

Lecture 1

Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 1 (General Training)

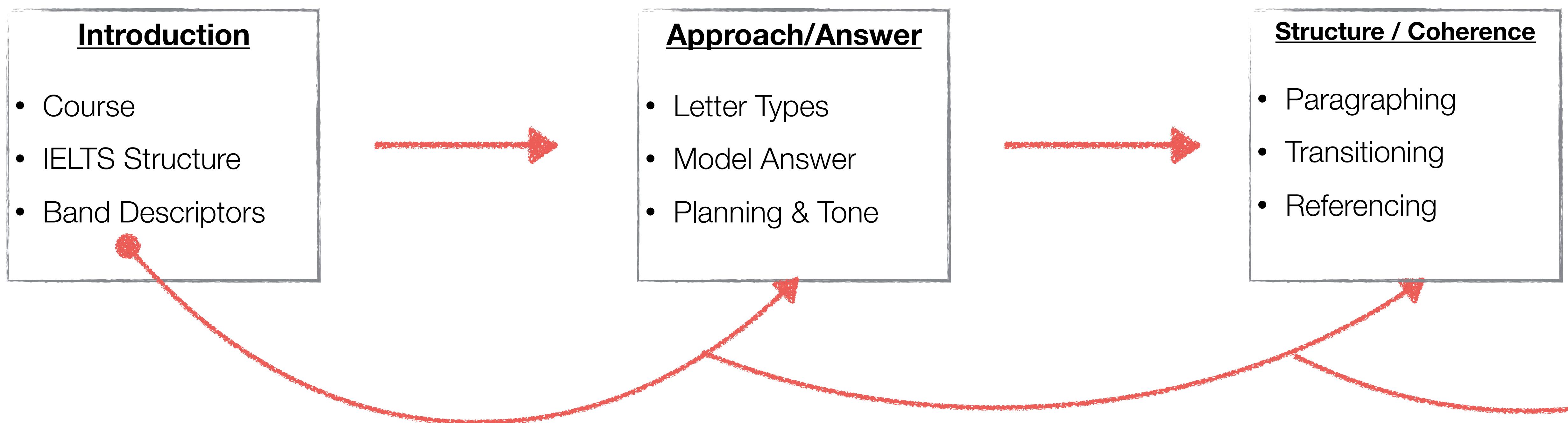
Course and exam breakdown.



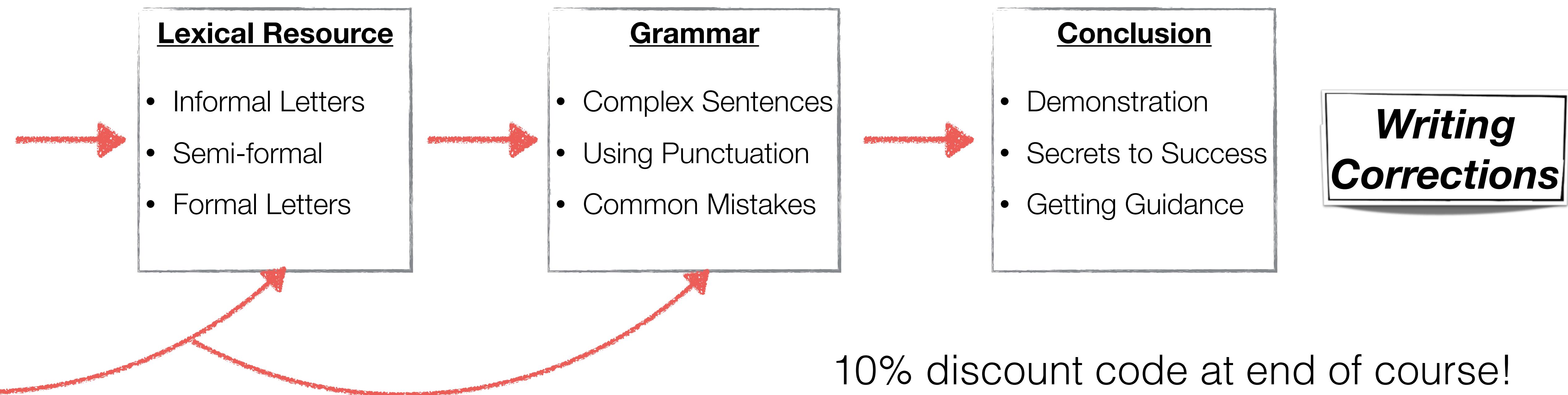
An introduction to the course

- **Who is this course for?**: If you're aiming to achieve Band 7 or above in IELTS Writing General Training, this course is for you.
- **How the course is structured**: 6 sections designed to address each band descriptor category requirement and help give you the confidence to produce a high-quality Task 1 letter.
- **Why this course works**: This course works because it addresses the most common difficulties encountered and errors made when responding to Task 1 GT questions. It offers clear strategies for tackling this task and addresses each band descriptor individually.

How the course is structured



How the course is structured



How to approach this course

Recommendation: Complete within **2 weeks**. However, if you have responsibilities, take your time.

To make the most of this course, you should:

- Bring a hard-working attitude to every lecture
- Continue to practice alone by answering Task 1 questions frequently
- Also watch the *Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 2* course lectures
- Find an IELTS Writing tutor to check your work
- Try to enjoy the writing process!

What the course is not...

I don't want anybody to be disappointed with this course, so it's important to explain up front, in this free preview lecture, what you should *not* expect to gain from the course:

- Vocabulary sets
- Grammar exercises
- Correction services
- Essay-writing advice
- Lots of model answers
- Academic Writing Task 1

How IELTS is structured: Walkthrough

Academic

Universities / Academic Careers

Academic Reading

- Each section = 1 long text
- Books, journals, magazines
- Non-specialist - academic

Academic Writing

- Task 1: Graph / Diagram
- Task 2: Essay

2 modules

Skill	Time	Sections/questions	Important Points
Listening	30 mins (+10 for transferring answers)	4 sections x 10 questions = 40 questions	Pencil only. Audio played once only.
Reading	1 hour (save 10 mins for transferring answers)	3 sections / 40 questions	Pencil only.
Writing	1 hour (20 mins Task 1 / 40 mins Task 2)	2 Tasks, 2 questions	Task 1 word min = 150 Task 2 word min = 250
Speaking	11-14 minutes	3 parts - no set number of questions	Part 1 = interview Part 2 = talk Part 3 = discussion

General Training

Visa Applications / Non-academic Careers

General Reading

- Section 1+2 = 2-3 short texts
- Section 3 = 1 long text
- Notices, magazines, newspapers, books, official/company docs

General Writing

- Task 1: Letter
- Task 2: Essay

Contact:

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or suggestions. I read everything you send!

You can contact me via:

- Udemy. Just use the Q&A function at the side of the page (preferred).
- Email: matt@theieltsteacher.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/theieltsteacher
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/theieltsteacher
- My website: www.theieltsteacher.com



Lecture 2

What Do You Want From Me?

How to impress the IELTS
examiner.



How IELTS Writing Task 1 is assessed

IELTS examiners assess your Writing Task 1 response by looking at **4** things...

Task Achievement

Coherence and Cohesion

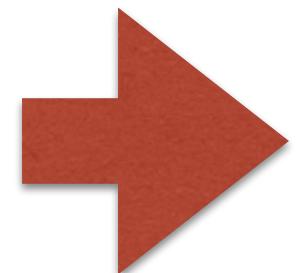
Lexical Resource

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

Task Achievement

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “cover the requirements of the task”
- “present a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate”
- “clearly present and highlight bullet point (directives)”



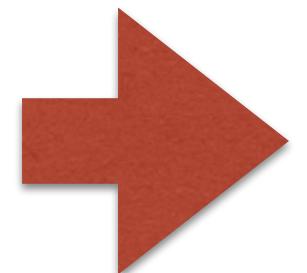
In other words:

- write about everything in the task and write at least 150 words
- make the purpose of your letters absolutely clear and use an appropriate tone/voice throughout
- make sure your letter includes everything the bullet points ask for

Coherence and Cohesion

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “logically organise information and ideas... clear progression throughout”
- “use a range of cohesive devices appropriately, although there might be some under-/over-use”



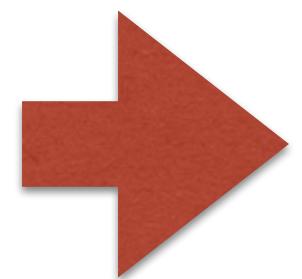
In other words:

- your letter should be in logical order and paragraphs should be separated according to their content
- link sentences and paragraphs with words like *however, therefore, furthermore* etc. (note that this language can be different depending on the tone required)

Lexical Resource

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “use a sufficient range of vocabulary to allow some flexibility and precision”
- “use less common lexical items with some awareness of style and collocation”
- “may produce occasional errors in word choice, spelling, word formation”



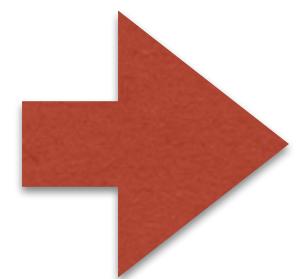
In other words:

- show a wide/flexible range of vocabulary for your specific letter type and be precise (don’t be vague!)
- use less common words and phrases, and show that you know how these words fit together (collocation)
- you can make a few mistakes with vocabulary, but try your best to be accurate!

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

According to the official IELTS Writing band descriptors, to achieve band 7 and above you **must**:

- “use a variety of complex structures”
- “produce frequent error-free sentences”
- “have good control of grammar and punctuation (but may make a few errors)”



In other words:

- use a range of sentence types and word orders (but use some simple sentences too!)
- avoid making mistakes in the majority of your sentences (more than 50%)
- use commas, colons and capitalisation appropriately (again this may change depending on the tone)

Band descriptors: A summary

Task Achievement

- Cover all task requirements
- Demonstrate a clear purpose
- Select and remain with an appropriate tone
- Address and develop bullet point directives

Coherence and Cohesion

- Order your response logically
- Link ideas together with cohesive devices
- Use referencing to link content in different areas
- Paragraph sensibly

Lexical Resource

- Show a wide range of vocab
- Be precise with language
- Use less common words/phrases; show collocations
- Aim for accurate spelling and word formation

Grammatical Range and Accuracy

- Show a range of grammar, simple and complex
- Don't make too many grammatical mistakes
- Use punctuation accurately
- +50% sentence accuracy

Lecture 3

The Different Letter Types

Understanding the types of letter tasks that appear in Writing Task 1 GT.



The three different letter types

INFORMAL

SEMI-FORMAL

FORMAL

The three different letter types

INFORMAL

You work for an international company. You have seen an advertisement for a training course which will be useful for your job.

Write to your manager.

SEMI-FORMAL

You recently received a letter from a friend asking for advice about whether to go to college or to try to get a job. You think he/she should get a job.

Write to this friend.

FORMAL

Your neighbours have recently written to you to complain about the noise from your house/flat.

Write to your neighbours.

The three different letter types

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Write to this friend.

SEMI-FORMAL

Your neighbours have recently written to you to complain about the noise from your house/flat.

Write to your neighbours.

FORMAL

You work for an international company. You have seen an advertisement for a training course which will be useful for your job.

Write to your manager.

Letter purposes

The tone of your letter is one of the most important aspects to consider, but the purpose of the letter deserves just as much attention.

Here are some of the different purposes that can appear:

Complaint

Praise / Thank you

Apology

Request

Application

Resignation

Explanation

Advice

Invitations / Arrangements

Almost all of these letter purposes can require a formal, semi-formal or informal style, depending on the context. This seems to present a huge array of different question types, but don't worry!

As you will see, a similar structure can be used for each, and many 'letter expressions' can be used across multiple letter purposes.

Section 2: Approaching the question

Lecture 4

Top Marks!

A brief look at what a top-scoring GT
Task 1 letter looks like.



Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 1 (GT) - A Model Answer

One of your friends recently had a birthday celebration, but you missed it and you forgot to tell your friend that you couldn't attend.

Write a letter to your friend. In your letter

- apologise for missing the birthday celebration**
- explain why you missed it and why you didn't tell your friend**
- say what you would like to do to show that you are sorry**

Dear Tom,

I hope you're doing okay and had a brilliant birthday.

