

## Teacher/Adult Lesson Plan: How to Write a Formal Letter: Unit 1, Lesson 1

**Learning Objective:** To understand the layout and language features of a formal letter.

Explain to students that they are going to learn how to write a formal letter and ensure they understand what 'layout' and 'language features' mean.

**Age Group:** 8-11 years old

**Success Criteria:** By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

- Understand when formal letters are used.
- Recognise the correct position of the date, name and address of the writer and recipient and the signature of the writer in a formal letter.
- Identify key words and phrases used in a formal letter.
- Recognise synonyms for 'damaged' and 'broken'.

**Materials Needed** (See also Unit Overview):

1. Formal Letters of Complaint No.1
2. Formal Letters of Complaint No.2
3. Interactive activities Scribeasy.com or Image of Damaged Trainer
4. Word Bank: Words for 'Broken' & 'Damaged'.
5. Labels: Elements of a Formal Letter
6. Language for a Formal Letter
7. Glue sticks & scissors
8. Highlighter pens or coloured felt tip pens/pencils

**Lesson Procedure:**

### Task 1. Introduction (10 minutes)

- Begin the lesson by asking students if they know what a formal letter is and when they are used. Discuss the importance of formal letters in communication.
- Explain that a letter of complaint is a type of formal letter and that other types of formal letters may include letters to a politician, appointment letters, legal letters, etc.
- This unit focuses on writing a letter of complaint. Ask students if they have ever bought something that was damaged or faulty and wanted to make a complaint. Or perhaps they have had a bad experience of a service such as in a café or restaurant or on a day out and wanted to make a complaint. What went wrong? What did they

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expect and how did the item or experience not live up to expectation? How did they feel? How might the situation be resolved? Who would they complain to?

### Task 2. (15 minutes)

Give each student a copy of **Image of a Damaged Trainer**. Discuss what is wrong with the picture. How are the trainers damaged? Use the **Word Bank: Words for 'Broken' & 'Damaged'** to help find the correct vocabulary.

- Give each student a copy of **Letter of Complaint No.1**. Explain that this is a letter of complaint written by a person who bought a pair of faulty trainers. Read this together, pausing to point out each part in detail, including the sender's address, date, recipient's address, salutation, body of the letter in short paragraphs, closing sentence and signature. Point to the position of each element and explain how the layout is the same in all formal letters.
- Explain that we use 'Dear sir/Madam' when we do not know the name of who we are writing to.
- Explain that we use 'Yours sincerely' when we know the name of who we are writing to and 'Yours faithfully' when we don't know.

### Task 3. (10 minutes)

- Give students a copy of **Labels: Elements of a Formal Letter**. Ask students to cut out the words and phrases and glue the labels on their **Letter of Complaint No.1** in the correct position.

### Task 4. (20 minutes)

- Give each student a copy of **Letter of Complaint No.2**. Explain that this is a different letter of complaint but follows the same layout and has the same purpose.
- Read this together, pausing to point out and discuss the language features of a formal letter, such as specific vocabulary, complete sentences and a formal, polite tone. Discuss these questions:
  - Who is the audience for the letter?
  - What is the complaint about?
  - How is the writer feeling?
  - What is the writer asking for?

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- Provide students with a copy of **Word Bank: Language for a Formal Letter**. Discuss the meaning of the words and phrases in the word bank. Ask students to identify and highlight or underline any formal vocabulary in the letter. Some of the words and phrases are in the word bank. Can students spot other examples of formal words and phrases that are not included in the word bank and highlight them too?

### Task 5. Review & Reflect (5 minutes)

If you are working one-to-one with a student, ask them a selection of the **Review & Reflect Questions** (below) to check their understanding of the layout and language features of a formal letter. Make sure to correct any misconceptions.

If you are working with a group or class, give one student in each group the role of 'questioner' and ask them to question the other students (and correct any misconceptions). Ask the questioner of each group to feedback one example to the class.

### Review & Reflect Questions

Layout Questions	Language Questions
Where does the recipient's address go on a formal letter?	What does 'recipient' mean?
Does the writer's name go before or after their signature?	What is the difference between formal and informal language?
When would you use Dear Sir/Madam?	When might we need to use formal language?
When would you use 'Yours faithfully'?	What does 'require' mean?
When would you use 'Yours sincerely'?	What does 'consequently' mean?
Where does the date go?	What is the difference between 'expecting' something and 'hoping' for something?
Where would you write your address?	What is a 'signature'?
What would you write in the opening paragraph?	If you are 'frustrated', how are you feeling?
What's the difference between a formal and an informal letter?	What is a 'title'? Does everyone have a title?