

Sunday, February 3, 2019

IELTS General Writing Task 1: 'private teacher' topic

Your son is learning a second language at school, but he needs some extra lessons. Write a letter to a teacher asking for his/her help. In your letter

- explain why your son needs help
- ask the teacher about her teaching experience and methods
- and suggest a possible schedule for the lessons

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing to ask whether you are available to help my son with some after-school Spanish lessons. (CX¹)

My son, Tom, missed the majority of the autumn school term due to illness, and he is struggling to catch up. (CP) His problems is Spanish lessons stem from the fact that he was off school when the teacher introduced some new verb tenses. (CX) He was also unable to attend a course of pronunciation lessons, and so he lacks confidence when asked to speak in front of the other students. (CC)

Can I ask you about your experience teaching high school students? (S) Are you familiar with the curriculum, in particular the grammar and vocabulary topics that are covered in year 9? (CX) Perhaps you could also tell me a little about the methods you use to build students' pronunciation and conversation skills. (CX)

Tom is free every weekday after school, so I was hoping that you could come to our house to teach him in the later afternoon or early evening. (CC) Two lessons per week would be ideal. (S)

I hope to hear from you soon, and that you will be able to help. (CP)

Yours sincerely,

Paul Jones

(194 words, band 9)

Analysis:

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	2
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	4
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	

¹ S stands for Simple, CP for Compound, CX for Complex, and CC for Compound-Complex

Sentences starting with S + V	7	
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	1 Perhaps	
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	2 direct questions	
Different kinds of clauses		
Adjective clause	3 that are covered (that) you used to build that you could come	
Noun clause	0	
Adverbial clause	3 whether you are available when the teacher introduced when asked to speak	
Reduced clause	0	
Verb variety		
Passive	1 are introduced	
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	2 would, could	
All forms of tenses	am writing, is struggling (present continuous) are, is, lacks (present simple) missed, introduced, was (past simple) are covered (passive present simple) was hoping (past continuous) could come would be will be (future simple)	
Comparisons		
Other grammar rules		
Linking devices - at least two kinds		
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>		
Sophisticated linking device	His problems	
Opinion linking device		
Beginning and Ending letter		
I am writing to ask whether you are available to help my son with some after-school Spanish lessons. I hope to hear from you soon, and that you will be able to help.		
Formal or informal LR		
whether stem from	illness attend struggling ideal	
Topic-Specific Vocabulary		
after-school Spanish lessons	autumn school term	be off school
introduced some new verb tenses		attend a course
pronunciation lessons	lack confidence	asked to speak
students	experience	curriculum
grammar and vocabulary topics		year 9
build students pronunciation and conversation skills		
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech		

Sunday, August 19, 2018

IELTS General Writing: letter of complaint

You are not satisfied with the changing rooms in a sports center that you visit. Write a letter to the sports center manager. In your letter

- explain the problem
- say how you feel about this problem
- and say what steps you would like the manager to take

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to complain about the unacceptable state of the male changing room at the Sprint Sports complex. (S)

I have been using the gym at your center for several years now, and it would appear that no maintenance work has been carried out on the changing room facilities in all that time. (CC) As a result, paint is peeling off the walls, floor tiles are cracked, and there is mold[†] and mildew growing around the showers. (CC)

The neglected and shabby state of the changing room makes me think that you do not care about your customers. (CX) I feel that we are being treated like farm animals, and I worry that you are putting our health at risk. (CC) It seems that profit is more important than the customer experience. (CX)

Please address the changing room issue as a matter of urgency. (S) I suggest that a full refurbishment is required, and that you should consider some form of compensation for members. (CC) We have tolerated this situation for too long. (S)

Yours faithfully,

John Smith

(176 words, band 9)

Analysis:

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	3
Compound (CP)	0
Complex (CX)	2
Compound-Complex (CC)	4
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	7
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	1 As a result,

[†] mould (British)

Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	1	Please address
Different kinds of clauses		
Adjective clause	2	
Noun clause	0	
Adverbial clause	0	
Reduced clause	1	mold and mildew (which is) growing
Verb variety		
Passive	3	
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	2	would, should
All forms of tenses		have been using (present perfect continuous) would appear has been carried out (passive present perfect) is peeling off (present continuous) are cracked (passive present) growing (reduced adj clause) makes, do not care, feel (present simple) are being treated (passive present continuous) have tolerated (present perfect)
Comparisons		profit is more important than the customer experience.
Other grammar rules		
Linking devices - at least two kinds		
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>		As a result
Sophisticated linking device		This + noun (this situation)
Opinion linking device		I feel that I worry that It seems that I suggest that
Beginning and Ending letter		
I am writing to complain about the unacceptable state of the male changing room at the Sprint Sports complex. Please address the changing room issue as a matter of urgency. ... We have tolerated this situation for too long.		
Formal or informal LR		
complain	unacceptable state	the neglected and shabby state
carry out	address	as a matter of urgency
refurbishment	compensation	tolerate
Topic-Specific Vocabulary		
the gym (at sports center)	maintenance work	changing room facilities
paint is peeling off	floor tiles are cracked	mold and mildew grow around
care about customers	putting our health at risk	customer experience
as a matter of urgency	full refurbishment	some form of compensation for
members		
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech		
unacceptable state	The neglected and shabby state	

Sunday, March 18, 2018

IELTS General Writing: 'job reference' letter

A work colleague (or student friend) has applied for a new job, and he/she has asked you to write a reference letter to the new employer. Write a letter to the employer to recommend your colleague/friend. In your letter

- state your reason for writing and say how you know the applicant
- describe your colleague/friend's relevant qualifications and skills
- and explain why you are recommending this person for the job

