

Writing overview: skills, tenses and vocabulary

COMMUNICATION

LEVEL
Upper-intermediate

NUMBER
EN_BE_3201X

LANGUAGE
English

lingoda

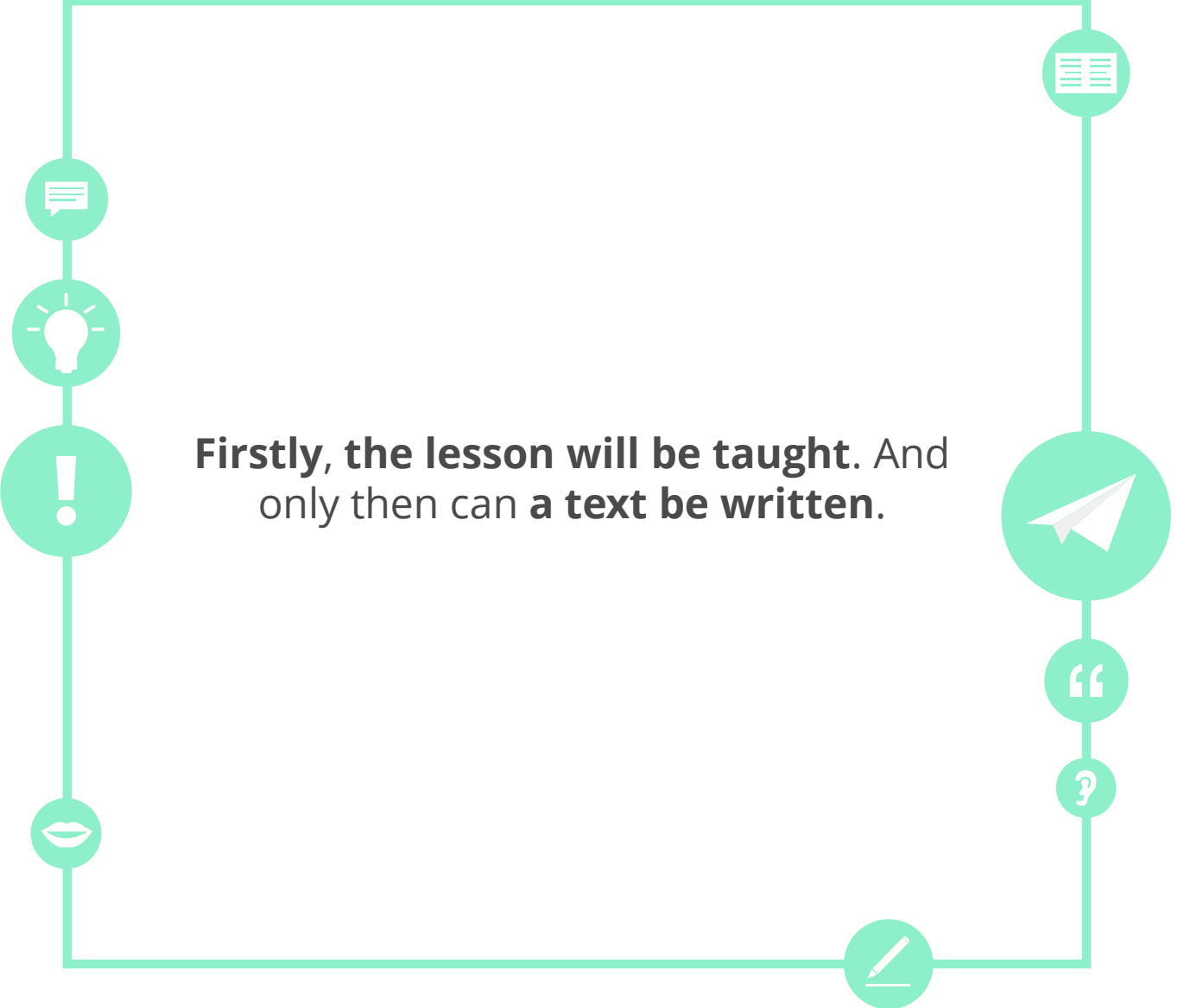




Goals

- Can recognise and understand how to use connectors and typical phrases to join different parts of a text
- Can use key words and phrases to write a cohesive text





**Firstly, the lesson will be taught. And
only then can **a text** be written.**



Writing at work

How often do you
have to write
something at work?