I'm just writing to say I'm so sorry for missing the celebrations. You're probably wondering what on earth happened to me and I can totally understand if you're feeling upset about my no-show. I feel awful not only about not warning you beforehand, but also for not having written sooner.

The thing is, without boring you with the details, I've been put under a huge amount of pressure at work to finish a certain project within an unreasonable timeframe. I've had to pull a few all-nighters, and it was these that prevented me from coming to your party. If it weren't for the resulting stress clouding my brain, I'm sure I would've remembered to call you to let you know I couldn't make it.

I really want to make it up to you, so although you may still be angry, I hope you'll accept this attached concert ticket by way of an apology. I have the other ticket, and you know how much fun we had last time we went to see these guys!

Hopefully speak soon,

Matt

Lecture 5

Planning, Structure & Timing

Laying the foundations to achieve
Task 1 success.



Planning your letter

Although planning is important in Task 1 as it can save you time in the long run, I don't recommend spending much time on this. **2 minutes should be enough.**

As in Task 2, the first thing to do is to underline or highlight any key words in the task. Let's take an example.

You and some friends ate a meal at a restaurant to celebrate a special occasion, and you were very pleased with the food and the service.

Write a letter to the restaurant manager.

- *give details of your visit to the restaurant*
- *explain the reason for the celebration*
- *say what was good about the food and the service*

Planning your letter

Although planning is important in Task 1 as it can save you time in the long run, I don't recommend spending much time on this. **2 minutes should be enough.**

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Why you should underline key words

Examples of letters which would lose marks for Task Achievement:

- Discussing your experience, but not mentioning your friends
- Describing where you ate, but not mentioning it was a restaurant
- Explaining it was a special occasion, but not mentioning what type of special occasion it was
- Describing what was good about the food, but not what was good about the service

Planning your letter - the process

Once you've underlined your key words (10-20 seconds), assess whether the letter should be formal, informal or semi-formal and use this as the title of your plan.

If you like, you can also include the purpose of the letter as this may help to orient your mind towards appropriate ideas and vocabulary.

The plan itself can be structured in the same way as the letter itself. This is super simple: **just plan one paragraph for each bullet point.**

For each paragraph plan, **try to offer two ideas.** This will prevent you from failing to reach the minimum word count and creating an imbalanced letter.

How planning leads to structure

Let's look at an example using the earlier task:

You and some friends ate a meal at a restaurant to celebrate a special occasion, and you were very pleased with the food and the service.

Write a letter to the restaurant manager.

- give details of your visit to the restaurant*
- explain the reason for the celebration*
- say what was good about the food and the service*

PLAN - FORMAL

Praise/Gratitude

P1?

P2 - Monday night /// First time there

P3 - Sister's birthday /// She loves Italian

P4 - Food: delicious, authentic, 'taste of Italy' /// Service: conscientious waiter

How planning leads to structure

Let's look at an example using the earlier task:

You and some friends ate a meal at a restaurant to celebrate a special occasion, and you were very pleased with the food and the service.

Write a letter to the restaurant manager.

- give details of your visit to the restaurant*
- explain the reason for the celebration*
- say what was good about the food and the service*

PLAN - FORMAL

Praise/Gratitude

**P1 =
purpose sentence**

P2 - Monday night /// First time there

P3 - Sister's birthday /// She loves Italian

P4 - Food: delicious, authentic, 'taste of Italy' /// Service: conscientious waiter

Timing

As mentioned earlier, you should try to spend no more than **2 minutes** on planning your letter. A good plan should actually **save you time** over the course of your response.

Following this, aim to spend no more than **5 minutes per paragraph**. Considering you should be writing no more than 3 paragraphs (plus a purpose sentence (next lecture)), this should leave you with **3 minutes to check your work**.

And remember, you **must** write at least **150 words** (not including your name at the end). If you don't, you **will** lose marks! As such, aim for 50 words per paragraph.

**Time:
20 minutes**



Timing

Word count trick:

Don't count all of your words! This takes too much time.

Instead, in your practice sessions, count how many words you usually write per line. Then, when it comes to the exam, you can just count the lines and multiply this figure by your average words-per-line!

Only do this when you are worried you haven't reached the word count. 150 words isn't many, so most of the time you shouldn't need to waste time counting words.

**Time:
20 minutes**



Lecture 6

The Importance of Tone & Purpose

Essential ingredients for success in
Task Achievement.



A look at the band descriptors

Let's take a look at the differences between band 6 and band 7 for Task Achievement in General Training Writing Task 1.

Band 6: “presents a purpose that is generally clear; there may be inconsistencies in tone.”

Band 7: “presents a clear purpose, with the tone consistent and appropriate.”

In other words, a **crystal clear purpose** and a **consistent and appropriate tone** can be the difference between a band 6 and a band 7.

Appropriate Tone

The following three sentences all communicate the same message, but they do so using different tones.

Which one is **formal**? Which one is **informal**? Which one is **semi-formal**?

Just writing to say a huge thank you to you for helping us in our big move the other day. I'm not sure we could have done it without you!

I am writing to express my gratitude for your assistance in our relocation on Wednesday 21st March.

My wife and I would like to thank you for your invaluable help with our house move last week.

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The following three sentences all communicate the same message, but they do so using different tones.

Which one is **formal**? Which one is **informal**? Which one is **semi-formal**?

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I am writing to express my gratitude for your assistance in our relocation on Wednesday 21st March.

My wife and I would like to thank you for your invaluable help with our house move last week.

Consistent Tone

It is not enough to select an *appropriate* tone. You must also be *consistent* with that tone. A **huge** number of students fail on this front.

Which of the following sentences would score highest for TA?

I am writing to register a complaint about the rubbish service I experienced in your establishment the other week.

I was really quite disappointed with the quality of service my family and I received on our visit to your restaurant last Friday.

To be honest, the waiter was really rude, and although our dishes were of the highest quality, I don't think we'll ever go back.

Consistent Tone

It is not enough to select an *appropriate* tone. You must also be *consistent* with that tone. A **huge** number of students fail on this front.

Which of the following sentences would score highest for TA?

F

I am writing to register a complaint about the rubbish service I experienced in your establishment the other week.

SF

I was really quite disappointed with the quality of service my family and I received on our visit to your restaurant last Friday.

I

To be honest, the waiter was really rude, and although our dishes were of the highest quality, I don't think we'll ever go back.

Consistent Tone

It is not enough to select an *appropriate* tone. You must also be *consistent* with that tone. A **huge** number of students fail on this front.

Which of the following sentences would score highest for TA?

*I am writing to register a complaint about the **disappointingly poor** service I experienced in your establishment the other week.*

F

I was really quite disappointed with the quality of service my family and I received on our visit to your restaurant last Friday.

SF

To be honest, the waiter was really rude, and although our dishes were of the highest quality, I don't think we'll ever go back.

I

Consistent Tone

It is not enough to select an *appropriate* tone. You must also be *consistent* with that tone. A **huge** number of students fail on this front.

Which of the following sentences would score highest for TA?

*I am writing to register a complaint about the **disappointingly poor** service I experienced in your establishment the other week.*

F

I was really quite disappointed with the quality of service my family and I received on our visit to your restaurant last Friday.

SF

*To be honest, the waiter was really rude, and although **the food tasted fantastic**, I don't think we'll ever go back.*

I

Clear Purpose

If we take a look back at the two previous ‘messages’ being communicated, we should be able to see a clear purpose:

Just writing to say a huge thank you to you for helping us in our big move the other day. I’m not sure we could have done it without you!

THANK YOU

I was really quite disappointed with the quality of service my family and I received on our visit to your restaurant last Friday.

COMPLAINT

I recommend opening with a **Purpose Sentence** to make sure your purpose for writing is **absolutely clear** from the very first line!

Purpose Sentence

Here are my suggestions for opening your purpose sentences. ***Be flexible!***

INFORMAL

Just writing to

say thanks / congratulations / sorry ...

ask for / check ...

let you know ...

Purpose Sentence

Here are my suggestions for opening your purpose sentences. ***Be flexible!***

FORMAL

I am writing

to complain / suggest / request / inform ...

to express my gratitude / disappointment / interest / regret regarding ...

with regards to ...

Purpose Sentence

Here are my suggestions for opening your purpose sentences. ***Be flexible!***

SEMI-FORMAL

I would like to / I am writing to

say thank you / congratulations ...

send my commiserations / apologies ...

invite you to ...

Lecture 7

Bullet Point Brilliance

Ensuring you cover all elements of the task.



A look at the band descriptors

Again, let's take a look at the differences between band 6 and band 7 for Task Achievement in General Training Writing Task 1.

Band 6: “presents and adequately highlights bullet points but details may be irrelevant, inappropriate or inaccurate.”

Band 7: “clearly presents and highlights bullet points but could be more fully extended.”

Similar to the issues of tone and purpose, the difference between band 6 and band 7 is related to **relevance, appropriateness** and **accuracy**. To score a band 8+, we should also consider **extension**.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

EXAMPLE

You recently bought a piece of equipment for your kitchen but it did not work. You phoned the shop but no action was taken.

Write a letter to the manager. In your letter

- describe the problem with the equipment
- explain what happened when you phoned the shop
- say what you would like the manager to do

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Appropriateness

- describe the problem with the equipment

There is a hole in the appliance which renders it useless (a word I would also use to describe your staff).

You might feel angry with the shop staff, but it is inappropriate to bring the issue up in this informal, aggressive manner within the letter.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Appropriateness

- describe the problem with the equipment

There is a hole in the appliance which renders it useless.

You might feel angry with the shop staff, but it is inappropriate to bring the issue up in this informal, aggressive manner within the letter.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Relevance

- describe the problem with the equipment

I had been stuck in traffic for hours and just arrived home before using the appliance.

The information about traffic has no relevance to the letter. It may be used to suggest frustration, but even then, an examiner would be likely to see it as irrelevant.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Relevance

- describe the problem with the equipment

I had been stuck in traffic for hours and just arrived home before using the appliance.

The information about traffic has no relevance to the letter. It may be used to suggest frustration, but even then, an examiner would be likely to see it as irrelevant.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Extension

- explain what happened when you phoned the shop

When I called the shop, I was told I couldn't get a refund.

The point here is both appropriate and relevant, but there is absolutely no extension. Who did you speak to? What did you say? Make sure to keep the details relevant.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Extension

- explain what happened when you phoned the shop

When I called the shop, I spoke to a staff member called Hannah to explain the issue with the defective appliance. Unfortunately, Hannah informed me I was not entitled to a refund.

The point here is both appropriate and relevant, but there is absolutely no extension. Who did you speak to? What did you say? Make sure to keep the details relevant.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Accuracy

- say what you would like the manager to do

I think it is only fair that I be reimbursed for this faulty product.

In this case, we are saying what we would *think is fair*, but not what we would *like the manager to do*. A minor difference, but this can be seen as a lack of accuracy.

A.R.E.A

Appropriateness. **R**elevance. **E**xtension. **A**ccuracy. These are all key to whether you succeed or fail when addressing the bullet point directives.