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to recommend Helen Jones for the position of Director of Studies at Manchester Language School. (S) Having worked closely with Helen for almost five years, I am very pleased to provide this reference in support of her application. (CX)

Helen is a highly qualified English teacher who also has significant management experience. (CX) She recently completed a master's degree in English language teaching, and she became our Assistant Director of Studies earlier this year. (CP) Helen was given this post because she demonstrated exceptional organizational, team building and course development skills during her first four years with us. (CX)

Helen's students and colleagues describe her as dedicated, hardworking, and enthusiastic. (S) I believe that her professionalism in the classroom and her commitment to her colleagues' development make Helen the perfect candidate for a full-time Director of Studies position. (CX)

If you have any further questions about Helen's suitability for the post, please do not hesitate to contact me. (CX)

Yours faithfully,

John Smith

Director, Sheffield English Academy

(166 words, band 9)

Notes:

- We could also begin this letter with "To whom it may concern".
- We don't really need to include the job title "Director, Sheffield English Academy", but I've included it to make the letter seem a little more realistic.
- Notice that I chose to write about a job that is familiar to me (English teacher). I imagined writing a reference for a real ex-colleague of mine, and I simply changed a few names.

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	2
Compound (CP)	1
Complex (CX)	5

Compound-Complex (CC)	0
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	6
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	0
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	Having worked If you have
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	1 who also has
Noun clause	0
Adverbial clause	2 because she demonstrated If you have
Reduced clause	Having worked closely (Because I have worked)
Verb variety	
Passive	1
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	0
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) having worked (present perfect) am-is-has (present simple) completed-became-demonstrated (past simple) was given (passive present simple) describe-believe-make-do not hesitate (present simple)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	this + noun (this post) her professionalism and her commitment (refer to dedicated, hardworking and enthusiastic)
Opinion linking device	I believe that
Beginning and Ending letter	
I am writing to recommend Helen Jones for the position of Director of Studies at Manchester Language School. If you have any further questions about Helen's suitability for the post, please do not hesitate to contact me.	
Formal or informal LR	
pleased enthusiastic Helen's suitability	highly qualified professionalism please do not hesitate demonstrated commitment contact me
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
the position of X (teacher/programmer/...) completed a master's degree course development skills hardworking commitment to sb's development someone's suitability	in support of his/her application significant management experience exceptional organizational skills colleagues enthusiastic highly qualified team building skills dedicated professionalism in the classroom perfect candidate
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	
for a new job	for the position of X

Saturday, September 16, 2017

General IELTS Writing: 'concert ticket' topic

You bought a ticket to a music concert. However, you are unable to go, so you decide to offer your ticket to a friend. Write a letter to your friend. In your letter

- Tell your friend the details about the concert
- explain why you are unable to go
- and explain how your friend can receive your ticket

Dear John,

I hope you're well. (S) I'm just writing to offer you a concert ticket that I won't be able to use. (CX)

Do you remember that I told you I was going to a gig this Saturday? (CX) There's an up-and-coming singer and guitarist who's playing at the Apollo Theater; I think you'll be blown away by how good he is. (CC) The concert starts at 7 pm, but there's a support act on first, so you can arrive a bit later if you only want to catch the main performance. (CC)

The reason why I'm offering you my ticket is that I've been asked to visit a client in Germany to help with a product lunch, and I won't be back until Monday. (CC)

If you're free on Saturday evening, and you'd like to go, just speak to my brother. (CC) He'll be going to the gig, so you won't be alone, and you can arrange to meet beforehand or outside the venue on the night. (CP)

I hope you can make it, and that you enjoy the concert! (CP)

See you soon,

Simon

(178 words, band 9)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	1
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	2
Compound-Complex (CC)	4
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	7
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	0
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	Do you remember If you're free
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3 that I won't be able that I told you

	who's playing
Noun clause	2 how good he is why I'm offering you
Adverbial clause	2 if you only want If you're free on Saturday
Reduced clause	0
Verb variety	
Passive	2
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would like
All forms of tenses	hope (present simple) am writing (present continuous) won't be (future simple) told (past simple) was going (past continuous) will be blown away (passive future simple) have been asked (passive present perfect) will be going (future continuous)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	a gig the concert Saturday evening on the night
Opinion linking device	I think I hope
Beginning and Ending letter	
I hope you're well. I'm just writing to offer you a concert ticket that I won't be able to use. I hope you can make it, and that you enjoy the concert!	
Formal or informal LR	
blow away (by)	a bit later
going to the gig	you can make it
	catch the main performance a lot of contractions
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
concert ticket	a gig
up-and-coming guitarist	at the X Theater
main performance	the venue
	an up-and-coming singer a support act enjoy the concert
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	
a gig	a concert

Sunday, May 07, 2017

IELTS General Writing Task 1: 'translation' question

You need a translation of a document into a different language, and you have a friend who speaks that language. Write a letter to your friend. In your letter

- explain what the document is and why you need a translation
- explain why this is urgent and important for you
- ask your friend if and when he/she will be able to help you

Dear Jane,

I hope you're well. (S) I'm writing to ask for your help with a document that I need to have translated into French. (CX)

As you know, I've been given the opportunity to spend a semester at a business school in Paris. (S) Well, they've asked me to provide a translated copy of my degree certificate along with the original. (S)

I've been told that I must submit both documents this week in order to secure my place on the course. (CX) They will give my place to someone else if I don't get the translation done; I'm running out of time, and you're my only hope! (CC)

Do you think you could do me a big favor and give me an hour or so of your time either tomorrow or Wednesday? (CC) It shouldn't take you long to translate the certificate, and I can come to see you whenever suits you best. (CC)