Do you usually write
on the computer or
by hand?

Who usually reads
what you write?

How do you check
what you have written
is correct?



Writing styles

How does your style of writing change when you are writing in these situations?



a monthly report

an e-mail to your
closest colleague

a letter to your
boss

a proposal on
changes in your
workplace



Formal English

How comfortable do you feel writing in formal English? Do you find informal English easier?





Writing overview

- In this lesson you are going to learn about **tenses** and **vocabulary** used in **formal English**, particularly in writing.



To begin, we are going to talk about greetings.

greetings

If you know the name of the person you are writing to, but you know that what you are writing needs to remain **formal and business appropriate**, you should use **Dear + title + surname + comma (,)**.



Dear Mr Jones,



Dear Mrs Jones,

greetings

If you **do not know the name** of the person you are writing to, you should use either of the phrases below. These are **formal forms of address** for someone you have not met before. You may need to use one when making an enquiry of a new company, when applying for a job or when making a complaint to a customer service department.



Dear **Sir/Madam**,



To whom it may concern,

greetings

If you are writing **within your own place of work**, and to **multiple recipients**, both forms below are appropriate. The former is for your own team, the latter for colleagues outside of your team.



Dear **Team**,



Dear **Colleagues**,



Signing off

- Depending on **whom you are writing to**, you will need to **sign off** in different ways.
- We normally use **yours sincerely** or **yours faithfully** when we want our writing to be very formal.
- We use the sign off **yours faithfully** when the name of the person or people is not mentioned in the greeting.
- If the person is named in the greeting, we use **yours sincerely**.

Greeting	Sign off
Dear Sir/Madam,	Yours faithfully,
To whom it may concern,	Yours faithfully,
Dear Mr Jones/Mrs Jones,	Yours sincerely,



Other ways of signing off

- If you are writing a less formal, day-to-day internal e-mail to one of your colleagues, any of the **sign offs** below is fine.

- Kind regards,
- Warm regards,
- Regards,
- Best regards,
- Best wishes,
- All the best,
- Best,





Greetings and sign offs

How would you begin and end letters in these circumstances? Does it ever depend on how well you know the person?



to the director of your company



to a new, unknown customer



to your team



to a few people you work with in other departments



Sequencing

- **Organisation** in writing and having a clear **sequence of** ideas is extremely important.
- See below for some **formal phrases** you can use to show **cohesion** in your ideas.

first point	subsequent points	final point
Firstly,	Secondly, thirdly...	Finally,
First of all,	Furthermore,	Lastly,
To begin,	Moreover,	Ultimately,
On the one hand,	On the other hand,	In conclusion,
Initially,	Similarly,	To summarise,



Reason and result

- Many times in writing, we must show the **reason** for making the point, or the **result** of a point we have made.
- Below are certain formal phrases you can employ to help you do that.

reason	result
Due to + noun/gerund	As a result,
Due to the fact that + clause	Consequently,
Owing to + noun/gerund	Therefore,
Owing to the fact that + clause	As a consequence,
Because of + noun/gerund	Thus,



Showing contrast and giving emphasis

- Below are phrases you can use in formal writing when you wish to **emphasise** your ideas or show **contrast**.

contrast	emphasising
However,	Undoubtedly,
Nevertheless,	Indeed,
In spite of/Despite + noun/gerund	In fact,
On the contrary	Notably,
Whereas/While	Particularly,



What do you remember?

Test what you can remember from the previous slides.



Therefore

On the
contrary



sequencing

result

reason

contrast

emphasising



Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with the correct linking words.

as a result

nevertheless

first of all

owing to this

secondly

There are too many cars on the road in London. This has many negative consequences for the inhabitants. _____, people spend a long time waiting in traffic jams. _____, they either have to leave home earlier, or are late for work. _____, the huge numbers of cars cause a great deal of pollution. _____, it is unpleasant to walk or cycle around the city. _____, more and more people are indeed cycling in London.





Fill in the gaps

Fill in the gaps with appropriate linking words.

There are too many exams for school children.
_____, this means that even young children feel under great pressure to succeed.
_____, there have been wide reports of a rise in depression among school-age children.
_____, children who are under pressure do less well at school than those who do not feel the same pressure. _____, so many exams means less time for learning new material. _____, it could be said that children who take many tests in fact learn less than those who do not. _____, it would be prudent to have fewer exams in schools.