Accuracy

- say what you would like the manager to do

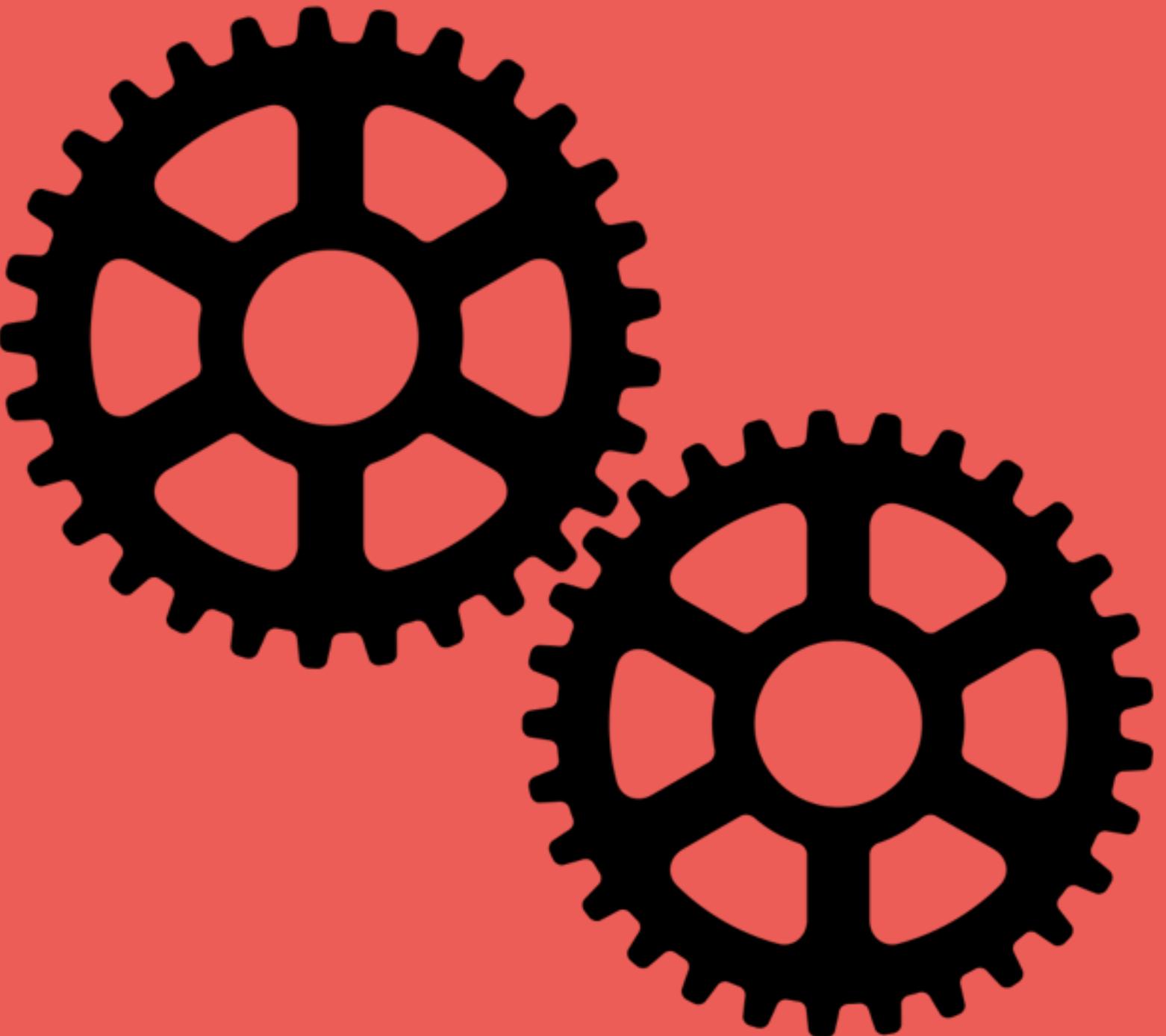
I think it is only fair that I be reimbursed for this faulty product, and I therefore kindly request that you provide a full refund at your earliest opportunity.

In this case, we are saying what we would *think is fair*, but not what we *would like the manager to do*. A minor difference, but this can be seen as a lack of accuracy.

Lecture 8

Paragraphing Pro(gression)

How to manage the development and progression of your paragraphs.



A reminder of overall structure

As we saw in Section 2, the overall structure of Task 1 letters should be super simple:

One paragraph per bullet point (+ one purpose sentence).

With the overall structure sorted, we still need to consider an important question:

- How should we *progress* through these paragraphs in a coherent, cohesive manner?

Individual paragraph structure

Have a look at these two paragraphs and decide for yourself which one is better:

When I saw the photos, they brought me fond memories. I'd like to thank you for all the support and attention you gave me while I was in Paris for holiday. Things like that are priceless and all I can give you is my gratitude. Although the weather was freezing cold, we had enjoyable moments together.

The photos you sent arrived the other day, and I have to say they're absolutely brilliant. I still can't believe how much snow there was! I look silly without a coat, but I hardly noticed the cold with all the fun we were having. They also really reminded me how generous you were with your hospitality and support, and for that I can't thank you enough.

Individual paragraph structure

Have a look at these two paragraphs and decide for yourself which one is better:

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Problematic progression

Have a look again at the problematic paragraph and consider why it might lose marks for coherence and cohesion.

When I saw the photos, they brought me fond memories.

I'd like to thank you for all the support and attention you gave me while I was in Paris for holiday.

Things like that are priceless and all I can give you is my gratitude.

Although the weather was freezing cold, we had enjoyable moments together.

NOTES

1. Abrupt opening.
2. No link between first and second sentences.
3. Second and third sentences don't link with first sentence.
4. Fourth sentence has very weak links with other sentences.
5. Little sense of progression.

Proper progression

Have a look again at the improved paragraph and consider why it might gain marks for coherence and cohesion.

The photos you sent arrived the other day, and I have to say they're absolutely brilliant.

I still can't believe how much snow there was!

I look silly without a coat, but I hardly noticed the cold with all the fun we were having.

They also really reminded me how generous you were with your hospitality and support, and for that I can't thank you enough.

NOTES

1. Clear opening.
2. Second sentence requires first sentence for context.
3. Third sentence requires second and first for context; follows logically.
4. Fourth sentence links all the way back to first sentence.
5. Clear sense of progression throughout.

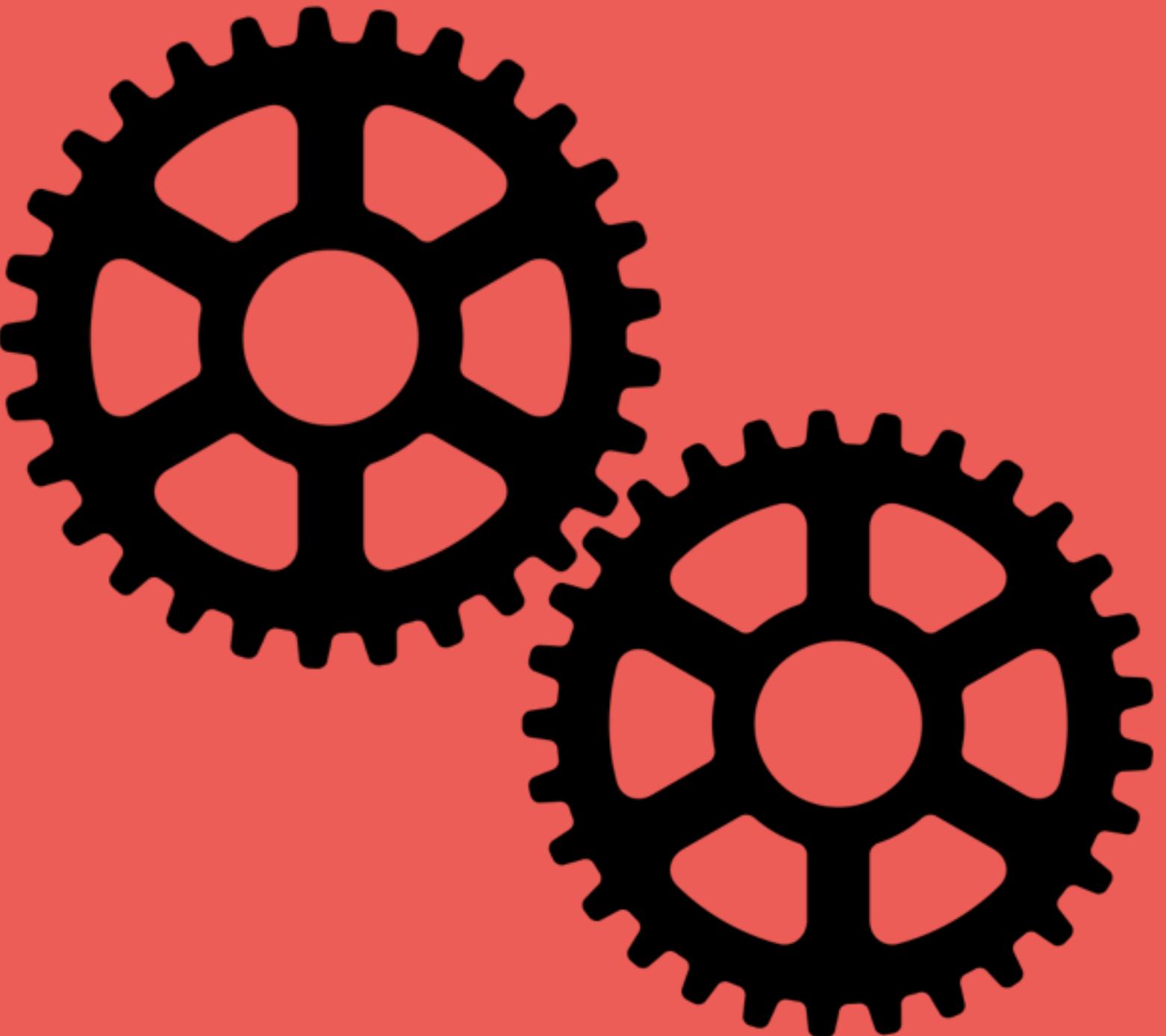
In summary:

- Guide the reader into the paragraph. Don't drop them into it without any markers.
- Be wary of any sentence that can exist independently of any others in the paragraph.
- Make sure every sentence has a clear link to its preceding sentence and its following sentence.
- Make sure each sentence has a clear and obvious link to the overall paragraph theme (in the earlier example, every sentence had a clear link to 'the photos').
- Try to ensure that there is a clear logic to the way you sequence your ideas and sentences.

Lecture 9

Useful Cohesive Devices

The gears that keep your letter running smoothly.



A look at the band descriptors

Returning once more to the band descriptors, this is what we see for different bands...

Band 6: “uses cohesive devices effectively, but cohesion within and/or between sentences may be faulty or mechanical.”

Band 7: “uses a range of cohesive devices appropriately although there may be some under-/over-use.”

Note that band 8 and band 9 do not mention cohesive devices at all. Why?

Smartly used cohesive devices should work like gears, keeping everything running smoothly, but working in the background, not the foreground.

Band 9: “uses cohesion in such a way that it attracts no attention.”

What are cohesive devices?

A ‘cohesive device’ is the name used for any word, expression or sequence of language that helps the reader **transition** from one idea to the next.

Remember, we do not **only** transition from one idea to another when moving **between** sentences. We can also do this **within** sentences.

*The deadline is next Tuesday, **so** could you give me a hand with getting it done on Monday?*

*The deadline is next Tuesday. **With that in mind**, could you give me a hand with getting it done on Monday?*

Different tones, different devices

One important difference between Task 1 and Task 2 of the GT module is that, in Task 1, it may be inappropriate to use certain cohesive devices that you would normally use in Task 2.

This is because, in informal letters, we are often aiming for a tone of **casual conversation**. Not so in essays.

Would you often use '*Nevertheless*', '*Furthermore*' or '*Lastly*' in a conversation with a friend? Probably not!

Instead, you would use '*Having said that*', '*Also*' and '*One more thing*'.

Examples

Check out the example paragraphs below. They are both communicating the same message: looking for a lost briefcase. Which one is **formal** and which one is **informal**?

With regards to the details of the briefcase, it is a tan brown leather case with black stitching and two gold latches. In the event that this briefcase is found, please contact me on my mobile number listed above. Furthermore, I can be available between the hours of 6pm and 8pm this week if you need to liaise with me in person.

So you know what you're looking for exactly, it's a tan brown leather briefcase with black stitching and two gold latches. If you do find it, you can call me on the number above. Just let me know if you need anything else. I'm also around in the evenings this week if you need to speak to me face-to-face.

Examples

Check out the example paragraphs below. They are both communicating the same message: looking for a lost briefcase. Which one is **formal** and which one is **informal**?

With regards to the details of the briefcase, it is a tan brown leather case with black stitching and two gold latches. In the event that this briefcase is found, please contact me on my mobile number listed above. Furthermore, I can be available between the hours of 6pm and 8pm this week if you need to liaise with me in person.

So you know what you're looking for exactly, it's a tan brown leather briefcase with black stitching and two gold latches. If you do find it, you can call me on the number above. Just let me know if you need anything else. I'm also around in the evenings this week if you need to speak to me face-to-face.

Examples

Check out the example paragraphs below. They are both communicating the same message: looking for a lost briefcase. Which one is **formal** and which one is **informal**?

With regards to the details of the briefcase, it is a tan brown leather case with black stitching and two gold latches. In the event that this briefcase is found, please contact me on my mobile number listed above. Furthermore, I can be available between the hours of 6pm and 8pm this week if you need to liaise with me in person.