If you're able to help, just let me know when you'd like me to pop round. (CX)

Speak soon,

Chris

(167 words, band 9)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	3
Compound (CP)	0
Complex (CX)	3
Compound-Complex (CC)	3
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	5
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	2 As you know, Well,
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	2 Do you think If you're able
Different kinds of clauses	

Adjective clause	2
Noun clause	0
Adverbial clause	3 If I don't get the translation done Whenever suits you best If you're able
Reduced clause	0
Verb variety	
Passive	2
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	must submit could do-can come would like
All forms of tenses	hope-need (present simple) am writing (present continuous) have been given-have been told (passive present perfect) have asked (present perfect) must submit will give (future simple) could do shouldn't take can come would like
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	As you know, Well,
Sophisticated linking device	a document my degree certificate both documents my place (repetition)
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I hope you're well. I'm writing to ask for your help with a document that I need to have translated into French. If you're able to help, just let me know when you'd like me to pop round.	
Formal or informal LR	
I'm running out of time	you're my only hope! a big favor to pop round (Brit. to go somewhere for a short time)
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
translate into French	a translated copy my degree certificate
original (document)	secure my place shouldn't take you long to translate
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Tuesday, January 03, 2017

IELTS General Writing: formal letter

You recently organized a party for your company at a hotel. Write a letter to the hotel manager.
In your letter

- describe the party and how it went
- explain why you were pleased with the hotel's service
- suggest some improvements that the hotel could make

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regard to the party that my company held at your hotel last weekend. (CX)

The event commemorated our company's 20th anniversary, and all two hundred staff members from across the country were invited. (CP) I am pleased to say that everything went according to plan, and it was a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable evening. (CC)

We were particularly impressed by the hotel personnel on the night, including waiters, bar staff and members of the events team. (S) They were friendly, welcoming and attentive, and they ensured that the party ran smoothly. (CC)

Perhaps I could make one or two suggestions for future events. (S) First, a little more care could have been taken with decorations in the events room; for example, it would have been nice to see more balloons. (CP) Second, a few people struggled to find the events room when they arrived, so you might consider improving your signage in the hotel. (CP)

On behalf of all of my colleagues, I would like to thank you and your team for hosting such a special event. (S)

Yours faithfully,

John Smith

(181 words, band 9)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	3
Compound (CP)	3
Complex (CX)	1
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	5
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	3 Perhaps First, Second,
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	1 On behalf of all of my colleagues
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3 that my company held

	that everything went according that the party ran smoothly
Noun clause	0
Adverbial clause	0
Reduced clause	0
Verb variety	
Passive	2
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	could make could have been taken would have been-would like might consider
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) held-commemorated-went-was (past simple) were invited-were impressed (passive past simple) could make could have been taken (passive present perfect) would have been (present perfect) might consider would like
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	Perhaps First, Second,
Sophisticated linking device	The + synonym (the event) They (hotel personnel)
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I am writing with regard to the party that my company held at your hotel last weekend. On behalf of all of my colleagues, I would like to thank you and your team for hosting such a special event.	
Formal or informal LR	
with regard to	commemorate
thoroughly enjoyable and memorable	pleased impressed
welcoming and attentive	struggle
On behalf of all of my colleagues	signage
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
hold a party (organize)	commemorating event
go according to plan	thoroughly enjoyable
particularly impressed	hotel personnel
friendly, welcoming, attentive	invite
take more care with decoration	memorable evening
struggle to find	waiters, bar staff
	run party smoothly
	to be nice to see more balloons
	host such a special event
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Sunday, December 04, 2016

IELTS General Writing: informal letters

You had arranged to meet a friend next week, but you have realized that you will not be able to go. Write a letter to your friend. In your letter

- cancel the meeting with your friend and apologize
- explain why you will not be able to meet your friend
- suggest where and when you could see each other instead

Dear James,

I hope you're well. (S) I'm afraid I have a bit of bad news related to our plan to meet next Friday evening. (CX)

I was really looking forward to catching up with you, but unfortunately something has come up, and I'm not going to be able to make it. (CP) I'm really sorry to have to cancel, especially as we haven't had a proper chat for such a long time. (CX)

So, what's my excuse? (S) Well, my boss has just informed me that I'm going to be speaking at a conference in London that runs from Wednesday to Friday. (CX) I thought I might be able to rush back on the Friday afternoon, but apparently we're being treated to an evening meal in the hotel, and I'm expected to attend. (CC)

On a more positive note, it's my birthday the following Saturday, and I'm planning to have a small celebration with family and close friends. (CP) I'll be cooking a meal at my place, and you're more than welcome to come along. (CP)

Sorry about next Friday, but I hope to see you at my birthday party! (CP)

Best regards,

John

(185 words, band 9)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	2
Compound (CP)	4
Complex (CX)	3
Compound-Complex (CC)	1
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	6
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	2 So, Well,
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	2 On a more positive note, Sorry about next Friday,
Different kinds of clauses	

Adjective clause	1
	that runs from Wednesday to Friday
Noun clause	0
Adverbial clause	2
	as we haven't had
Reduced clause	0
Verb variety	
Passive	2
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	might be
All forms of tenses	hope-have (present simple) was looking (past continuous) has come up-haven't had (present perfect) am not going to be (future simple) has informed (present perfect) am going to be speaking (future continuous) thought (past simple) might be able (modal + verb) are being treated (passive present continuous) am expected (passive present simple) am planning (present continuous) will be cooking (future continuous)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	So, Well, On a more positive note
Sophisticated linking device	sth has come up my excuse
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I hope you're well. I'm afraid I have a bit of bad news related to our plan to meet next Friday evening. Sorry about next Friday, but I hope to see you at my birthday party!	
Formal or informal LR	
I'm afraid	have a bit of bad news
sth has come up	be able to make it
On a more positive note	come along
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
have a proper chat	speaking at a conference
have a small celebration	cook a meal
birthday party	evening meal
	you're more than welcome
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Saturday, June 18, 2016

