

Name: _____

Topic/Component: **Factual Recount – Letter to the Principal**

For your reference and files.

Formal Letter

Written letters are a very important type of writing. Make sure you have a clear and consistent style and sense of character in the letter. Make sure you write appropriately to audience - if you are asked to write to a family member you would use a different tone than if you were writing to your head teacher!

Success Criteria:

- Clear Structure (see below for your structure for success) with topic sentences
- Think about the audience (this will affect the language you choose)
- Think about the purpose (this will affect your language - e.g. if you are asked to PERSUADE then use PERFECT techniques).
- Varied punctuation
- Different sentence types

Structure for Success

1. Opening

Address your letter to Dear + the name or job title of the person you have been asked to write to, then start a new line for the opening paragraph. N.B. Although it is good practice to teach and expect students to put dates and addresses on formal letters, and to sign them appropriately, these are not required and not rewarded in the exam.

- If the letter **begins with 'Dear Madam' or 'Dear Sir', it should end with 'Yours faithfully'.**
- If the letter **begins with somebody's name, for example 'Dear Mr. Robert', it should end with 'Yours sincerely'.**

Dear Sir or Madam >>>>> Yours faithfully

Dear Ms Bates >>>>> Yours sincerely

2. Paragraph 1: Introduction

Why are you writing? Give the general aim and minimum information only, e.g. to complain, apply, request, disagree, and an indication of what you are responding to e.g. a recent holiday or a letter in last week's newspaper.

3. Paragraph 2: Details of situation

Give previous history of event or your background or experience. Say what happened exactly if you are making a complaint, or focus directly on the text you are arguing with. This section should include specific data such as names, dates, facts and details.

4. Paragraph 3: Further development

Give further support to your claim or request. Summarise the current situation and why you should be given consideration e.g. other problems which occurred with your holiday accommodation, how well you fulfil the job requirements.

5. Final paragraph: Future action

Say what you wish to happen next e.g. that you look forward to being called for interview or expect to receive some compensation as soon as possible. Suggest, firmly but politely, what may happen if you do not receive a response to a complaint.

FORMAL LETTER TEMPLATE

The diagram illustrates the structure of a formal letter with the following components and annotations:

- Your name and address.** (An arrow points to the sender's address block.)
Jessica Schachterle
203 Dale Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55103
- 2 spaces** (An arrow indicates the gap between the sender's address and the date.)
- The date.** (An arrow points to the date.)
January 30, 2003
- 2 spaces** (An arrow indicates the gap between the date and the recipient's address.)
- The name, title, and address of the person to whom you are sending the letter.** (An arrow points to the recipient's address block.)
The Honorable Mee Moua
Minnesota State Senate
St. Paul, MN 55102
- 1 space** (An arrow indicates the gap between the recipient's address and the salutation.)
Dear Senator Moua.
- Type the body of your letter here. This is where you tell the politician or business manager what you want them to know. It is important to be respectful and to state your ideas in a way that is not too emotional.**
- 1 space** (An arrow indicates the gap between the salutation and the closing.)
Sincerely,
- 4 spaces** (An arrow indicates the gap between the closing and the signature.)
Jessica Schachterle

Conventions

There are a number of conventions that should be adhered to and it is important that the overall structure is as clear and concise as possible and that you avoid the use of colloquialisms (informal language).

Addresses:

1) Your Address

Your address should be displayed in the top right-hand section. This will enable the person that you are writing to, to reply.

2) The Address of the person you are writing to

This address should be displayed beneath your address on the left-hand side, remember to include the name of the person that you are writing to (if known).

Date:

This should be displayed on the right-hand side of the page on the line beneath your address and should be written in full format:

e.g. 1st January 2001

Salutation & Greeting:

1) Dear Sirs,

If you do not know the name of the person that you are writing to, use the greeting "Dear Sirs,". In some circumstances it is useful to find a name, especially if you are making a request as this will show that you have done your homework and you are more likely to receive a response.

2) Dear Mr Jones,

If you know the name, use one of the following titles:

Mr - for a male

Mrs - for a married female

Miss - for an unmarried female

Ms - for a female whose status is unknown or would prefer to remain anonymous

Dr - for a person with the status of a doctor

This should be followed by the surname only (not the first name).

