

UNIT 3 Writing a formal letter

Reading

1 Read Stefanie's letter. What type of work is she applying for?

Desmond Reyes
Director, Tanzania Community schools
12 Fish Lane
London
SW2 5AA

3rd June 2010
Lärchenstrasse 22
CH - 8442 Hettlingen

Dear Mr Reyes,

I'm writing in reply to your advertisement for volunteers to teach sports at a community school in Tanzania. I'm interested in working at the school and I'd like to know a little more about the work.

I'm from Switzerland and I'm currently training to be a primary school teacher in Zurich. Before that, I was employed as a sports shop manager for ten years. During that time, I taught the staff about sports equipment and also worked as a tennis coach at a local tennis club. I believe I have the right qualities for the job because I'm friendly and empathic, I like children, and I can work well in a team. As well as playing tennis, I am good at athletics, basketball, and swimming. I speak fluent German, good French, and intermediate English. I'd like to do something useful after I graduate. I also believe it'll be a good opportunity to learn about other cultures and to gain more experience of teaching.

I have some questions about the work. First of all, how old are the children and what languages do they speak? Regarding the volunteers, which sports will we teach? Also, where exactly will we live and how long will we work at the school? In addition, could you please send me information about visa requirements and travel arrangements?

I'm willing to attend an interview at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Stefanie Jucker

Stefanie Jucker

2 Read the letter again and complete the form.

Name	Stefanie Jucker
Nationality:	
Teaching experience:	
Sports played:	
Personal qualities:	
Reason for applying:	
Availability for interview:	

3 Work in pairs. Role-play the interview for the job and invent answers to Stefanie's questions.

Writing skills: a formal letter

1 Read the rules about writing a formal letter. Which rules has Stefanie broken?

- 1 Start by writing the purpose of the letter.
- 2 Write your own address at the top of the letter on the right.
- 3 Write the name, title and address of the recipient on the left, before *Dear* ...
- 4 Write the date after the addressee.
- 5 If you write *Dear Mr Turner* or *Dear Ms Bravo*, finish with *Yours sincerely*. If you write *Dear Sir / Madam*, finish with *Yours faithfully*.
- 6 To make a request, write *Please send me information ...*
- 7 To finish the letter, write *I look forward to hearing from you*.
- 8 Do not use contractions (e.g. *It's, I've, doesn't*).

2 Use the rules to improve Stefanie's letter.

Preparing to write

Work in pairs. Look at the job advertisement and discuss the questions.

- What skills, qualities or experience do you need for the job?
- Why would you like to do it?
- What questions would you like to ask?

Volunteers needed for elephant orphanage in Sri Lanka. You will help feed, clean and look after the elephants, observe and interact with them and help with administrative work in the office.

Describing your experience and skills

- I am currently studying / working as a / training to be a ...
- Before that, I ... / After leaving school I ... / During that time I taught ... / I was employed as a ...
- I believe I have the right skills / qualities for the job because ...
- I am good at ... I am interested in ...

Writing

Write a letter to apply for the job. Describe your experience, qualities and skills and ask questions.

WRITING A LETTER OF APPLICATION

writing

1. DISCUSS

- What do employers look for in a job candidate?
- Is work experience more important than qualifications?

2. FOCUS ON CONTENT

Read the rubric and the sample letter below. What information does the writer give about herself to show that she is suitable for the job?

Shop assistant required for bookshop

- Applicants must appreciate books and be reliable
- Good customer service and communication skills essential
- Previous sales experience preferred
- Part-time work

Apply in writing to: PO Box 7450

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing with regard to the position of sales assistant advertised in 'The Guardian' on 21st November.

I am seventeen years old and I'm currently attending Radcliffe Sixth Form College, where I am studying A level Business Studies, Maths and German. I have previous experience working as a sales assistant in a department store. The job involved attending to customers' needs and working on the till. This experience provided me with excellent customer service and communication skills through negotiating with demanding customers.

In addition, I realise that reliability is important. I consider myself to be hardworking and dependable. In my free time, I like reading and I am also an active member of the local library.

I believe I possess the necessary skills and experience for this position. I have enclosed a copy of my curriculum vitae as well as a reference from my previous employer. I hope my application will be taken into consideration.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,


Helen Austin

4. OUTLINE

When you are writing a letter of application follow the outline below.

GREETING

- Use an appropriate greeting (formal).

OPENING PARAGRAPH

- Use set phrases to state the position you are applying for and where you saw the advertisement.

MAIN PART

- Mention your age.
- Describe your qualifications and experience.
- Give information about your present or previous job if relevant.
- State any relevant interests or hobbies.
- Explain why you believe you are suitable for the job.

CLOSING PARAGRAPH

- Mention that you hope your application will be taken into consideration.
- Mention that you enclose a CV and/or a reference.

SIGNING OFF

- Use a formal signature ending. Sign underneath and print your full name below your signature.

TIP

When you are writing a letter of application:

- begin and end your letter with appropriate expressions.
- use formal language and write in a confident manner.
- identify the qualities required for the job (as stated in the advertisement) and explain why you consider yourself suitable for the job.

5. WRITING TASK

You have seen this advertisement and have decided to apply for the job. Write your letter of application (120-180 words).

STAFF REQUIRED

FOR INTERNET CAFE

We offer:

- Part-time work
- Flexible hours
- Excellent working conditions

We require:

- Basic computer skills
- Pleasant personality
- Knowledge of a foreign language an advantage

Apply in writing to: PO Box 3429

3. FOCUS ON STYLE

Read the letter again and find the formal words/expressions that correspond to the more informal meanings given below.

about (para 1)

now (para 2)

taking care of (para 2)

gave (para 2)

I think I am (para 3)

I have (para 4)

I have included (para 4)

thought about (para 4)

For the layout of formal letters and set phrases you can use, see Appendix I.