IELTS General Writing: task 1 letter

Your local council is considering closing a sports and leisure center that it runs, in order to save money. Write a letter to the local council. In your letter

- give details of how you and your friend or family use the center
- explain why the center is important for the local community
- describe the possible effects on local people if the center closes

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regard to the proposed closure of the town's sports and leisure center. (S)

First, I would like to stress how important the center is for my own family. (CX) My wife and I both use the gym on a daily basis, and our two children attend weekly gymnastics and football clubs, which they enjoy immensely. (CC)

I also believe that the leisure center is an integral part of the local community. (CX) It is where people go to do exercise, play sports, take part in group activities, and to socialize and make friends. (CX) It really is a social hub in the town. (S)

If you do close the sports and leisure center, the local residents will lose a treasured facility. (CX) As there are no other sports centers within a reasonable distance, the closure would have a detrimental effect on health and quality of life in the area. (CX)

I hope that you will take these concerns into consideration before making a decision. (CX)

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(168 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	2
Compound (CP)	0
Complex (CX)	6
Compound-Complex (CC)	1
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	6
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	1 First,
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	2 If you do close As there are
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3 , which they enjoy that the leisure center is

	that you will take
Noun clause	2 how important the center is where people go
Adverbial clause	2 If you do close As there are no other sports centers
Reduced clause	
Verb variety	
Passive	0
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) would like (modal + verb) is-use-attend-enjoy-believe (present simple) will lose-will take (future simple)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	First,
Sophisticated linking device	these concerns
Opinion linking device	I also believe that, I hope that
Beginning and Ending letter	
I am writing with regard to the proposed closure of the town's sports and leisure center. I hope that you will take these concerns into consideration before making a decision.	
Formal or informal LR	
with regard to attend take these concerns into consideration	the proposed closure integral part would like to stress local residents
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
proposed closure attend weekly gymnastics and football clubs integral part of the local community play sports a social hub in the town a detrimental effect	sports and leisure center use the gym enjoy immensely do exercise socialize and make friends a reasonable distance take part in group activities a treasured facility health and quality of life
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	
proposed closure, close	attend, take part socialize, social

Sunday, November 29, 2015

IELTS General Writing: 'thank you' letter

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

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

Dear Sir,

I am writing to thank you and your staff for making our celebration meal so special last Friday evening. (S)

I made a booking for ten people at very short notice on Friday, and you managed to find us a table. (CP) When we made the spontaneous decision to eat out that evening, we were amazed to find a table for such a large group, and we could not have chosen a better restaurant. (CC)

The ten of us were celebrating our university graduation. (S) The ceremony had taken place, and my friends and I were all so relieved to have finally received our degree certificates. (CP) Nobody wanted to go home, so I suggested that we find somewhere to have dinner together. (CC)

As soon as we walked into the restaurant, we knew that we were in good hands. (CX) Your waiters were extremely friendly and obliging, and the food was delicious. (CP) We were also impressed that both you and the head chef came to check that everyone was happy with their food. (CX)

All ten of us would like to thank you for giving us such a memorable evening. (S)

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(189 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	3
Compound (CP)	3
Complex (CX)	2
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	8
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	0
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	When we made As soon as we walked
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3

	that we find somewhere that both you and chef came that everyone was happy
Noun clause	
Adverbial clause	2 When we made the spontaneous decision As soon as we walked into the restaurant
Reduced clause	
Verb variety	
Passive	3
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	2 could, would
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) made, managed, wanted, suggested, walked, knew, were (past simple) were amazed, were relieved, were impressed (passive past simple) could not have chosen (modal + present perfect) were celebrating (past continuous) had taken place (past perfect) would like
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	were celebrating-> the ceremony
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I am writing to thank you and your staff for making our celebration meal so special last Friday evening. All ten of us would like to thank you for giving us such a memorable evening.	
Formal or informal LR	
made a booking relieved	spontaneous decision obliging amazed impressed
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
your staff spontaneous decision find somewhere to have dinner waiter delicious	make a booking ceremony (take place) managed to find us a table receive degree certificate to be in good hands obliging (willing to help) memorable evening
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	
celebrate, celebration	ten people, the ten of us, all ten of us

Sunday, July 26, 2015

IELTS General Writing: 'accommodation' letter

You and your family are moving to another country, and you are looking for rented accommodation there. Write a letter to a property agent. In your letter

- introduce yourself and your family
- describe the type of accommodation that you hope to find
- give your preference for the location of the accommodation

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to ask for your help finding accommodation in Australia. (S)

My name is Mark Smith, and I am married with two young children. (CP) A recent promotion at work has meant that I will soon be based in Sydney instead of London, and so we are hoping to emigrate as soon as possible. (CC)

Our plan is to find rented accommodation for at least the first year of our stay in Australia. (S) Ideally, we would like a detached house with three or four bedrooms and a good-sized garden so that the children have somewhere to run around. (CX)

We would prefer a quiet, suburban location within easy commuting distance of the city center. (S) The local schools are an important consideration, and we would like to be close to shops and other amenities. (CP)

I hope that you can help us with our house search, and I look forward to hearing from you. (CC)

Yours faithfully,

Mark Smith

(158 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	3
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	1
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	7
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	1 Ideally
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	2 that I will soon be based that you can help