Concluding:

1) Yours faithfully,

If you do not know the name of the person, conclude with "Yours faithfully,".

2) Yours sincerely,

If you know the name of the person, conclude with "Yours sincerely,".

3) Your signature

Sign your name, then print it underneath the signature. If it is potentially unclear what your title would be then include this in brackets next to your printed name.

Content

In modern society there is a trend to use a shorthand writing style, for instance replacing the word "you" with "u" or replacing the word "weekend" with "wkend", there are many other examples. This casual approach and informal writing style can easily be transferred, sometimes subconsciously, when a more formal style is required.

Introductory Paragraph

The introductory paragraph should be concise and should clearly state the purpose, whether it is to lodge a complaint, make an enquiry or to request something.

Main Body

The main body should clearly state the points that you want to make. As a general rule it is a good idea to keep this as to the point as possible to ensure that the recipient remains engaged. A longer main body may be more appropriate when making a complaint as you may require to add more detail in order to convey the importance of what you are putting across.

Concluding Paragraph

The concluding paragraph should outline what action you would like the recipient to take: to make a refund, to send you information etc.

Application

Complaint

A letter of complaint is sent to an individual or organisation in response to receiving poor service or a product that is not fit for purpose. An example of a letter of complaint would be a one sent to a tour operator who has provided a bad service while you have been on holiday. This does not necessarily need to be concise as it is important that you detail your arguments and points as much as possible.

Enquiry

A letter of enquiry makes an approach to an individual or organisation either speculatively or in response to printed public domain material whereby you are requesting some information. An example of a letter of enquiry would be one sent to a company requesting a copy of their catalogue or brochure. By their very nature these are short and to the point, it is usually beneficial to include other methods of contact in case the company needs to get in touch with you via other means.

Request

A letter of request is similar to when you make an enquiry but specifically asks an individual or organisation to take an action. An example of a letter of request would be one sent to request sponsorship for a charity activity. It is important to stress the importance of being clear and concise with this format as the recipient must remain engaged and interested in what you have to say.

Additional Notes

Register:

Use a formal tone: this affects your choice of vocabulary and grammar. For example, the first text below would not be appropriate in a formal letter, whereas the second would be:

Hey

I saw some stuff in your mag about activities for kids and I just wanna say that the activities in this town suck. I mean what are we supposed to do in the evenings?

Dear Sir or Madam

With regard to your recent feature on leisure activities for young people, I would like to make a few suggestions.

NOTE: You should not use short forms (e.g. don't, won't, isn't).

Below are some important points about writing a formal letter in your IGCSE exam:

- You do not need to supply addresses or a date, unless you are specifically asked to. However, you need to **address the person** that you are writing to.
- A formal letter is the type you write to someone you have never met before, or to someone with whom you have no personal relationship.

A formal letter will usually contain at least two paragraphs, and will use formal language and no abbreviations.

During the exercise:

You will be given some ideas (pictures or opinions), which can start you thinking about the topic. In these writing exercises, Examiners are looking for answers which:

- i) are the right length – remember to check how many words you need to write.
- ii) have paragraphs – these don't have to be long, but each one should contain a different set of ideas
- iii) answer the question – don't forget any bullet points
- iv) are organised and logical–this helps to keep you on the topic
- v) are accurate – so be careful to check your spelling, grammar and punctuation
- vi) are clear to read–so keep your handwriting tidy.

SAMPLE FORMAL LETTERS

Dear Mrs Talker,

I am writing to inform you that I was very disappointed with my visit to your restaurant two days ago. I read your advertisement in the newspaper and decided to spend an evening there with my friend. Unfortunately, I have a couple of complaints concerning this visit.

According to your advertisement the place is perfect for having private conversations in relaxing atmosphere. However, it turned out that the music was so loud that I could hardly concentrate on the chat with my friend. The waiter asked to turn the music down shrugged his shoulders and said that other guests liked it that way. Is that what you mean by 'discreet service'?

To make matters worse, the place was crowded and waiting for an ordered meal was intolerably long. I must admit that the cuisine was quite good but the prices were way too high.

I would like you to take my points under consideration and I expect a refund from your restaurant. I trust you will give this matter immediate attention. I look forward to receiving a reply from you.

Yours sincerely,
David Beckham.

