

WRITING

Writing a letter to a friend

LEVEL

Intermediate (B2)

NUMBER

EN_B2_3131W

LANGUAGE

English



Learning outcomes

- I can identify and recall how to structure an informal personal letter.
- Can write a short letter highlighting some important experiences and events.



Warm-up

**When was the last time
you wrote a letter?**



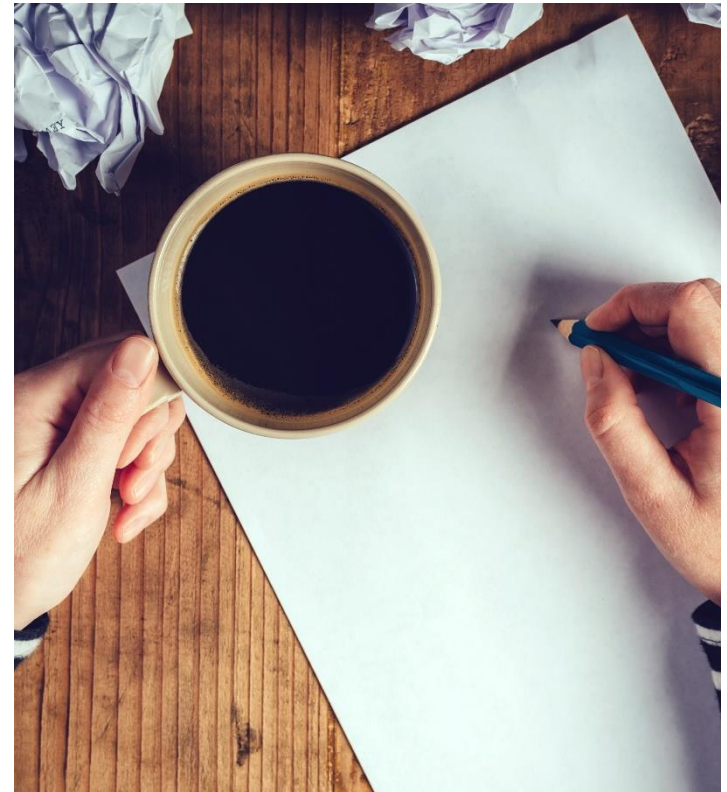
**What do you think
about letter-writing as
a form of
communication?**



Structuring your letter

Even when writing an informal letter or email to a friend, it helps to bear this basic structure in mind.

- 1 Opening greeting
- 2 Introductory paragraph
- 3 Main body
- 4 Concluding paragraph
- 5 Closing salutations





Match the examples to the correct heading

1 Opening greeting

2 Introductory paragraph

3 Main body

4 Concluding paragraph

5 Closing salutations

a *Thanks for your letter. It was great to hear from you. Sorry I haven't written sooner, I've been run off my feet at work.*

b *Dear John, ...*

c *Love, Julia*

d *So after the wedding, we stayed for a few weeks on the island. It was really nice...*

e *Anyway, I have to go now, I've got loads of work to do. Let me know what you think about planning a visit soon!*



A letter to a friend about a celebration

Dear Tom,

Thanks for your letter, it's great to hear your new job's going well. Sorry I haven't written sooner, I've been snowed under at work.

You asked about my birthday party – it was brilliant. It was a complete surprise, as you know – my friends planned it all and I thought I was just going out for dinner. When I turned up to the club, all my family and friends were there! You know I'm a bit of a Coldplay enthusiast – well it was decorated with their posters and the DJ played their music all night. I felt a bit emotional all night, actually. It really made me realise how much my friends care about me.

Anyway, I'm sorry you couldn't be there. Maybe next year? Write back soon.

Love,
Carrie

A letter to a friend about a holiday (1/2)

Dear Simon,

Thanks so much for your last letter, it was great to hear from you! I'm glad to know your new job is going well. How are your parents these days? Well, you asked about my holiday, so here it goes.

As I told you, I just spent two weeks in Bali. My wife and I were fed up with our normal holidays in the UK, so we decided to go somewhere exotic. It was really different from what we'd expected – so green, and such a lush landscape. And we were astonished at the temples, there was one around every corner, each more beautiful than the last. It was a bit overwhelming at first, actually, the culture shock and everything.

We stayed in a brilliant hotel. The food was all inclusive so we really indulged (a bit too much in my case!), and there were loads of recreational activities.

A letter to a friend about a holiday (2/2)

You know that I'm a bit of a water sports enthusiast so while we were there I tried my hand at surfing. Let me tell you, it's not as easy as it looks, and it provided a lot of amusement for my wife, as well as a few bruises for me. It really took me out of my comfort zone, which is something I believe in experiencing.