Noun clause		
Adverbial clause	1 so that the children have (purpose adverbial clause)	
Reduced clause		
Verb variety		
Passive	1	
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	2	
All forms of tenses	am writing, are hoping (present continuous) is, am, have (present simple) has meant (present perfect) will be based (passive future simple) would like, would prefer can help	
Comparisons		
Other grammar rules		
Linking devices - at least two kinds		
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	Ideally	
Sophisticated linking device		
Opinion linking device		
Beginning and Ending letter		
I am writing to ask for your help finding accommodation in Australia. I hope that you can help us with our house search, and I look forward to hearing from you.		
Formal or informal LR		
accommodation	has meant	consideration
Topic-Specific Vocabulary		
finding accommodation	a recent promotion at work	emigrate
rented accommodation	stay in Australia	a detached house
three bedrooms	a good-sized garden	run around (run while playing)
a quiet, suburban location	easy commuting distance	city center
local schools	important consideration	close to shops and amenities
house search		
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech		
looking for, finding		

Sunday, February 08, 2015

IELTS General Writing: apology letter

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

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

Dear Mark,

I hope you're well and that had a fantastic time on your birthday. (S)

I'm so sorry that I wasn't there to celebrate with you, and for not letting you know beforehand that I wouldn't be able to come. (CC) I feel terrible that I haven't found the time to contact you until now. (CX)

The truth is that I've been under a lot of stress at work recently. (CX) I was in danger of losing my job if I didn't meet a sales target, so I haven't been able to think about anything else over the past few weeks. (CC) This is why I couldn't be at your party, and why I didn't call you to tell you I wouldn't be there. (CC)

I really hope you'll forgive me for being so thoughtless, and I hope you'll let me make it up to you. (CC) By way of an apology, I've bought tickets for us both to go to the football next Saturday; I hope you'll come. (CP)

Speak to you soon,

Mike

(168 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	1
Compound (CP)	1
Complex (CX)	2
Compound-Complex (CC)	4
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	7
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	0
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	1 By way of an apology,
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3 that I wasn't there that I wouldn't be able that I haven't found the time
Noun clause	2

	why I couldn't be why I didn't call you
Adverbial clause	1 if I didn't meet a sales target
Reduced clause	
Verb variety	
Passive	0
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	2 would, could
All forms of tenses	hope, are (present simple) had, wasn't (pas simple) wouldn't be haven't found, have been, have bought (present perfect) couldn't be will forgive, will let (future simple)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I hope you're well and that had a fantastic time on your birthday. By way of an apology, I've bought tickets for us both to go to the football next Saturday; I hope you'll come.	
Formal or informal LR	
fantastic time make it up to you ³	feel terrible to be under a lot of stress
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
have a fantastic time on sb's birthday find the time to contact sb to be so thoughtless	celebrate with sb in danger of sth (losing my job) by way of an apology
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

³ to do something to show that you are sorry about the problems you have caused someone
<https://www.ldoceonline.com/dictionary/make-up-to>

Sunday, November 16, 2014

IELTS General Writing: 'time off work' topic

You are working for a company. You need to take some time off work and want to ask your manager about this. Write a letter to your manager. In your letter

- explain why you want to take time off work
- give details of the amount of time you need
- suggest how your work could be covered while you are away

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing to ask for some time off work next month. (S)

The reason for this request is that my brother is getting married. (CX) His future wife is Australian, and the wedding will take place in her home city, Melbourne. (CP) As the brother of the groom, I cannot miss such a special occasion. (S)

To attend the ceremony and make the round trip from the UK, I would need at least five days off work. (S) However, I would like to take the opportunity to do some sightseeing in Australia, and so I am hoping that you will allow me to take a full two weeks' leave, from the 1st to the 15th of May. (CP)

I have spoken to my co-workers, and it seems that Peter Jones would be best placed to cover my project commitments while I am away. (CC) I will leave detailed instructions for him on my desk. (S)

I hope that my request does not cause you any inconvenience. (CX)

Yours sincerely,

Michael Hall

(166 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	4
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	2
Compound-Complex (CC)	1
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	6
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	1 However,
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	2 As the brother of the groom, To attend the ceremony
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3

	that my brother is getting married that you will allow that my request does not cause	
Noun clause	0	
Adverbial clause	0	
Reduced clause	0	
Verb variety		
Passive	0	
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would need, would like	
All forms of tenses	am writing, am hoping (present continuous) is (present simple) will take place, will allow (future simple) cannot miss would need, would like have spoken (present perfect)	
Comparisons		
Other grammar rules		
Linking devices - at least two kinds		
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	However,	
Sophisticated linking device	this + noun (this request) the groom (refer to my brother)	
Opinion linking device		
Beginning and Ending letter		
I am writing to ask for some time off work next month. I hope that my request does not cause you any inconvenience.		
Formal or informal LR		
special occasion	ceremony	however
sightseeing	commitments	cause any inconvenience
Topic-Specific Vocabulary		
ask for some time off work	wedding will take place	the groom
special occasion	attend the ceremony	make the round trip
five days off work	do some sightseeing	two weeks' leave
co-workers	to be best placed to cover...	my project commitments
detailed instructions		
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech		

Sunday, August 24, 2014

IELTS General Writing: local problem

There is a problem in the road outside your house. Write a letter to your local councilor. In your letter

- introduce yourself
- explain what the problem is
- tell the councilor what you would like to be done

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to bring to your attention a road maintenance issue just outside my house on North Road. (S)

My name is Paul Jones. (S) I have been a resident at number 20 North Road for over 10 years, and I have never had reason to complain to the council before. (CP)