23rd January 2012

Dear Students,

I am writing to inform you why today's lesson is so important. By the end of today's lesson, you should understand exactly how to structure a formal letter, and you will all have had a chance to write your own. I am looking forward to reading your letters and seeing how much you have managed to learn.

There are many reasons why learning to write a formal letter is a vital skill. Firstly, what you learn today will help you to pass your functional skills exam. The exam will be a valuable qualification to put on your CV.

Secondly, when you are applying for jobs/college/university you will need to be able to write a formal letter. If you don't know how to do it, people are unlikely to take you seriously. Today's lesson isn't just about the exam; it's about having a skill that you can use for life! The skills you learn today may help you get your dream job...

Finally, when you put as much effort as you can into a lesson, it makes me happy! I'm going to be making a note of who is working well today and will be making a positive phone call home for the student whose letter I am most impressed by.

Give 100% in today's lesson and you'll find you can achieve a great deal; I can't wait to see what you can produce before the end of the day!

Yours sincerely,

Miss

Your name

Address

Phone:

Email:

Date

The Editor

Name of the newspaper

City of publication

Dear Sir

The insensitive use of loudspeakers has become quite a nuisance in our cities. The most annoying thing is that loudspeakers have now become an integral part of almost all celebrations. People seem to believe that even private occasions like marriages and birthday parties would be incomplete without the blaring of loudspeakers.

Noise pollution is already one of the greatest problems that people living in cities have to deal with. The excessive use of loudspeakers makes it even worse. Of course, there are occasions when their use is absolutely necessary, but I see no justification in using them during every party or meeting.

The worst hit by this improper use of loudspeakers are the elderly and the children. Due to the excessive noise, the elderly can't sleep properly and the children can't concentrate on their studies. It is high time the authorities did something to regulate the use of loudspeakers.

Sincerely

Your name

This question is marked out of 15 for Writing and 10 for Reading.

Use the following table to give a mark out of 10 for Reading.

Band 1	9–10	Makes a thorough, perceptive, convincing evaluation of the ideas, positive and negative, with links between these logically made. Reads effectively between the lines. Develops the reading material and integrates it into the argument.
Band 2	7–8	A good evaluation of the passage, using reading material (positive and negative points with evidence of linking ideas) to support the argument. Occasionally effective development of some of the ideas in the material.
Band 3	5–6	A reasonable response, referring to a number of points. Candidates cover the positives and negatives satisfactorily, but may miss opportunities to develop it relevantly or at length.
Band 4	3–4	Selects points (positive and negative) from the passage rather literally and/or uses material thinly. Does not combine points into an effective response.
Band 5	1–2	Parts of the answer are relevant, though material may be repeated injudiciously, or wrongly used.
Band 6	0	Answer does not relate to question and/or too much unselective copying directly from the material to gain a mark in Band 5.

Use the following table to give a mark out of 15 for Writing.

Band 1	13–15	Excellent, consistent sense of audience; persuasive/authoritative style; very fit for purpose. Fluent, varied sentences/wide range of vocabulary. Strong sense of structure and sequence. Virtually no error.
Band 2	10–12	Sense of audience mostly secure; quite stylish and fluent; sense of overall structure; arguments occasionally well developed. Writing is mainly accurate, sentences mostly fluent/complex sentences/range of vocabulary/occasional error/mostly well sequenced.
Band 3	8–9	Recognisable sense of audience; mostly written in accurate, if fairly straightforward language; some argument based on material apparent; mostly quite well structured. Errors minor; language straightforward but effective; vocabulary fit for task.
Band 4	5–7	Appropriate if sometimes inconsistent style; sentences mainly accurate; fact rather than argument; basic structure: has beginning, middle and end; fairly frequent (minor) errors; language and vocabulary simple with occasional attempts at argument.
Band 5	3–4	Functional expression; facts selected and occasionally listed; has a beginning, but main part of response is not always well sequenced. Some serious errors in grammar/punctuation/use of vocabulary. Errors slightly intrusive.
Band 6	1–2	Language and style not clear; some blurring and lack of order. Despite some serious errors, can mainly be followed. Simple sentences.
Band 7	0	Serious inaccuracies and problems with language and grammar are too intrusive to gain a mark in Band 6.