All in all, the holiday was brilliant, I really recommend Bali if you can get there. The only bad thing was that the flight coming home was delayed – we were stuck in the airport for 6 hours. Nightmare!

Anyway, I have to go now, dinner's ready. Write back to me soon and let me know what you've been up to.

Best wishes,
Pete

Things to remember

Informal letters to friends are all about getting your speaking voice across in writing!

Informal letters

Use contractions: *don't, can't, etc.*

Use one or two exclamation marks.

Ask direct questions.

Use slang, idioms and colloquial language.

Use phrasal verbs.

Use informal linking expressions:
but, anyway, etc.



informal letters

Use **adjectives**. The experience was subjective, so use **extreme** and **bold** adjectives to tell someone how much you **enjoyed** it, or how **terrible** it was.

Give your **opinion** on what happened.

Try to **involve** the person you are writing to. Maybe they would like to have the same **experience**, or maybe you **wish** they had been there.



All in all, the holiday was brilliant, I really recommend Bali if you can get there!



Fill in the gaps with the correct prepositions

- 1 I am guilty _____ not spending enough time on preparing food.
- 2 I was astonished _____ how much thought my wife put into my present.
- 3 Thailand was really different _____ what I had expected.
- 4 I think I'm incapable _____ learning to surf.
- 5 I'm allergic _____ peanuts, so I have to be really careful in restaurants.



Write answers to these sentences

1 What are you guilty of in your everyday life?

2 When was the last time you were really astonished at something?

3 Have you ever met anyone who was different from what you had expected?





Complete the sentences so they are true for you

1 When I'm on holiday, I'm really keen on...



2 I am absolutely incapable of...



3 When I'm at work, I often get fed up with...



4 I am allergic to...



5 I often get annoyed about...







Complete the sentences so they are true for you

1 The last time I made an attempt to improve something was...



2 My favourite form of recreation is...



3 I am a/an _____ enthusiast.



4 The best place in my city for socialising is...





Write a letter

Write a letter to a friend about a recent holiday you went on or an important event which just happened in your life.





End of the lesson

Idiom

Not worth writing home about

Meaning: use this phrase to describe an experience that didn't make a very big impression or was not very good.

Example: The holiday? It wasn't worth writing home about. I probably wouldn't go there again.



Additional practice



Match the sentences

1 Introductory paragraph

2 Concluding paragraph

3 Main body

a Put the main information here – broken into paragraphs for ease of reading

b Talk about previous contact and ask the recipient a question here

c Talk about future contact



Vocabulary review





Vocabulary review



1



I don't have a lot of **leisure** time normally.

2



There were loads of **recreational activities** to do at the holiday camp.

3



I'm a surfing **enthusiast**!

4

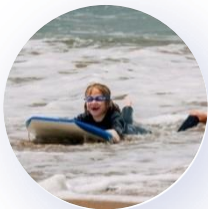


The bar was a great place for **socialising**.



Vocabulary review

5



Our daughter's attempts at surfing provided us with great **amusement**.

6



I made **an attempt to improve** my surfing skills.

7



It's a popular **form of recreation** over there.

8



We really **indulged** in all of the great food.



Fill in the gaps

- 1 Large hotels often have a wide range of _____ activities available to guests.
- 2 During a holiday is a good time to attempt to _____ on something.
- 3 Stories which seem annoying at the time often provide a lot of _____ for the listener.
- 4 Cookery _____ might want to take a trip to Italy to improve their skills.

improve
enthusiasts
recreational
amusement



Answer key

P.11:

1. of 2. at 3. from 4. of 5. to

P.23:

1. recreational 2. improve 3. amusement 4. enthusiast



Summary

Structuring a letter:

- **Opening greeting:** *Dear John,*
- **Introductory paragraph:** *Thanks for your letter. It was great to hear from you. Sorry I haven't written sooner, I've been run off my feet at work.*
- **Main body:** *So, after the wedding we stayed for a few weeks...*

Structuring a letter (2):

- **Concluding paragraph:** *Anyway, I have to go now, I've got loads of work to do. Let me know what you think about planning a visit soon!*
- **Closing salutations:** *Love, Julia.*

Informal letters:

- Use **contractions:** *don't, won't*; Use one or two **exclamation marks**; Ask **direct questions**.
- Use **slang, idioms and colloquial language**; Use **phrasal verbs**; Use **informal linking expressions:** *but, anyway, etc.*

Informal letters:

- Use **adjectives**. The experience was subjective, so use **extreme** and **bold** adjectives to tell someone how much you **enjoyed** it, or how **terrible** it was. Give your **opinion** on what happened.
- Try to **involve** the person you are writing to. Maybe they would like to have the same **experience**, or maybe you **wish** they had been there.



Vocabulary

snowed under

enthusiast

fed up

lush

to indulge



Notes