Recently, a large pothole has appeared on the side of the road closest to my house. (S) When it rains, the pothole fills with water and becomes an invisible danger to drivers. (CX) It is also an eyesore for those of us living in the vicinity. (CX)

I have called the council offices on several occasions to report the problem, but still nothing has been done. (CP) I would like to request that you address this matter personally and ensure that it is treated as a priority by the road maintenance department. (CX)

I look forward to the problem being resolved. (S)

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(154 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	4
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	3
Compound-Complex (CC)	0
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	7
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	0
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	2 Recently, When it rains
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	2 that you address this matter that it is treated

Noun clause	0
Adverbial clause	1 When it rains
Reduced clause	1 living in the vicinity (who live)
Verb variety	
Passive	2
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would like
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) is, rains, fills, becomes (present simple) have been, have had, has appeared (present perfect) has been done (passive present perfect) would like is treated (passive present simple)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	Repetition (a pothole, the pothole, it) the problem – this matter
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I am writing to bring to your attention a road maintenance issue just outside my house on North Road. I look forward to the problem being resolved.	
Formal or informal LR	
bring to your attention address this matter resolve	on several occasions ensure request treat as a priority
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
a road maintenance issue pothole (appear) drivers council offices	a resident the side of the road eyesore maintenance department complain to the council an invisible danger to vicinity
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	
issue, the problem, this matter	

Saturday, June 14, 2014

IELTS General Writing: 'insurance' letter

On a recent holiday, you lost a valuable item. Fortunately, you have travel insurance to cover the cost of anything lost. Write a letter to the manager of your insurance company. In your letter

- describe the item you lost
- explain how you lost it
- tell the insurance company what you would like them to do

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to make an insurance claim for an item that I lost while on holiday last week. (CX)

The item is a wristwatch that I inherited from my grandfather. (CX) Both the watchstrap and the face are made of gold, and the watch is worth a considerable amount of money. (CP) It also has great sentimental value. (S)

I believe that I must have left the watch on the beach in front of the hotel where I was staying. (CX) I did return to search for it, but I can only assume that it was either covered in sand or that it had been washed out to sea. (CC)

I took out comprehensive travel insurance with your company, and my contract states that all lost items are covered. (CP) I would therefore ask that you review the attached information regarding the estimated value of the watch, and that you process my claim as quickly as possible. (CC)

Please let me know if you require any further information. (CX)

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(169 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	1
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	4
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	8
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	1 Please
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	2 that I lost that I inherited

Noun clause		
Adverbial clause	2 where I was staying if you require	
Reduced clause		
Verb variety		
Passive	3	
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would ask	
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) lost, inherited (past simple) is, has, believe (present simple) are made (passive present simple) have left (present perfect) was staying (past continuous) can assume was covered (passive past simple) had been washed (passive past perfect) would ask	
Comparisons		
Other grammar rules		
Linking devices - at least two kinds		
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	therefore	
Sophisticated linking device	repetition (an item, the item)	
Opinion linking device		
Beginning and Ending letter		
I am writing to make an insurance claim for an item that I lost while on holiday last week. Please let me know if you require any further information.		
Formal or informal LR		
my contract states that	require any further information	
Topic-Specific Vocabulary		
make an insurance claim	wristwatch	inherited from someone
watchstrap and the face	considerable amount of money	sentimental value
covered in sand	washed out to sea	comprehensive travel insurance
lost items	process my claim	
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech		

Sunday, January 26, 2014

IELTS General Writing: 'lost photo' letter

You recently went on a trip with a friend and you both took some photographs. Write a letter to your friend. In your letter

- ask your friend to send you one of the photographs
- explain why you need that particular photograph
- and tell your friend what happened to your copy of it

Dear Jane,

I hope you've recovered from the trip, and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did! (CC)

I'm just writing to ask whether you could send me a copy of the photo you took of the sun setting over the mountains on the last evening. (CX) I think you took some photos of me with the sunset in the background, but there should be one that just shows the sunset. (CC)

The reason I'm after that particular photo is that I think it would look great as the screen saver on my laptop. (CX) I'm fed up with the stock image that I've got at the moment, and I was hoping to change it for something really stunning that I had taken myself. (CC)

I did take a fantastic picture of the sunset, but somehow I managed to delete it on my camera. (CP) It would be great if you could email a copy to me if you have it. (CX)

Speak soon,

Jim

(161 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	0
Compound (CP)	1
Complex (CX)	3
Compound-Complex (CC)	3
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	7
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	0
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	0
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3 (that) you took that I've got that I had taken
Noun clause	
Adverbial clause	4 as much as I did whether you could

	if you could if you have it
Reduced clause	setting over the mountains
Verb variety	
Passive	0
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	could send should be would look
All forms of tenses	hope (present simple) have recovered, have got (present perfect) enjoyed, took (past simple) am writing (present continuous) could send should be would look was hoping (past continuous) had taken (past perfect)
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	that particular photo
Opinion linking device	I think
Beginning and Ending letter	
I hope you've recovered from the trip, and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did! It would be great if you could email a copy to me if you have it.	
Formal or informal LR	
fed up with (adj): (informal) annoyed or bored	something really stunning
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
Recover from the trip enjoy	the photo you took
with the sunset in the background	particular photo
look great as the screen saver	
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Saturday, November 30, 2013

IELTS General Writing: informal letter

The task was to write to a friend to explain that you had moved house

- explain why
- describe the new place
- invite your friend to come and stay

Dear John,

I'm just writing to let you know that I've moved house. (CX)

As you know, I went for an interview for a job here in London. (CX) Well, they gave me the position! (S) It would have been impractical to travel down from Manchester every day, so we've found a house here, in a nice part of London called Greenwich. (CC)

Our new house isn't ideal. (S) London prices are crazy, and we were only able to afford a one-bedroom flat. (CP) But on the bright side, it's on the ground floor, it's got nice big windows, and a lovely view out onto the garden. (CP)

If you ever fancy a trip to London, you're more than welcome to come and stay. (CX) It would be great to see you. (S) From where we live, it's only a quick ride on the underground into the city center, so we could do some sightseeing together. (CC)

Keep in touch!