Grammar in formal writing

- The following slides are intended as a reminder of certain **grammatical structures** with which you should already be familiar. These structures are ones which are used most often in **formal writing**.



I **was notified** only yesterday of the upcoming meeting.



The passive voice

Passive structures are favoured in formal writing. We use the passive voice for several reasons:

- In order to make our writing **impersonal** or **neutral**.
- To focus the action on the **object** of the sentence.
- When it is obvious who is performing an action.

active	passive
You must do something to change this.	Something must be done to change this.
You should present the report on Monday.	The report should be presented on Monday.
We are going to make some changes.	Some changes are going to be made.
We will hold the meeting in the boardroom.	The meeting will be held in the boardroom.

forming the passive voice

1. Move the **object** of the sentence to the **first position**.
2. Keeping the tense the same, use the correct form of **be** + the **past participle**.
3. Often, you can eliminate the subject completely.

We will hold the meeting in the boardroom.
The meeting will be held in the boardroom.



Active to passive

- Here are some more examples of **active to passive** voice transformations. Together with your teacher, look at the changes in position of **objects**, and at the **be + past participle** in each sentence.

active	passive
We will show it.	It will be shown.
We use the passive voice a lot.	The passive voice is used a lot.
John wrote the annual report.	The annual report was written by John.
They had already made the decision.	The decision had already been made.





The present continuous for arrangements

- We use the **present continuous** for **future arrangements** between two or more people which will happen at a set **time**, in a set **place**.

Arrangements

Mr Smith is arriving at 2 p.m.

I'm meeting my boss at 11 a.m.

Are we meeting in the conference room tomorrow?

Is John bringing the report on Friday?

Who is presenting the statistics next week?





Transform the sentences from active to passive voice

1. You must finish the report by Friday.

→ The report must be finished by Friday.

2. We should hold a vote on that.

→ _____

3. You didn't send the figures to Ms Thompson.

→ _____

4. He didn't finish the presentation on time.

→ _____

5. You should collect information from all team members.

→ _____



Diary entries

Look at the diary entries below and make sentences in the present continuous to describe the arrangements.



Mr Kowalski,
2 p.m., Tues

Team meeting,
boardroom,
10 a.m.



Alice, Coffee
Heaven, Fri
afternoon

Presentation,
conference
room, Wed
evening



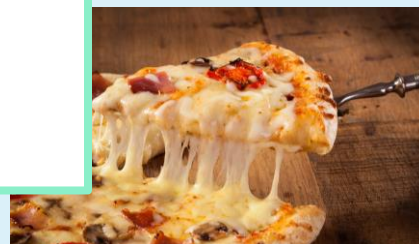
Reading a formal text

Look at the report below.

Can you identify the conventions of formal writing in use?

See below the findings of my investigation into employee facilities at Waterford Plc.

Firstly, there is a lack of healthy food available. Employees are forced to either go off site in order to buy healthy meals, or simply must accept the unhealthy choices available in the building. Going off site takes time, and consequently wastes valuable working hours. Furthermore, eating unhealthy food does not increase productivity. Indeed, it even has a detrimental effect on efficiency. Therefore, healthy food must undoubtedly be made available in the staff canteen.





Reading a formal text

Secondly, there was found to be little natural light in the offices of many employees. This is unsurprising due to the fact that many offices have no windows at all. Natural light has been proven to improve output, and to ensure people maintain a good circadian rhythm. Thus, it is of the utmost importance that offices are placed where there are sources of natural light.

Finally, the aesthetic of the office was commented upon. The decor is thought to be uninspiring, and many employees could not recall the last time the offices were painted. Moreover, the colour of the walls, a pale green, was said to remind the employees of a hospital, and did not inspire them to work. Because of this, it is imperative that the office be repainted in a neutral colour, which will be calming and motivating for workers.

On the next page, look at some more problems that might arise in the workplace.





Can you add to this list of potential problems in an office?

no space to relax –
feeling stressed

not enough parking
spaces – late for work

open office too noisy
– can't concentrate

no kettle for making
tea



Writing a report

Using the ideas on the previous page and the example to help you, write a report on the problems in an office you have visited. Concentrate especially on using the correct formal language.





Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!