So you know what you're looking for exactly, it's a tan brown leather briefcase with black stitching and two gold latches. If you do find it, you can call me on the number above. Just let me know if you need anything else. I'm also around in the evenings this week if you need to speak to me face-to-face.

Useful Cohesive Devices

NOTE:

I strongly recommend reading other people's letters to get a good idea of when and how to use cohesive devices in Task 1 GT. The following cohesive devices should not be used as perfect reference; there is a lot of nuance when it comes to letters!

Still, the following slides should offer a good starting point for your practice, and you can follow up with Google search to learn about how they might be used in a letter.

Useful Cohesive Devices - Informal Letters

Begin a list	Add another point	Conditionals	Switch direction
First off, ...	Also, ...	If ...	Still, ...
To start with, ...	What's more, ...	Supposing ...	That said, ...
First, ...	On top of that, ...	Just in case + subject + verb ...	Having said that, ...
The first thing is ...	By the way, ... (adding a final point)	On the off chance that ...	Then again, ...

Useful Cohesive Devices - Formal Letters

Begin a list	Add another point	Conditionals	Switch direction
Firstly, ...	Furthermore, ...	If ...	Despite this, ...
To begin with, ...	Moreover, ...	In the event that ...	Nevertheless, ...
First and foremost, ...	Additionally, ...	Should ...	However, ...
First of all, ...	In addition, ...	In the unlikely scenario that ...	On the other hand, ...

Useful Cohesive Devices - Informal Letters

Explain	Clarify	Referencing a point	Summarise
Basically, ...	In other words, ...	About ..., ...	Long story short, ...
The thing is, ...	In plain English, ...	Thinking about ..., ...	To recap, ...
... because ...	What that means is ...	As for ...,	All things considered, ...
Thanks to / Because of ..., ...	Essentially, related to ...	So, ...

Useful Cohesive Devices - Formal Letters

Explain	Clarify	Referencing a point	Summarise
This is because ...	To clarify, ...	With regards/respect to ..., ...	To conclude, ...
... due to ...	To be precise, ...	As to ...	In conclusion, ...
The reason for this is ...	In the interest of clarity, ...	Regarding ..., ...	To summarise, ...
This can be attributed to ...	To avoid confusion, concerning ...	In summary, ...

Informal Letter Example

Here is a paragraph of an **informal letter** with some of the cohesive devices missing. Can you work out which ones go where from the selection below? Make sure to change the punctuation/language if necessary!

I'm sorry I couldn't write any earlier, but I do have some good reasons! I was given this huge project to finish at work. Yesterday the deadline was pushed back when the manager realised it was just impossible to finish the work in that timeframe. I had to get this problem with my car fixed, which just took forever to get done. All of that's sorted now. I can get back to normal life for a bit!

so thankfully also first off though on top of that

Informal Letter Example

Here is a paragraph of an **informal letter** with some of the cohesive devices missing. Can you work out which ones go where from the selection below? Make sure to change the punctuation/language if necessary!

I'm sorry I couldn't write any earlier, but I do have some good reasons! First off, I was given this huge project to finish at work, though yesterday the deadline was pushed back when the manager realised it was just impossible to finish the work in that timeframe. On top of that, I had to get this problem with my car fixed, which just took forever to get done. Thankfully, all of that's sorted now, so I can get back to normal life for a bit!

Formal Letter Example

Here is a paragraph of a **formal letter** with some of the cohesive devices missing. Can you work out which ones go where from the selection below? Make sure to change the punctuation/language if necessary!

Please accept my apologies for my delayed response. Several reasons: I had been working overtime to ensure the completion of a project prior to its deadline. This deadline was pushed forward yesterday to a more realistic date. I had been having car troubles that proved harder to fix than initially appeared and this demanded a large portion of my time. All of the above issues have now been resolved.

until

however

furthermore

this was due to

first of all

Formal Letter Example

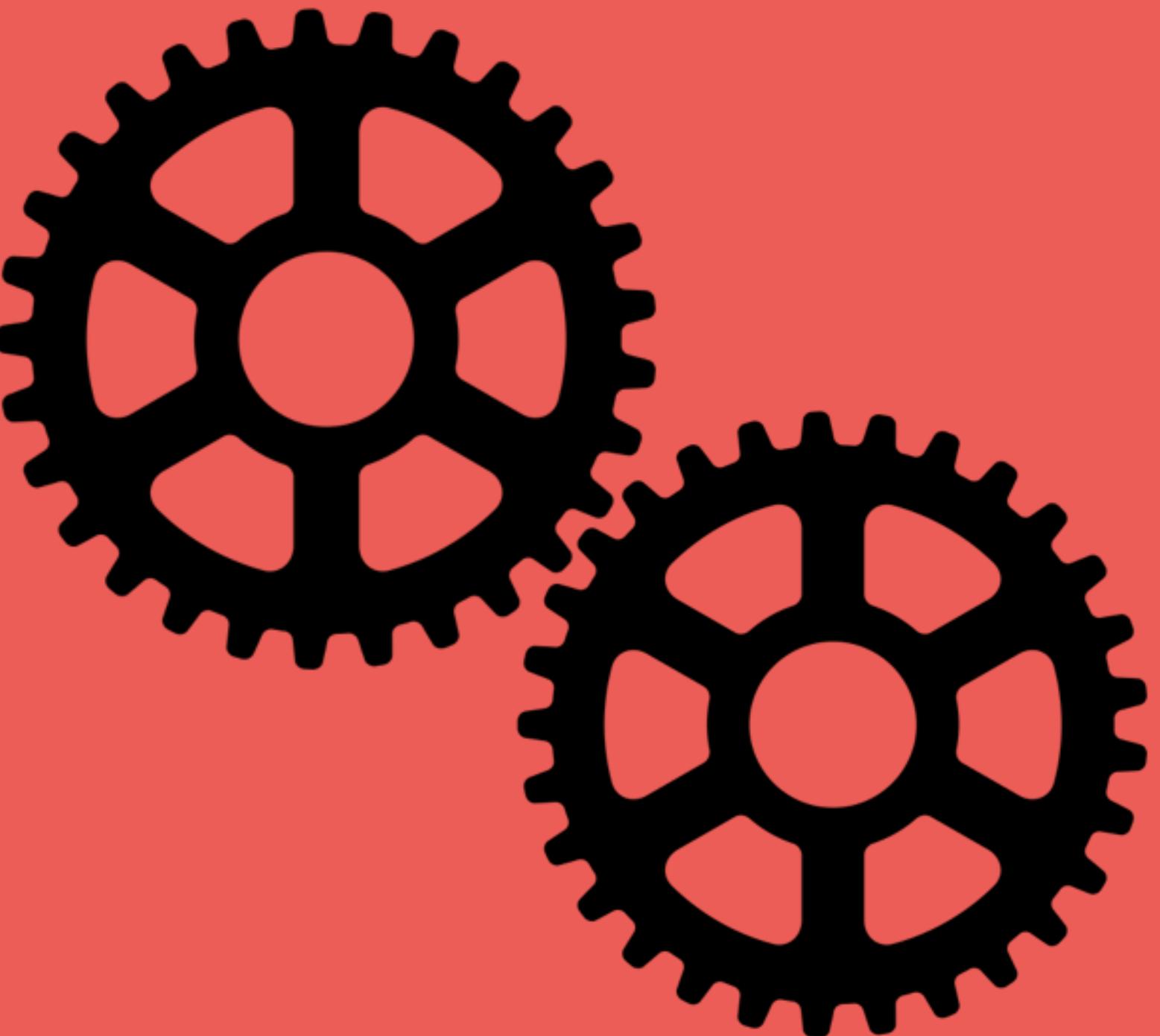
Here is a paragraph of a **formal letter** with some of the cohesive devices missing. Can you work out which ones go where from the selection below? Make sure to change the punctuation/language if necessary!

Please accept my apologies for my delayed response. This was due to several reasons. First of all, I had been working overtime to ensure the completion of a project prior to its deadline until the deadline was pushed forward to a more realistic date. Furthermore, I had been having car troubles that proved harder to fix than initially appeared and this demanded a large portion of my time. However, all of the above issues have now been resolved.

Lecture 10

Referencing Review

The gears that keep your letter
running smoothly.



A look at the band descriptors

Referencing is not mentioned in the band descriptors anywhere from band 7 and up.

However, it is mentioned in band 6, suggesting that accurate referencing can be the difference between a band 6 and a band 7 in Coherence and Cohesion.

Band 6: “may not always use referencing clearly or appropriately.”

First question: **What is referencing?**

What is referencing?

This. These. Such. Those. That. It. They. His. Her. Their. It. Its. One. Ones.

All of the above words can be used as ‘referencing devices’.

This means that they point the reader in the direction of previously mentioned ideas. By doing this, they allow the writer to avoid repetition and save time.

We use them all the time, and often we don’t even notice.

Where above can you see referencing devices being used? What exactly are those words referencing?

What is referencing?

This. These. Such. Those. That. It. They. His. Her. Their. It. Its. One. Ones.

All of **the above** words can be used as ‘referencing devices’.

This means that **they** point the reader in the direction of previously mentioned ideas. By doing **this**, **they** allow the writer to avoid repetition and save time.

We use **them** all the time, and often we don’t even notice.

Where above can you see referencing devices being used? What exactly are those words referencing?

Formal and Informal Referencing

When writing essays, we tend to use the demonstrative pronouns ‘this’ and ‘these’ instead of ‘that’ and ‘those’ when referencing ideas (though there are exceptions).

This is also true of formal letters. In formal letters, treat referencing as you would in an essay.

However, with informal letters, this rule is loosened to some degree and the pronouns ‘that’ and ‘those’ are much more common, particularly when starting sentences.

Formal: This is why I have been forced to write to you.

Informal: That's why I've had to get in touch.

Fix the paragraph - Informal

Here is a paragraph in an **informal** letter from a student who struggles with referencing in terms of word selection, tone and timing. See if you can improve the paragraph.

Now, I remember you showing great interest in learning about the culture in the country I live in. This is why I'm inviting you to come visit me and my family in England this summer. We'll need to work out the details so you can come at a time convenient for both of us, but I want to make sure the visit happens! There are loads of tourist spots near where we live, one of the tourist spots being Stonehenge, and another spot being Salisbury Cathedral. I know you have so much lined up for summer already, but just think about the suggestion and let me know.

Fix the paragraph - Informal

Here is a paragraph in an **informal** letter from a student who struggles with referencing in terms of word selection, tone and timing. See if you can improve the paragraph.

Now, I remember you showing great interest in learning about the culture in my country. That's why I'm inviting you to come visit us in England this summer. We'll need to work out the details so you can come at a time convenient for both of us, but I want to make sure it happens! There are loads of tourist spots near where we live, one of them being Stonehenge, and another one being Salisbury Cathedral. I know you have so much lined up for summer already, but just think about it and let me know.

Fix the paragraph - Formal

Here is a paragraph in a **formal** letter from a student who struggles with referencing in terms of word selection, tone and timing. See if you can improve the paragraph.

The lost documents should be relatively simple to find considering that the documents were left in the safety deposit box in room 249. The documents are in a blue plastic folder and are A4 size. I would greatly appreciate your help in finding the documents and sending those to my office location at 452 Edgar Street, London. The documents contain sensitive information so please handle it with care. That is why it is also essential that they are located and returned post-haste.

Fix the paragraph - Formal

Here is a paragraph in a **formal** letter from a student who struggles with referencing in terms of word selection, tone and timing. See if you can improve the paragraph.

The lost documents should be relatively simple to find considering that they were left in the safety deposit box in room 249. They are in a blue plastic folder and are A4 size. I would greatly appreciate your help in finding these documents and sending them to my office location at 452 Edgar Street, London. The documents contain sensitive information so please handle them with care. This is why it is also essential that they are located and returned post-haste.

Section 4: Writing the Letter

Lecture 11

Vocabulary - Informal Letters

Useful and typical language for
informal letters.



Letter language

Letter writing is different to writing in any other format. Much of the language that you see in letters is rarely seen in other written formats. This goes for informal, semi-formal, and formal letters, but much more so with regards to formal.

We'll start this section by looking at informal letter vocabulary. What you will notice is that, a lot of the time, the language in informal letters sounds like the spoken language of a casual chat between friends.