All the best,

Mike

(154 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	3
Compound (CP)	2
Complex (CX)	3
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	5
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	2
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	3 But on the bright side, If, From where we live
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	1 that I've moved
Noun clause	1 where we live
Adverbial clause	1 If you ever fancy

Reduced clause	1 (which is) called Greenwich
Verb variety	
Passive	0
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would, could
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) have moved, have found (present perfect) know, fancy (present simple) went, gave, were (past simple) would have been, would be could do
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	As you know, Well,
Sophisticated linking device	Synonym (a job, the position)
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I'm just writing to let you know that I've moved house. Keep in touch!	
Formal or informal LR	
Nice	prices are crazy fancy
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
went for an interview for a job	give sb the position
a nice part of London	ideal house
afford	one-bedroom flat
ground floor	nice big windows
fancy a trip (fancy doing sth)	come and stay
do some sightseeing	to be only a quick ride
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Sunday, October 20, 2013

IELTS General Writing: resignation question

You have decided to leave your current job even though you enjoy it. Write a letter to inform your manager of your decision. In your letter

- tell the manager about your decision and the reason for it
- describe what you learnt in your current job
- and ask the manager to write a reference letter to help you with future employment

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing to inform you of my decision to leave Smith Industries when my current contract comes to an end next month. (CX)

I have thoroughly enjoyed my three years here. (S) However, I feel that now is the time for me to broaden my horizons and gain experience of different working environments and practices within our industry. (CX) I would also like the chance to travel more as part of my job. (S)

Over the course of my tree years at Smith Industries, I have learnt an incredible amount. (S) Not only am I now proficient with the key software programs that are used across the industry, but I have also learnt valuable interpersonal skills, such as how to organize a team or delegate tasks. (CC)

I would be extremely grateful if you could provide me with a letter of reference for future employers. (CX)

Thank you for all of your help and support. (S)

Yours sincerely,

Paul Jones

(156 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	4
Compound (CP)	0
Complex (CX)	3
Compound-Complex (CC)	1
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	4
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	1 However,
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	3 Over the course... Not only, Thank
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	2

	that now is the time that are used across the industry
Noun clause	
Adverbial clause	2 when my current contract comes to an end if you could provide me
Reduced clause	
Verb variety	
Passive	1
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would, could
All forms of tenses	am writing (present continuous) comes, feel, is (present simple) have enjoyed, have learnt (present perfect) would like, would be are used (passive present simple) could provide
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	However
Sophisticated linking device	
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I am writing to inform you of my decision to leave Smith Industries when my current contract comes to an end next month. Thank you for all of your help and support.	
Formal or informal LR	
to inform you Not only (+ inversion)	broaden provide me with gain
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
contract comes to an end broaden my horizons within our industry proficient with the software delegate tasks	thoroughly enjoy gain experience as part of my job valuable interpersonal skills now is the time different working environments over the course of my tree years organize a team
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Sunday, June 30, 2013

IELTS General Writing: 'new business' letter

One of your friends has asked you to be a partner in his new business. Write a letter to reply to your friend's offer. In your letter

- give your opinion of your friend's business idea
- tell him whether or not you have decided to accept his offer
- and explain your reasons for this decision

Dear John,

I hope you're well. (S) Thanks for giving me some time to think about your business proposal. (S)

First, let me just say that I think it would be a great idea to open a café on the high street. (CX) It definitely makes sense since there are no other cafés in the area. (CX)

Having said that, I'm afraid I'm going to have to turn your offer down. (CX) I've thought long and hard about this decision, and I just don't think it's the right time for me to get involved with a big project like this. (CC)

To be honest, I would struggle to find enough money to cover my share of the initial investment costs. (S) Also, I don't really want to leave my current job, and I think it would be impossible for me to commit to the café project while I'm still working full-time. (CC)

Best of luck with the café. (S) I'm sure you'll make a success of it without me! (CX)

Speak soon,

Chris

(163 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	4
Compound (CP)	0
Complex (CX)	4
Compound-Complex (CC)	2
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	4
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	3
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	3 Thanks, Having said that, Best of luck
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	3 (that) it would be a great idea (that) it's the right time (that) you'll make a success

Noun clause	
Adverbial clause	2 since there are no other while I'm still working
Reduced clause	Having said that,
Verb variety	
Passive	0
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	would
All forms of tenses	hope, thanks, let (present simple) am going to have, will make (future simple) have thought (present perfect) would struggle, would be
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices - at least two kinds	
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	First, To be honest, Also,
Sophisticated linking device	this + noun (this decision)
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
I hope you're well. Thanks for giving me some time to think about your business proposal. Best of luck with the café. I'm sure you'll make a success of it without me!	
Formal or informal LR	
Thanks a great idea	giving me some time to think (instead of giving me an opportunity) I'm afraid turn sth down (refuse)
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
giving me some time definitely makes sense the right time for me to get involved cover my share of Best of luck with sth	business proposal turn your offer down ⁴ the initial investment costs make a success of it without me a great idea to open a cafe think long and hard a big project like this to commit to the cafe project
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

[†] to refuse an offer

Sunday, February 03, 2013

IELTS General Writing: environment problem

Your local newspaper published an advertisement asking people to help with environment projects in your area. Write a letter to the project manager to offer your help. In your letter

- describe a local environmental issue that affects you
- explain what you would like to do to help
- and suggest how the problem could be avoided in future

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regard to your newspaper advertisement requesting volunteers for local environment projects.

