and match them with a purpose A-K

1.That reminds me,...
2. Why don't we...
3. I'd better get going...
4. Thanks for your letter...
5. Please let me know...
6. I'm really sorry...
7. Love,
8. Could you do something for me?
9. Write soon...
10. Did you know that..
11. I'm happy to hear that...

A. to finish the letter
B. to apologize
C. to thank the person for writing
D. to begin the letter
E. to change the subject
F. to ask a favor
G. before signing the letter
H. to suggest or invite
I. to ask for a reply
J. to ask for a response
K. to share some information

Answers: 1K; 2H; 3A; 4C; 5 I/J; 6B; 7G; 8F; 9 I/J; 10K; 11D

Task 2 Contract the words in brackets in the following letter:

Dear Claire

(It is) great to hear from you. (I am) so pleased that you passed your exam. (You are) a very clever student!

Anyway, (I have) got my summer holiday coming soon and I was wondering if (you would) like to come and stay with me for a week. (We will) be able to do some travelling and hopefully enjoy some lovely weather. And as (we are) planning to take FCE next year we can practise our English!

Write back soon and tell me what you think. My parents send their love and say (they would) love to meet you.

Best wishes

Karen

The correct answers are: It's great ..., I'm so pleased ..., You're a very clever ..., I've got my summer ..., you'd like to come ...., We'll be able to ..., we're planning ..., they'd love to meet you!

Task 3 **Practise Using Paragraphs** The letter below has been written without the use of paragraphs. How would you organise the sentences into paragraphs?

Dear Mikel

It was nice to hear from you.
Of course I will help you with your school project!
You wanted to know about a typical morning.
Well, on days when I go to college I usually get up about 7.00 o'clock.
My mum always asks me to sit down and have breakfast before I leave.
Unfortunately, I don't have much time and I eat breakfast at college.
I go to college by bus.
It takes about 30 minutes but sometimes it's longer if there's a lot of traffic.
As soon as I arrive I meet my friends and get the latest news.
Anyway, give my love to your family.
Write back soon.

Best wishes

Steve

Answer. Here's the letter written with paragraphs.

Dear Mikel

It was nice to hear from you. Of course I will help you with your school project!

You wanted to know about a typical morning. Well, on days when I go to college I usually get up about 7.00 o'clock. My mum always asks me to sit down and have breakfast before I leave. Unfortunately, I don't have much time and I eat breakfast at college. I go to college by bus. It takes about 30 minutes but sometimes it's longer if there's a lot of traffic. As soon as I arrive I meet my friends and get the latest news.

Anyway, give my love to your family. Write back soon.

Best wishes

Steve

Task 4 <u>Write topic sentences for each paragraph of the informal e-mail.</u>

Dear Susan,

..... I know it's only been several weeks since I saw you. So far my summer has been great!

..... I am getting a nice tan and you can no longer say I am paler than you. I have been playing lots of volleyball, surfing and building a nice collection of sea shells. Just this past weekend I took second place in a sandcastle building contest!

..... I drive an ice cream truck around and sell ice cream to the kids. It is so cool. It is a combination of the two things I love most, ice cream and kids. The pay isn't too great but I love the job so much.

..... There's only a month and a half left in summer vacation and after that it's back to school. Would you like to meet up some time before school starts?

Your friend,
Signature

P.S. John Austin says hi.

<u>Answers</u>

1) It feels like such a long time since the last time I saw you
2) I spend my all my weekends at the beach
3) On the weekdays I work.
4)I hope the summer's been going well for you too

Task 5 Write topic sentences for each paragraph of the informal e-mail answer.

Dear John,

..... I'm glad to hear that everything is going well. Sorry I'm a bit late replying, but I've been really busy studying for my exams.

..... I'd love to spend some more time with you. My classes at university finish on 5th July. Is it OK if I come on Monday 15th July and leave on Friday 26th? If these dates sound good, let me know and I'll go ahead and book the flight.

..... . What kind of clothes should I bring? I've never been to a wedding abroad before. Also, my family really wants to get a small gift for Jane. What do you think about some beach towels? They could use them on their honeymoon.

..... Well, I guess the first few days we'll be busy getting ready for the wedding. After that, though, there are one or two things I'd like to do. You know I'm a huge fan of modern art. Do you think we could go to the Tate Gallery one day? Of course, a day sightseeing in London would be great, too. Other than that, I'll leave it up to you.

Anyway, I hope to hear from you soon.

Take care,

María

Answers

1) Thanks for your email

2) Thank you so much for inviting me to stay a bit longer

3) I need to ask you a few questions about your sister's wedding

4) Finally, you asked me what I'd like to do when I get there

Writing test. Write an informal e-mail (answer).

Requirements for the e-mail

1) Write 120-150 words

2) Make a plan

3) Write a topic sentence for each paragraph

4) Use variety of special phrases for: greeting, introduction, main body, conclusion, ending part

5) Use rich informal language and vocabulary (adjectives; adverbs; idioms; questions; phrasal verbs; short forms; variety of tenses: present / past / future simple, present perfect, present / past continuous)

Task. Write an informal e-mail **120-150** words.

Your Scottish friend, Maggie, has sent you an email asking you to help her organise a special surprise birthday party for her brother Rupert. Read Maggies email and the notes you have made. Then write an email to Maggie using all your notes..

We must make sure that Rupert doesn't know we are planning this surprise. I'm not sure how many people to invite but our house is definitely too small. Do you think we should book the Royal hotel for the evening and have the party there? You know that Rupert is very keen on music so we could hire a live band.

I've also been wondering what we could all buy as a present. What do you think?

Could you come the day before the party to help with preparations. There's a lot to plan so I'd really like your help. Can you suggest something else that will really make the party special?

All for now.

best wishes,

Anne

Your notes:

- **Paragraph 1 - Royal Hotel sounds OK but very expensive**
- **Paragraph 2 - Rupert really enjoys fishing**
- **Paragraph 3 - Sorry, busy that day.**
- **Paragraph 3 - Something else - Yes, how about ….**

Task. Write an informal e-mail **120-150** words.

You are studying in Britain and you've recently received a letter from a friend, Susan, who is interested in in arranging a day trip for a group of students. Read Susan's letter, the advertisement and the notes you have made. Then write a letter to Susan, using all your notes.

….. and the students in my class are really interested in going on a day trip. I know you went on a boat trip with your class recently. Could you tell me what it was like and whether you'd recommend it?

Susan

Castle and Lake Boat Trips

- Departures 9 a.m. or 11 a.m. dail
- Lunch at restaurant
- Afternoon at lake with choice of water sports
- Reasonable prices with reductions for groups

Your notes:

- Earlier boat less crowded
- Take a packed lunch because ……..
- You must try ……..(watersport)
- Group minimum is 15

For hearty work