Top tip: Listen to conversations between friends and family members, whether artificial (scripted dialogue in films and books) or genuine (eavesdropping on the train, listening to unscripted radio shows). Think about which words and expressions might fit well in an informal letter, but not a formal one.

Apology/condolence letters

“for apologies ...”

Example: _____ getting back to you so late, but work's been mad recently.

“sorry I'm so ... ”

Example: _____ to hear about your loss. I can't imagine what you must be going through.

“a shame such”

Example: I'm sorry you didn't get to the next round of the competition. That's _____.

Apology/condolence letters

“*Apologies for ...*”

Example: *Apologies for* getting back to you so late, but work's been mad recently.

“*I'm so sorry ...*”

Example: *I'm so sorry* to hear about your loss. I can't imagine what you must be going through.

“*... such a shame...*”

Example: *I'm sorry you didn't get to the next round of the competition. That's such a shame.*

Invitation letters

“free you are . . . ?”

Example: We’re having a little get together on Friday night, _____?

“don’t why you . . . ?”

Example: In fact, _____ come and stay with us this summer?.

“come should you along . . . ”

Example: It’s Rachel’s birthday at the weekend and she’s throwing a little party. _____!

Invitation letters

“Are you free ... ?”

Example: We’re having a little get together on Friday night, are you free?

“Why don’t you ... ?”

Example: In fact, why don’t you come and stay with us this summer?.

“You should come along...”

Example: It’s Rachel’s birthday at the weekend and she’s throwing a little party. You should definitely come along!

Thank you letters

“for so thanks much ...”

Example: _____ giving me a hand this weekend. You’re an absolute lifesaver.

“huge / a / thanks/thank you ...”

Example: Just writing to say _____ for putting us up last month.

“enough you can’t thank” / “appreciated massively”

Example: I _____ for what you did for Sarah on Tuesday. It was _____.

Thank you letters

“Thanks so much for ...”

Example: *Thanks so much for giving me a hand this weekend. You’re an absolute lifesaver.*

“A huge thanks / thank you”

Example: *Just writing to say a huge thanks / thank you for putting us up last month.*

“Can’t thank you enough” / “Massively appreciated”

Example: *I can’t thank you enough for what you did for Sarah on Tuesday. It was massively appreciated.*

Request letters

“ask to about wanted just ...”

Example: _____ how you managed to find that job in London.

“happen to / ... / would you / you wouldn’t / ?”

Example: You wouldn’t happen to have a tent I could borrow for the weekend, would you?

“do me a / could you / huge favour / you couldn’t / ?”

Example: _____ I really need someone to come and have a tinker with my PC to see what’s wrong with it.

Request letters

“Just wanted to ask about ...”

Example: *Just wanted to ask about how you managed to find that job in London.*

“You wouldn’t happen to ..., would you?”

Example: *You wouldn’t happen to have a tent I could borrow for the weekend, would you?*

“You couldn’t do me a huge favour, could you?”

Example: *You couldn’t do me a huge favour, could you? I really need someone to come and have a tinker with my PC to see what’s wrong with it.*

Advice letters

“I think / ask me / if you / you should ... ”

Example: _____ talk to him and be honest about how you feel.

“were if I you I’d ... ”

Example: _____ get out of that job as soon as possible and find something that isn’t so soul-destroying.

“what here’s I do would”

Example: I’m not sure what the best move is in this situation, but _____:
first of all, I’d ...

Advice letters

“If you ask me, I think you should ...”

Example: *If you ask me, I think you should talk to him and be honest about how you feel.*

“If I were you, I’d ...”

Example: *If I were you, I’d get out of that job as soon as possible and find something that isn’t so soul-destroying.*

“Here’s what I would do...”

Example: *I’m not sure what the best move is in this situation, but here’s what I would do: first of all, I’d ...*

Complaint letters

“to have / this up / I’m sorry / but / to bring ...”

Example: _____ I’m really quite upset about how you reacted to our news last week.

“rather down let I feel ...”

Example: _____ by the lack of contact I’ve received from you since moving to the city.

“... good simply enough isn’t... ”

Example: We had such high hopes for this partnership, but your work _____.

Complaint letters

"I'm sorry to have to bring this up, but ..."

Example: *I'm sorry to have to bring this up, but I'm really quite upset about how you reacted to our news last week.*

"I feel rather let down ... "

Example: *I feel rather let down by the lack of contact I've received from you since moving to the city.*

"... simply isn't good enough ... "

Example: *We had such high hopes for this partnership, but your work simply wasn't good enough.*

Letter endings

Hope to hear from you soon (!)

Look forward to hearing from you (!)

Just get back to me when you can. No rush (!)

Just let me know if you need anything on my end.

Best, ...

Love / Yours, ...

Cheers / Thanks, ...

Section 4: Writing the Letter

Lecture 12

Vocabulary - Semi-Formal Letters

Useful and typical language for semi-formal letters.



Letter language

Semi-formal letter language is perhaps the trickiest of all to master, but not because it is the most advanced. It is because it needs to achieve the right balance between just enough formal and just enough informal.

Not only that, but each semi-formal letter might have a different ‘formality weighting’ depending on the letter’s recipient.

Writing to your aunt and writing to your friendly co-worker both require a level of semi-formality, but not necessarily the same level.

There is no rule here. You will need to use your instinct. But one thing can help: read, read, read.

Apology letters

“for am very sorry I ...”

Example: _____ causing you such trouble.

“do apologise I ...”

Example: Although I cannot erase what happened, _____ since

“hear I sorry am to ...”

Example: _____ about the news regarding your brother's redundancy.

Apology letters

“I am very sorry for ...”

Example: *I am very sorry for causing you such trouble.*

“I do apologise ...”

Example: *Although I cannot erase what happened, I do apologise since*

“I am sorry to hear ...”

Example: *I am sorry to hear about the news regarding your brother's redundancy.*

Thank you letters

“you thank wanted to I for ... ”

Example: _____ the flowers you sent last week.

“... share appreciation to my ... ”

Example: *I felt it was important for us all _____ with you for the huge effort you made toward the project.*

“... not contribution did your unnoticed go ... ”

Example: *It is fair to say that _____, and I will be speaking with the other directors to discuss a suitable reward.*

Thank you letters

“I wanted to thank you for ...”

Example: *I wanted to thank you for the flowers you sent last week.*

“... to share my appreciation ...”

Example: *I felt it was important for us all to share our appreciation with you for the huge effort you made toward the project.*

“... your contribution did not go unnoticed ...”

Example: *It is fair to say that your contribution did not go unnoticed, and I will be speaking with the other directors to discuss a suitable reward.*

Request letters

“have with a regards to question I...”

Example: _____ setting up a profile on the local system.

“you if wondered I help with me could ... ”

Example: I am new to the sport and so _____ learning some of the basics.

“a trouble I little am with having ... ”

Example: Since moving to the new house, _____ meeting new people and I wondered whether you had any tips.

Request letters

"I have a question with regards to ..."

Example: *I have a question with regards to setting up a profile on the local system.*

"I wondered if you could help/assist me with ... "

Example: *I am new to the sport and so I wondered if you could help me with learning some of the basics.*

"I am having a little trouble with ..."

Example: *Since moving to the new house, I have been having a little trouble with meeting new people and I wondered whether you had any tips.*

Explanation letters

“to give / be happy / few pointers / you a / I would ...”

Example: *I remember how tricky it was when I got started, so _____.*

“a couple / steps to / there are / follow / of important...”

Example: *Once you get started, it should be pretty straightforward. Having said that, _____. Firstly, ...*

“I can / please do / know if / any more help / let me / be of / at all...”

Example: *I appreciate that this might be quite challenging, so _____.*

Explanation letters

“I would be happy to give you a few pointers...”

Example: *I remember how tricky it was when I got started, so I would be happy to give you a few pointers.*

“There are a couple of important steps to follow...”

Example: *Once you get started, it should be pretty straightforward. Having said that, there are a couple of important steps to follow. Firstly, ...*

“Please do let me know if I can be of any more help...”

Example: *I appreciate that this might be quite challenging, so please do let me know if I can be of any more help at all.*

Invitation letters

“you could / and I / delighted if / join us / my (____) / would be ”

Example: _____ join us for a dinner party on Tuesday 12th September.

“be great / it would / you on/at / to see”

Example: _____ the New Year’s bash on Thursday. It should be a lively one!

“if you / appreciate it / could RSVP / I would ”

Example: We will need to give a headcount to the restaurant to confirm the booking, so _____ as soon as you can.

Invitation letters

“(My ____ and) I would be delighted if you could join us ...”

Example: *My family and I would be delighted if you could join us for a dinner party on Tuesday 12th September.*

“It would be great to see you at/on...”

Example: *It would be great to see you at the New Year’s bash on Thursday. It should be a lively one!*

“I would appreciate it if you could RSVP...”

Example: *We will need to give a headcount to the restaurant to confirm the booking, so we would appreciate it if you could RSVP as soon as you can.*

Advice letters

“I think / If I / your position / I would / were in”

Example: I would never want to tell you what to do, but _____ stay in your current job rather than risk this new one.

“but perhaps / I am / you could try / no expert”

Example: _____ speaking to your tutor to see if he would be open to your suggestion.

“given was to / of advice / one piece / I was”

Example: It is difficult to know the right thing to do in this case, but _____ draw up a list of all the pros and cons.

Advice letters

“If I were in your position, I think I would ...”

Example: *I would never want to tell you what to do, but if I were in your position, I think I would stay in your current job rather than risk this new one.*

“I am no expert, but perhaps you could try ...”

Example: *I am no expert on these matters, but perhaps you could try speaking to your tutor to see if he would be open to your suggestion.*

“One piece of advice I was given was to ...”

Example: *It is difficult to know the right thing to do in this case, but one piece of advice I was given when I was in a similar position was to draw up a list of all the pros and cons.*

Letter endings

I will look forward to your reply.

I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

I would be very grateful if you could get back to me as soon as possible.

Please feel free to get in touch if you have any questions.

Best Regards, ...

Kind Regards, ...

All the best, ...

Section 4: Writing the Letter

Lecture 13

Vocabulary - Formal Letters

Useful and typical language for
formal letters.



Letter language

Formal letter language can be weird.

It is in formal letters that you see words taking strange formations, sentences taking strange constructions, and whole expressions that seem to be taken straight out of the eighteenth century.

Just try to memorise these expressions and understand the context in which they are used. The bulk of your letter should still be about the actual content and responding to the task requirements.

As always, find examples. Read, read, read. And practice regularly.

Apology/condolence letters

“for accept my please apologies ...”

Example: _____ *the delay in replying to your letter.*

“unreservedly like I to would apologise for”

Example: _____ *the scheduling error made in your name last week.*

“with must regret I deep it that is”

Example: _____ *inform you of the termination of our working agreement.*

Apology/condolence letters

“Please accept my apologies for ...”

Example: *Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to your letter.*

“I would like to apologise unreservedly for ...”

Example: *I would like to apologise unreservedly for the scheduling error made in your name last week.*

“It is with deep regret that I must ...”

Example: *It is with deep regret that I must inform you of the termination of our working agreement.*

Illness/Death = I was deeply saddened to hear ...

Thank you letters

“express my / I would / sincere gratitude / like to ...”

Example: _____ for your assistance with our community project.

“you thank for ...”

Example: _____ agreeing to meet with me on Wednesday.

“appreciate I greatly ...”

Example: _____ your willingness to listen to my concerns and take them on board.

Thank you letters

“I would like to express my sincere gratitude ...”

Example: *I would like to express my sincere gratitude* for your assistance with our community project.

“Thank you for ...”

Example: *Thank you for* agreeing to meet with me on Wednesday.

“I greatly appreciate ...”

Example: *I greatly appreciate* your willingness to listen to my concerns and take them on board.

Request letters

“writing to am I request ...”

Example: _____ a formal interview with you and your partners in the immediate future.

“grateful could if be you I would ...”

Example: _____ provide me with the blueprints of the building as soon as possible.

“greatly swift is cooperation appreciated your ...”

Example: Thank you for your help. _____.

Request letters

“I am writing to request...”

Example: *I am writing to request a formal interview with you and your partners in the immediate future.*

“I would be grateful if you could ...”