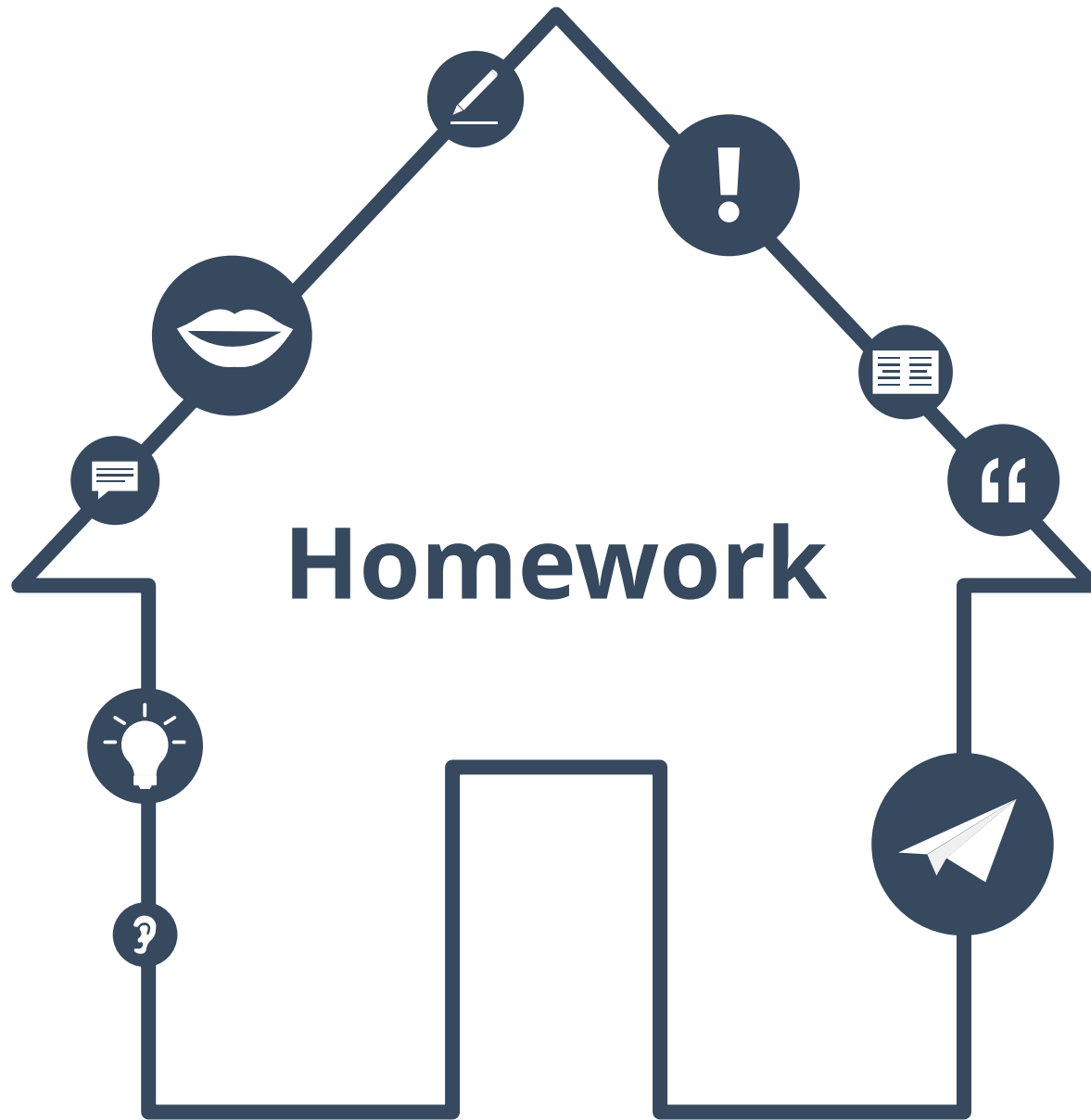
Answer key

Exercise p. 25

2. A vote should be held on that. 3. The figures were not sent to Ms Thompson. 4. The presentation was not finished on time. 5. Information should be collected from all team members.

Exercise p. 18

first of all, as a result/owing to this, secondly, as a result/owing to this, nevertheless





Writing a report

You are writing a report for the council in the city where you live. Look at the ideas below for some problems and solutions you might want to mention. Then, use the model of the report in the lesson to help you write.

public transport
too crowded

not enough
bike lanes

parking very
expensive

not enough
public toilets

no drinking
fountains

not enough
parks and
green spaces





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