Example: *I would be grateful if you could provide me with the blueprints of the building as soon as possible.*

“Your swift cooperation is greatly appreciated...”

Example: *Thank you for your help. Your swift cooperation is greatly appreciated.*

Complaint letters

“writing to / I am / concerns/frustration / express my ...”

Example: _____ regarding the service of your hotel staff.

“attention to / like to / I would / draw your ...”

Example: _____ the appalling treatment our family dog received during our visit to your veterinary clinic.

“will be / if no / taken, I / action is / forced to ...”

Example: _____ take this matter to senior management staff and to write to my local newspaper.

Complaint letters

"I am writing to express my concerns/frustrations..."

Example: *I am writing to express my concerns regarding the service of your hotel staff.*

"I would like to draw your attention to..."

Example: *I would like to draw your attention to the appalling treatment our family dog received during our visit to your veterinary clinic.*

"If no action is taken, I will be forced to ... "

Example: *If no action is taken, I will be forced to take this matter to senior management staff and to write to my local newspaper.*

Invitation letters

“formally / to / you / attend / are / invited ...”

Example: _____ the wedding of Amanda and Simon on June 4th 2020.

“extend to you / I am / an invitation / writing to ...”

Example: _____ to the Regency Ball on June 4th 2020.

“V P S R”

Example: Please _____ at your earliest convenience.

Invitation letters

“You are formally invited to attend ...”

Example: *You are formally invited to attend the wedding of Amanda and Simon on June 4th 2020.*

“I am writing to extend to you an invitation ...”

Example: *I am writing to extend to you an invitation to the Regency Ball on June 4th 2020.*

“RSVP”

Example: *Please RSVP at your earliest convenience.*

Job application letters

“interest in / I am / express my / writing to ...”

Example: _____ the position of Senior Teacher at your school in West London, as advertised in the Gazette newspaper.

“skills include my ...”

Example: _____ strong classroom management, excellent rapport building, and close attention to detail.

“..., / from other / which I / me apart / candidates / believe set/s”

Example: I have worked in several different countries across four separate continents, and it is this experience _____.

Job application letters

“I am writing to express my interest in...”

Example: *I am writing to express my interest in* the position of Senior Teacher at your school in West London, as advertised in the Gazette newspaper.

“My skills include...”

Example: *My skills include* strong classroom management, excellent rapport building, and close attention to detail.

“..., which I believe set/s me apart from other candidates...”

Example: *I have worked in several different countries across four separate continents, and it is this experience which I believe sets me apart from other candidates.*

Letter endings

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation.

I would be grateful if you could respond at your earliest convenience.

Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely, ...

Yours faithfully, ...

Letter endings

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Thank you for consideration and cooperation.

I would be grateful if you could respond at your earliest convenience.

Please let me know if I can be of any assistance in this matter.

*Yours sincerely, ... **when you do write the name of the recipient.***

*Yours faithfully, ...**when you don't write the name of the recipient.***

Section 4: Writing the Letter

Lecture 14

Maximise Your LR Score

Improving range, precision and collocation
to boost your Lexical Resource score.



Paraphrasing

The expression ‘range of vocabulary’ is used in the Lexical Resource category of the band descriptors for bands 5, 6, 7 and 8. The key difference is in the adjective that appears before this expression.

Band 5: ‘Uses a **limited** range of vocabulary...’

Band 6: ‘Uses an **adequate** range of vocabulary...’

Band 7: ‘Uses a **sufficient** range of vocabulary...’

Band 8: ‘Uses a **wide** range of vocabulary...’

Avoiding repetition

The key to achieving a wider range of vocabulary is to make sure we avoid repetition. There are a number of techniques we can utilise to meet this paraphrasing aim.

- Synonyms
- Referencing
- Word formation
- Antonyms
- Word order

Avoiding repetition

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- Synonyms
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- Word formation
- Antonyms
- Word order

It has now been **two weeks** since I was last contacted by the bank.

That means that for the last **two weeks** I have been without a credit card, which has made it very difficult for me to manage my financial affairs.

Avoiding repetition

The key to achieving a wider range of vocabulary is to make sure we avoid repetition. There are a number of techniques we can utilise to meet this paraphrasing aim.

- **Synonyms**
- Referencing
- Word formation
- Antonyms
- Word order

It has now been **two weeks** since I was last contacted by the bank.

That means that for the last **fortnight** I have been without a credit card, which has made it very difficult for me to manage my financial affairs.

Avoiding repetition

The key to achieving a wider range of vocabulary is to make sure we avoid repetition. There are a number of techniques we can utilise to meet this paraphrasing aim.

- Synonyms
- **Referencing**
- Word formation
- Antonyms
- Word order

It has now been **two weeks** since I was last contacted by the bank.

That means that for **this whole time** I have been without a credit card, which has made it very difficult for me to manage my financial affairs.

Avoiding repetition

The key to achieving a wider range of vocabulary is to make sure we avoid repetition. There are a number of techniques we can utilise to meet this paraphrasing aim.

- Synonyms
- Referencing
- **Word formation**
- Antonyms
- Word order

*You recently left some **important** documents on a train. Write a letter to the train company.*

The documents in question are of great **importance**, so it is vital that they are located and returned post-haste.

Avoiding repetition

The key to achieving a wider range of vocabulary is to make sure we avoid repetition. There are a number of techniques we can utilise to meet this paraphrasing aim.

- Synonyms
- Referencing
- Word formation
- **Antonyms**
- Word order

*You recently left some **important** documents on a train. Write a letter to the train company.*

The loss of these documents is **no trivial matter**, and thus it is vital that they are located and returned post-haste.

Avoiding repetition

The key to achieving a wider range of vocabulary is to make sure we avoid repetition. There are a number of techniques we can utilise to meet this paraphrasing aim.

- Synonyms
- Referencing
- Word formation
- Antonyms
- **Word order**

*You recently **left** some **important documents** on a train. Write a letter to the train company.*

The **documents**, which are very **important**, were **left** in carriage A, seat 12, upon my exit.

Spelling & Word Formation

‘Occasional errors’ in spelling and word formation are acceptable in achieving a band 7, but you should aim to produce none at all. This may give you a little leeway if making other errors. How can we improve this skill?

- 1. Identify errors made and notice any patterns**
- 2. Write down correct spelling/form, notice any patterns**
- 3. Consider which words are most likely to appear in IELTS**
- 4. Practice writing sentences with these words daily**

Precision

Band 7 = ‘A sufficient range of vocabulary to allow for some flexibility and **precision**.’

This is one of the most common failings of written work in IELTS.

Which of the following extracts would score highest in this regard?

Sorry it took so long to write. I have just been very busy at work. I was working on two projects and both of them required a lot of effort. There has been so much to do since I started. = **40 words**

Sorry I couldn’t write sooner. I was recently put in charge of two work projects, both of which had totally unrealistic deadlines, and I have just been snowed under with paperwork ever since I started. = **35 words**

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Which of the following extracts would score highest in this regard?

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Collocation

'Uses less common lexical items with some awareness of style and **collocation**' is a requirement of band 7 writing in Lexical Resource.

Awareness of collocation is about choosing the words that fit naturally with other words. For instance, in many languages, it is natural and appropriate to say 'I want to **make** a picture'. Not in English.

In English, it is natural and appropriate to say 'I want to **take** a picture'. This is a verb-noun collocation (*take* goes with *picture/photo*).

Advice? **Read, read, read, read.** Notice patterns in both speech and writing. Refer to collocation dictionaries (e.g. <http://www.freecollocation.com/>)

Lecture 15

Using Complex Sentences

How to create complex sentences
and use them in your letter.



Why complexity matters

Let's return to the band descriptors and focus on the difference between band 6 and band 7.

Band 6: "uses a mix of simple and complex sentence forms."

Band 7: "uses a variety of complex structures."

What does this mean?

It does **not** mean that a band 7 requires **no** simple sentences. Simple sentences have their place.

It means that we cannot *depend* on only writing perfect simple sentences to secure a band 7. We need a good number of complex sentences too.

Complex sentences in formal letters

We use complex sentences to join a **dependent clause** to an **independent clause** by way of a **subordinating conjunction**. What does this mean?

INDEPENDENT CLAUSE

Our experience of the hotel was awful

DEPENDENT CLAUSE

Although we were very much looking forward to our visit

SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTION

Although

Complex sentences in formal letters

COMPLEX SENTENCE

Although we were very much looking forward to our visit, our experience of the hotel was awful.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE

While I had read excellent reviews online, I felt that the quality of the food and service left a lot to be desired.

Because complex sentences are great for **emphasising contrast**, they are particularly useful in letters of complaint.

Create your own - formal

Letter of enquiry

lost wallet / no access to funds / until

Letter of gratitude/praise

bookstore closing / even though / found book

Letter of resignation

so that / new challenge / career progression

Job application / covering letter

commitment and passion / wherever / been employed

Create your own - formal

Letter of enquiry

Until this lost wallet is found, I will have no access to any of my funds.

Letter of gratitude/praise

Even though the bookstore was closing, your staff member was kind enough to find and sell to me the book I needed.

Letter of resignation

I feel that that the time is right for me to embark on a new challenge so that I may continue with my career progression.

Job application / covering letter

I have always prided myself on my passion and commitment wherever I have been employed.

Complex sentences in informal letters

Even though informal sentences tend to be shorter and less complex, we can still find opportunities for complex sentences.

Complex sentences in informal letters

Even though informal sentences tend to be shorter and less complex, we can still find opportunities for complex sentences.

Try to notice whenever you are **explaining, discussing time or contrasting**; these are all great opportunities for informal complex sentences.

When you say the first sentence, you might say, 'I'm not going to work today because I have to go to the doctor's office.' Then you might say, 'I'm not going to work today because I have to go to the doctor's office because I'm not feeling well.'

Create your own - informal

Letter of invitation

you're working weekends / because / organised party Tuesday night

Letter of thanks

once / everything fell into place / showed me what to do

Letter of apology

can forgive me / if / make it up to you

Letter of advice

option A or option B / consider your own wellbeing / whether

Create your own - informal

Letter of invitation

Because we know you're now working weekends and have Wednesdays and Thursdays off, we've organised the party for a Tuesday night.

Letter of thanks

Once you were kind enough to show me what to do, running the program became so much easier and everything pretty much fell into place.

Letter of apology

If you can find it in your heart to forgive me, I promise to do everything I can to make it up to you.

Letter of advice

Whether you take option A or option B, the most important thing to consider is your own wellbeing.

Lecture 16

How to Use Punctuation

Making sure your use of punctuation
is both accurate and effective.



Punctuation in the band descriptors

Let's take another look at the band descriptors.

Band 6: "makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication."

Band 7: "has good control of grammar and punctuation but may make a few errors."

These two criterions seem awfully similar, but the chief difference is a telling one:
communication.

To score a band 6, your grammar and punctuation can cause confusion, but this must be rare.

Such reduced communication is not even mentioned by band 7. This suggests that **at no point can your grammar or punctuation confuse the reader.**

Formal letter punctuation

In formal letters, you should, on the whole, use exactly the same punctuation as you would when writing your Task 2 essay.

There are some common mistakes which are made, however, and these need to be acknowledged.

I have talked about these mistakes already in a 13-minute lecture in my Task 2 course, so I won't repeat them again here.

If you haven't yet seen this video, please go to the Mastering IELTS Writing Task 2 video course and check out lecture 24. I have made this lecture free to access.

Informal letter punctuation

In contrast to formal letters, the essay in Writing Task 2, and the Academic module's version of Writing Task 1, you can use more varied punctuation in informal letters of Writing Task 1.

Exclamation marks !

Contractions don't

Elipses ...

Parentheses ()

Informal letter punctuation

Exclamation marks

What they are: punctuation marks which express an exclamation (surprise / strong emotion).

Appropriate use:

I'm so happy to hear you got the job! Congratulations!

I never could've done it without you!

Inappropriate use:

I feel deeply upset at the way you have acted!

I'm sorry for not writing sooner!

Informal letter punctuation

Contractions

What they are: single words created by squeezing two separate words into one word by way of an apostrophe.

Appropriate use:

How've you been?

I'll call you later in the week.

You should've told me about your plans.

Inappropriate use:

Any formal letter.

Aim for consistency!

Informal letter punctuation

Ellipses

What they are: the use of three dots to indicate the omission of language for particular reasons (to emphasise a pause, to trail off into silence, to indicate an unfinished thought, to remove superfluous language).

Appropriate use:

Unfortunately, I never heard back...

I'm sure you can imagine how that felt...

Inappropriate use:

I think it's my favourite country I've visited...

The photos you sent are all magnificent...

Informal letter punctuation

Parentheses

What they are: words or statements which appear between brackets and are used to provide more explanation or context or as an afterthought.

Appropriate use:

Jenny finally got the promotion she'd been asking about (and deserving) for years.

If I were you (and sometimes I wish I was!), I would seriously consider at least looking for positions elsewhere.

Inappropriate use:

Just wanted to ask how the little ones are doing at their (new) school?

(Without wanting to be presumptuous) are you free this weekend for a little get-together?

Lecture 17

The Power of Conditionals

How to use conditional sentences to improve your Task 1 score.



Conditionals - a recap

If you've taken my Task 2 course, you'll have already learnt about what conditional sentences are and how they can be used to boost grammatical range.

Here, we'll recap what conditional sentences are, and then see how they can be used in formal and informal letters:

Conditional sentences

A sentence containing two clauses: the cause/condition (dependent clause) and the result/consequence (independent clause).

Conditionals - a recap

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Here, we'll recap what conditional sentences are, and then see how they can be used in formal and informal letters:

Conditional sentences

If I stop working, I feel listless and moody.

ZERO CONDITIONAL

sub+pres. sim & sub+pres. sim

Conditionals - a recap

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Here, we'll recap what conditional sentences are, and then see how they can be used in formal and informal letters:

Conditional sentences

If you visit in the summer, we'll get to see all the best sights.

FIRST CONDITIONAL

sub+pres. sim & sub+will+inf.

Conditionals - a recap

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Here, we'll recap what conditional sentences are, and then see how they can be used in formal and informal letters:

Conditional sentences

If I were you, I wouldn't rush my decision.

SECOND CONDITIONAL

sub+past. sim & sub+would+inf.

Conditionals - a recap

If you've taken my Task 2 course, you'll have already learnt about what conditional sentences are and how they can be used to boost grammatical range.

Here, we'll recap what conditional sentences are, and then see how they can be used in formal and informal letters:

Conditional sentences

If you hadn't made that decision, the project would have been ruined.

THIRD CONDITIONAL

sub+past. perf & sub+would+have+p.p.

Conditionals in use

FORMAL LETTER EXAMPLES

Resignation letter: If I am unhappy, my productivity declines.

Information letter: If you speak to the manager, he will show you what to do.

Job application letter: If you were to hire me, I would guarantee you my utmost commitment to the position.

Complaint letter: If the waiting staff had listened to my dietary requirements, I would not have had to go through this ordeal.

Apology letter: If I offended you, I am truly sorry.

Conditionals in use

INFORMAL LETTER EXAMPLES

Explanation letter: If you press the red button, it opens a new screen.

Invitation letter: If you can make it on Monday, we'll have a six pack waiting for you.

Advice letter: If I were you, I'd go as soon as possible.

Thank you letter: If you hadn't been there to help, I would never have finished it.

Complaint letter: If you had listened to me the first time, we wouldn't be in this mess now.

Common conditional errors

Because conditionals are a tricky grammatical skill to master, they are often the source of a few errors in candidates' writing. **Can you find the common errors below?**

If I can liaise with him this week, he would call you with the details.

You will never have even taken this course if it wasn't for me.

If the manager treated you this unfairly, you will not be a satisfied employee.

If I was you, I wouldn't send that letter just yet.

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Because conditionals are a tricky grammatical skill to master, they are often the source of a few errors in candidates' writing. **Can you find the common errors below?**

*If I can liaise with him this week, he **will** call you with the details.*

*You **will** never have even took this course if I hadn't shared it with you.*

*If the manager treated you this unfairly, you **will** not be a satisfied employee.*

*If I **was** you, I wouldn't send that letter just yet.*

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*If I **was** you, I **wouldn't** send that letter just yet.*

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*If I **were** you, I wouldn't send that letter just yet.*

Common conditional errors

Because conditionals are a tricky grammatical skill to master, they are often the source of a few errors in candidates' writing. **Can you find the common errors below?**

*If I can liaise with him this week, he **will** call you with the details.*

Formal - giving information

*You **would** never have even **taken** this course if I hadn't shared it with you.*

Informal - complaint / grievance

*If the manager treated you this unfairly, you **would** not be a satisfied employee.*

Formal - training

*If I **were** you, I wouldn't send that letter just yet.* Informal - advice

Lecture 18

Common Grammar Errors

The most common grammatical errors
made in Writing Task 1 letters.



Why accuracy matters

Let's look again (last time!) at the band descriptors. When we look at Grammatical Range and Accuracy, this is what we see:

Band 6: *makes some errors in grammar and punctuation but they rarely reduce communication*

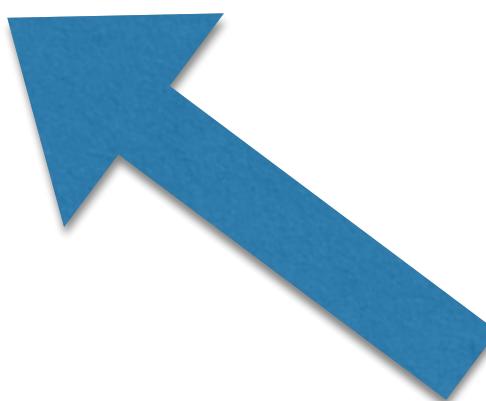
Band 7: *produces frequent error-free sentences*

Band 8: *the majority of sentences are error-free*

Accuracy matters because it can be the difference between band scores. More accuracy = a higher band score. So which errors should you be most careful about avoiding?

Common Error #1: Articles

An otherwise perfect sentence, no matter how complex, can be compromised by article error.



Not 'error-free'

Common Error #1: Articles

An otherwise perfect sentence, no matter how complex, can be compromised by **an** article error.

These units of language are tiny (and yes they can be annoying), but they must not be neglected!

If you know that you struggle with article usage, **dedicate time to improving this aspect of your grammar**. Don't put it off.

So many high-level students have failed to achieve 'error-free' sentences, and thus a band 7+, as a result of article errors.

Find the article errors

I am writing to thank you for an opportunity to work as the intern for your company. I gained a valuable experience and learnt many new skills.

I would be delighted if you could arrange the visit to our home in United Arab Emirates this summer.

A bag in question was a blue faux-leather backpack bearing the Adidas logo on its left and right sides and silver zip across the front.

I can't say a move has been easy. We had few issues with the removal guys, the little one got a bout of flu, and only in past few days have we been able to properly finish furnishing the place.

Find the article errors

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I can't say a move has been easy. We had few issues with the removal guys, the little one got a bout of flu, and only in past few days have we been able to properly finish furnishing the place.

Find the article errors

*I am writing to thank you for **the** opportunity to work as **an** intern for your company. I gained**d** valuable experience and learnt many new skills.*

*I would be delighted if you could arrange **a** visit to our home in **the** United Arab Emirates this summer.*

*The bag in question was a blue faux-leather backpack bearing the Adidas logo on its left and right sides and **a** silver zip across the front.*

*I can't say **the** move has been easy. We had **a** few issues with the removal guys, **the** little one got a bout of flu, and only in **the** past few days have we been able to properly finish furnishing **the** place.*

Common Error #2: Conjugation

A conjugation error usually happens when the form of the verb used **does not match up with the subject** or is in **the wrong tense**.

The most common reason for **the former error** is when candidates mistake the final word in a subject for the subject itself.

For example, '*Completing these projects s have been really challenging*'.

Common Error #2: Conjugation

A conjugation error usually happens when the form of the verb used **does not match up with the subject** or is in **the wrong tense**.

The most common reason for **the former error** is when candidates mistake the final word in a subject for the subject itself.

For example, '**Completing** these projects **has** been really challenging'.

Before you rush into the verb after the subject, particularly if the subject is fairly long, take a moment to consider whether the subject is singular or plural so that you have the correct 'subject-verb agreement'.

Common Error #2: Conjugation

A conjugation error usually happens when the form of the verb used **does not match up with the subject** or is in **the wrong tense**.

There are various reasons for **the latter error**, but a common one is mistaking verbs which are similar across different tenses.

For example, ‘*Since starting my new job, I’ve became much happier*’.

Common Error #2: Conjugation

A conjugation error usually happens when the form of the verb used **does not match up with the subject** or is in **the wrong tense**.

There are various reasons for **the latter error**, but a common one is mistaking verbs which are similar across different tenses.

For example, ‘*Since starting my new job, I’ve become much happier*’.

Try to realise which verbs cause you the most problems in terms of correct tense. There probably aren’t too many, which is good because it will be easier to raise an internal alarm when you come to use them!

Find the conjugation errors

One of the problems with these new laws are that they will be difficult to implement quickly.

Thanks for helping us to have such a fantastic holiday. I just wish we hadn't drank quite so much!

I am writing to complain about a number of issues that I have with a piece of equipment which I bought from your store.

I'm afraid that a number of people has already asked me for the same thing.

Find the conjugation errors

*One of the problems with these new laws **is** that they will be difficult to implement quickly.*

*Thanks for helping us to have such a fantastic holiday. I just wish we hadn't **drunk** quite so much!*

*I am writing to complain about a number of issues that I have **had / been having** with a piece of equipment which I bought from your store.*

*I'm afraid that a number of people **have** already asked me for the same thing.*

Common Error #3: Singular/plural

Errors concerning singular/plural nouns are also very common in candidates' writing. Here are some typical sticking points:

One of the + noun. Singular or plural? **PLURAL.**

One of the reasons. One of the best ideas. One of the most useful things.

Determiners like 'every' (singular), 'each' (singular) and 'all' (plural).

Every situation is different. Each situation is different. All situations are different.

Countable and uncountable noun forms. Uncountable nouns are not given two different singular/plural forms. We can sometimes add the noun 'piece' if we want to imply a plural/singular:

It was a fantastic piece of entertainment. That's a great piece of advice. Let's separate those pieces of information.

Find the singular/plural errors

Quite frankly, I am appalled by the disgraceful services I have received from your staffs.

It was so good to catch up last Tuesday, and we should definitely do it again sometimes soon. How about beer at the pub next weekend?

The injury occurred in your supermarkets dairy aisle at around 1pm on Thursday 9th May.

One of the best thing about the new job is that I get to set my own hours, which means no more graveyard shifts!

Find the singular/plural errors

Quite frankly, I am appalled by the disgraceful **service** I have received from your **staff**.

It was so good to catch up last Tuesday, and we should definitely do it again **some time** soon. How about **beers** at the pub next weekend?

The injury occurred in your **supermarket's** dairy aisle at around 1pm on Thursday 9th May.

One of the best **things** about the new job is that I get to set my own hours, which means no more graveyard shifts!

Lecture 19.1

Demonstration Task 1 Letter

Writing an **informal** Task 1 Letter from start to finish.



You recently received a letter from a friend asking for advice about whether to go to college or to try to get a job. You think he/she should get a job.

Write a letter to this friend. In your letter

- say why he/she would not enjoy going to college
- explain why getting a job is a good idea for him/her
- suggest types of job that would be suitable for him/her

Dear John,

Hope you're getting on okay in London!

It sounds like you're having a tough time deciding on this college issue. It's a difficult choice, I know, but if I were you, I'd hold off on the studies for the time being. With the crazy cost of tuition here and little time left over to work, I feel you might struggle to make ends meet. And that wouldn't be any fun!

Here's what I would do: first of all, I'd find a job as quickly as possible. Then, I'd open a savings account and deposit at least a little bit every month. If you do this, you'll be able to work towards affording college without the financial pressure that would come with it if you went this year.

As for what kind of job to take, knowing you and your love of the outdoors, I'd recommend something in agriculture or conservation. Maybe even sports coaching... You did take that two-week course after all.

Anyway, if you want to talk it through in person, just let me know. Always happy to hear from you.

Best,

Matt

Lecture 19.2

Demonstration Task 1 Letter

Writing a **semi-formal** Task 1 Letter
from start to finish.



Your neighbours have recently written to you to complain about the noise from your house or flat.

Write a letter to your neighbours. In your letter,

- explain the reasons for the noise
- apologise
- describe what action you will take

Dear Mark and Amanda,

I am writing to apologise for the trouble I seem to have caused you both over the past few weeks.

The reason for all the noise you have been hearing is due to an extension which is being constructed in our dining hall. This construction has required the use of much drilling and hammering, and I regret that this noise has spilled over into your home.

Since receiving your letter, I have called the builders to ask that they work only within business hours. The extension should be finished within the next two weeks, but if you experience any more disturbances, please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Again, I do apologise for causing you both so much distress. In hindsight, I should have let you know beforehand when the extension was due to be built so as to give you sufficient warning. I hope this will not damage our good relationship with one another.

Best Regards,

Matt

Lecture 19.3

Demonstration Task 1 Letter

Writing a **formal** Task 1 Letter from start to finish.



You recently attended a meeting at a hotel. When you returned home, you found you had left some important papers at the hotel.

Write a letter to the manager of the hotel. In your letter

- say where you think you left the papers
- explain why they are so important
- tell the manager what you want him/her to do

Dear Mr. Jones,

I am writing to request your assistance in locating some important papers which I believe were left at your hotel during my stay for a recent meeting.

If I recall correctly, the papers were left on the bedside table in room 204, which was the room in which I had been staying. These documents were inside a brown manilla envelope with the numbers '40613' across the front.

It is of the utmost importance that papers are located since they are imperative to a business deal which is due to be concluded this weekend. If these files are not found, this deal will thoroughly jeopardised.

I regret that I have been so foolish as to misplace such vital documents, but I would be sincerely grateful if you could take all necessary means to assist in their location. Should these papers be found, please send them via express delivery to the attached address.

Thank you for your help. Your swift cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Rainsbury

Lecture 20

Secrets to Success

Little tips and techniques for maximising your score in GT Writing Task 1.



Secret #1: Don't count words

It is vital that you write at least 150 words. If you don't, you will lose marks for not meeting all task requirements.

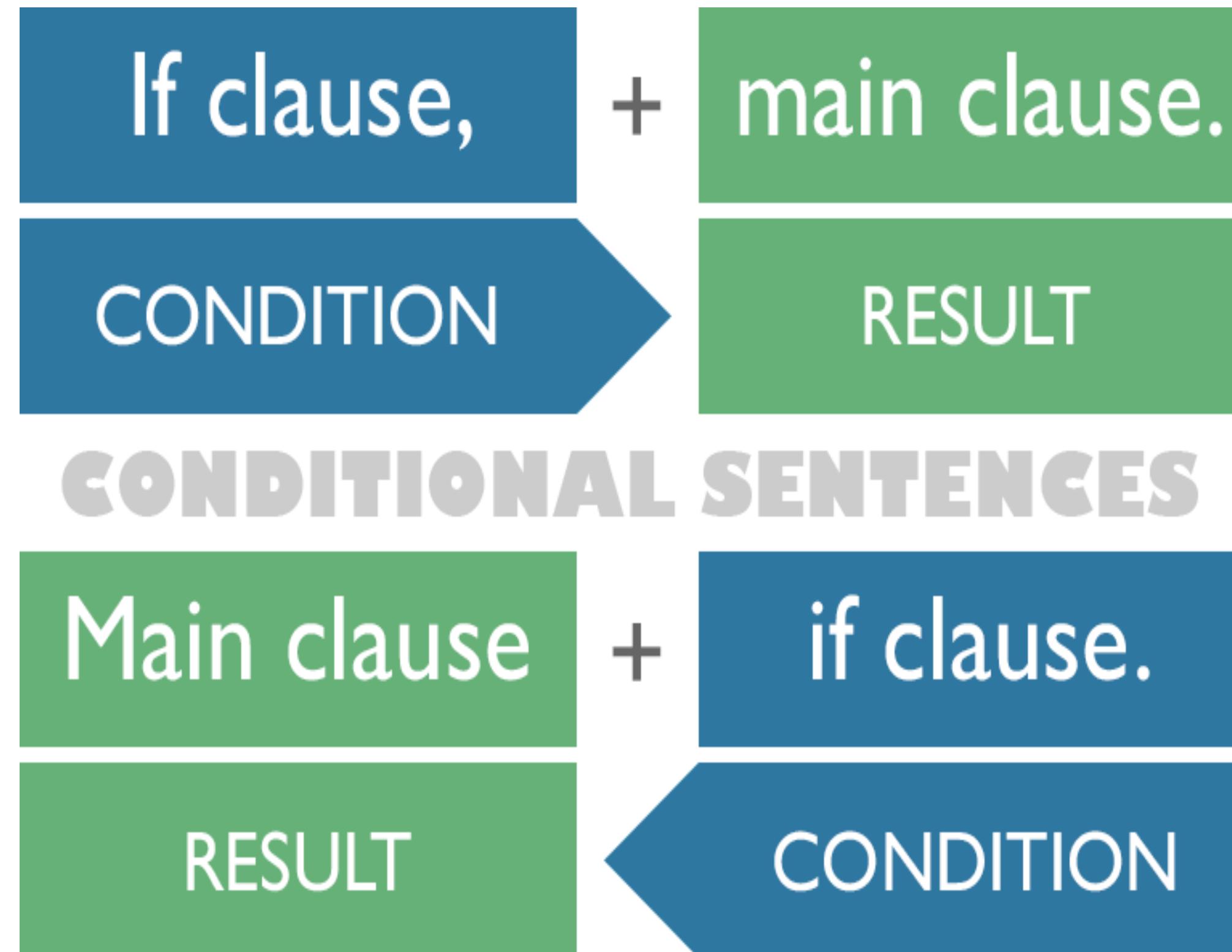
However, don't waste time by counting all the individual words.

If you think you might be under the word count, then count how many full lines are in your letter. Multiply this by the number of words in your first full line. If the figure is comfortably over 150, you're probably okay!

of soy, vinegar, and spices.

word (wûrd) *n.* *Abbr. wd.* **1.** A sound or a combination of sounds, or its representation in writing or printing, that symbolizes and communicates a meaning and may consist of a single morpheme or of a combination of morphemes. **2.** Something said; an utterance, a remark, or a comment: *May I say a word about that?* **3.** *Computer Science.* A set of bits constituting the smallest unit of addressable memory. **4. words.** Discourse or talk; speech: *Actions speak louder than words.* **5. words.** Music. The text of a vocal composition; lyrics. **6.** An assurance or a promise; sworn intention: *She has kept her word.* **7.a.** A command or direction; an order: *gave the word to retreat.* **b.** A verbal signal; a password or watchword. **8.a.** News: *Any word on your promotion?* See Synonyms at **news.** **b.** Rumor: *Word has it they're divorcing.* **9. words.** Hostile or angry remarks made back and forth. **10. Word.** **a.** See **Logos** (sense 3). **b.** The Scriptures; the Bible. —**word** *tr.v.* **word·ed, word·ing, words.** To express in words: *worded the*

Secret #2: Easy conditionals



As we discovered earlier, conditionals are a great way to boost the grammatical complexity of your letter.

Good thing they're so easy to include at the end of your letter then!

If you could get back to me as soon as possible, that'd be great.

It would be highly appreciated if a response could be sent as soon as possible.

Secret #3: A special use of ‘the’

A great way to demonstrate a high level of comfort and confidence with informal letters is to use definite articles where you might not otherwise. Using definite articles suggests a much closer, more intimate relationship than using possessive pronouns.

~~How are **your** kids?~~ -> How are **the** kids?

~~I've been having trouble with **my** boss again.~~ -> I've been having trouble with **the** boss again.

~~We need to go shopping at the weekend since **my** in-laws are visiting for the weekend.~~ -> We need to go shopping at the weekend since **the** in-laws are visiting for the weekend.

~~How's Katy getting on at **her** new school?~~ -> How's Katy getting on at **the** new school?

Avoid using definite articles to refer to singular family members or friends. It can seem cold and even rude.

Writing ‘How’s **the** daughter?’, for instance, sounds disrespectful.

Secret #4: Passive voice in formal letters

It is very common to use the passive voice more often than usual when writing formal letters. Exceptions apply, but in general, it is considered less formal to use personal pronouns.

I placed the documents in a transparent blue folder with an elastic binding.

*The documents **were placed** in a transparent blue folder with an elastic binding.*

Unfortunately, although he completed the project within the deadline, our team deemed the work to be unsatisfactory.

*Unfortunately, although the project **was completed** within the deadline, the work **was deemed** to be unsatisfactory.*

Lecture 21

Getting Guidance

How to make sure you're heading in
the right direction.



Guidance Options

There are a number of options for those who wish to get guidance in their Writing Task 1 preparation.

- Language exchange sites
- Exam forums
- Exam preparation sites
- Native speakers
- Professional IELTS Tutors

Professional IELTS Tutors

For those who wish to have the best preparation possible, it is my firm belief that a professional tutor is the way to go.

There are a number of IELTS teachers online at sites like www.italki.com, www.cafetalk.com, www.verbalplanet.com and more.

However, there are not many sites which **only** offer **IELTS** lessons. Not General English, not Business English, not TOEFL. Just IELTS.

www.theieltsteacher.com is one such site. Everything you have learnt about in this course has come from my experience **exclusively** teaching IELTS over the last few years.

The IELTS Teacher - Lessons

Teachers at The IELTS Teacher are happy to prepare you for each component of the exam, whether Listening, Reading, Writing or Speaking.

Each teacher uses a different method, but all have a **wealth of experience** both teaching and developing materials for IELTS preparation courses.

Different teachers teach at different times and offer different prices, so you are sure to find a teacher who fits your budget and schedule.

And we offer a free 20-minute demo lesson for every new student!

The IELTS Teacher - Writing Corrections

The IELTS Teacher also offers a Writing Correction service.

Unlike many ‘corrections’ online, corrections with The IELTS Teacher are focused on IELTS, easy to understand, and **extremely comprehensive**.

Here are just a couple of the many comments we have received:

“I wanted to thank you for helping me improve my writing skills: I gave the test and got an overall mark of 8.0, with 7.5 in Writing! That is more than I needed for applying for the masters degree I want, so I am super happy about it!” - *Francisca, Chile*

“Thank you for the correction! I’m still being surprised by the thoroughness of your work every time I open a newly received correction. It’s hard to imagine something more useful than that!” - *Nikolay, Russia*

Discounts for Udemy Students!

As a thank you for your attention during this course, I would like to offer each and every one of you a **discount** on Writing Corrections, so that you can put all of the advice here into practice.

For 10% off Writing Corrections (any package), please enter:

LETTERPRO

into the ‘Coupon code’ box at the checkout.

We look forward to reading all of your submissions!

Resources

- [www.theielts teacher.com](http://www.theieltsteacher.com)
- [www.theielts teacher.com/choose-your-teacher](http://www.theieltsteacher.com/choose-your-teacher)
- [www.theielts teacher.com/writing-corrections](http://www.theieltsteacher.com/writing-corrections)
- [www.theielts teacher.com/testimonials](http://www.theieltsteacher.com/testimonials)
- www.instagram.com/theielts teacher
- www.facebook.com/theielts teacher



The IELTS Teacher

Section 6: Conclusion

Lecture 22

Good Luck!

What to do once you've finished
Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 1 (GT).



Before your exam

It's very important that you feel fresh and focused during the exam. Therefore, be careful with your routine leading up to the exam date.

- Watch what you eat
- Get plenty of rest
- Cold shower therapy (CST)
- Exercise
- Read letters ('51 Letters for IELTS General Training' is a good resource) and novels with plenty of dialogue (particularly those in which characters write many letters).
- Have fun!

Nerves

Anxiety is a big factor to consider for many candidates. If you are someone who gets very nervous before and during exams, these tips might help a little.

- Meditation
- Deep breaths
- Focus on one thing at a time
- Remember, there's always next time!

Good Luck

Congratulations! You have completed *Mastering IELTS Writing: Task 1 (General Training)*. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to the course.

I would like to take this final moment to say a big **GOOD LUCK** to each and every one of you.

Did you find this course helpful? Leave a review!

Do you have any constructive feedback? Please email me to let me know!

I'd love to hear about your exam experiences/scores, so please don't hesitate to get in touch with the results of your exam.