The issue that most concerns me is the increasing amount of litter in the public park. Litter is both an eyesore for park users like myself and a potential threat to birds and other wildlife.

I would like to suggest a “cleanup” day on which local people would come together to pick up litter and restore the park to its former state. I would be happy to help publicize this, perhaps by making posters or handing out flyers in the town center.

If we want to keep our park litter-free in future, more effort will need to be made to educate children about the importance of looking after our local environment. Some extra bins around the park would also be a good idea.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(153 words)

Different kinds of sentences	
Simple (S)	
Compound (CP)	
Complex (CX)	
Compound-Complex (CC)	
How the sentence started	
Sentences starting with S + V	
Sentence starting with a sentence connector	
Sentence starting WITHOUT S + V or a sentence connector	
Different kinds of clauses	
Adjective clause	
Noun clause	
Adverbial clause	
Reduced clause	

Verb variety	
Passive	
Modal verbs other than <u>may, can or will</u>	
All forms of tenses	
Comparisons	
Other grammar rules	
Linking devices	- at least two kinds
Sentence connectors other than <u>in conclusion</u>	
Sophisticated linking device	
Opinion linking device	
Beginning and Ending letter	
Formal or informal LR	
Topic-Specific Vocabulary	
Synonyms-paraphrase-part of speech	

Sunday, October 14, 2012

IELTS General Training: letter of complaint

There have been some problems with public transport in your area recently. Write a letter to the manager of the transport company. In your letter

- describe the problems
- explain how these problems are affecting the public
- suggest some changes that could be made

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to bring to your attention some issues with my local train service.

I take the 8am train from Manchester to Liverpool every morning. This week, my train has arrived at least 10 minutes late each day, and I have been unable to find a seat due to overcrowding.

Passengers are becoming increasingly frustrated. I have seen several people complain to members of your staff that the delays are making them late for work, and the overcrowding means that many of us are forced to stand in the central aisle of the train for the duration of the journey. This is extremely uncomfortable.

I would like to suggest that you run a more regular service on the Manchester to Liverpool line. Another solution would be to add an extra carriage to trains at peak times in order to provide more space.

I hope you will address these concerns as soon as possible.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(162 words)

Sunday, September 16, 2012

IELTS General Writing: 'travel problem' topic

You missed a flight due to a problem at the airport. Write a letter to the airline. In your letter

- describe what happened that caused you to miss the flight
- explain how missing your flight affected you
- make it clear what you would like the airline to do

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regard to a flight that I missed due to a mistake by one of your employees.

Two weeks ago, I was due to catch a flight to Rome, where I intended to spend four days on holiday. Unfortunately, the attendant at the check-in desk gave me a boarding card for a different flight, and I did not notice the mistake until I arrived at the departure gate and it was too late.

As a result of the error, I was not allowed to board the flight to Rome, and this caused me great inconvenience. I had to book a new flight two days later, which meant that I missed two days of my holiday and I spent an extra \$200.

As the mistake was caused by your company, I hope that you will compensate me for the cost of the additional flight, as well as for my taxi fares to and from the airport.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jones

(173 words)

Sunday, July 15, 2012

IELTS General Writing: a friend's visit

You are about to go on vacation for a month. A friend from another town will come and stay in your apartment. Write a letter to this friend. In your letter

- explain where your friend can get the key to the apartment
- give your friend some instructions about using your apartment
- recommend some places to go

Dear John,

I hope you're well and looking forward to your stay at my place. I'm just writing to tell you a few things that you'll need to know.

The first thing you'll need to do is pick up the keys from one of my neighbors. Just pop round to number 10 any time after 5pm and ask for Sarah. She'll be expecting you, and she'll tell you which key is which.

If the weather gets a bit warmer, you might want to turn the heating off. Just open the cover on the boiler in the kitchen and look for the "on/off" switch. You can also open the windows using one of the keys, but please shut them if you go out.

The only other thing to tell you is that there'll be a festival in the town center during the second week of your visit. It would definitely be worth checking out. And don't forget to go to that restaurant I told you about – it's called 'The Grill' and it's just across the street.

Enjoy your stay, and look after the flat!

See you soon,

Simon

(187 words)

Sunday, June 17, 2012

IELTS General Writing: letter to a tutor

You have a full-time job and are also doing a part-time evening course. You now find that you cannot continue the course. Write a letter to the course tutor. In your letter

- describe the situation
- explain why you cannot continue at this time
- say what action you would like to take

Dear Mr. Smith,

I am writing to inform you that I will be unable to continue with the part-time computer programming course.

I have been attending your evening classes for the last two months, and have enjoyed them immensely. As I stated on my course application form, I work full-time for a large IT company, and until now I have managed to fit the programming course into my schedule.

However, my company is currently on the verge of signing a contract with an important new client in China, and I am part of the team that is being sent to Beijing to negotiate terms and conditions. I will probably be out of the country for several weeks.

I am aware that you run the same course twice a year. Rather than try to catch up when I return China, I was wondering if it would be possible for me to join the next cohort in September.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Jones

(167 words)

Sunday, May 20, 2012

IELTS General Training: formal letter

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 shop 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

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing with regard to an appliance that I recently bought from your shop.

On the 10th May I bought a new washing machine, and it was installed the following day. However, when I tried to wash some clothes, I noticed that the machine failed to spin during the washing cycle. Consequently, it leaves clothes wet but not clean.

When I phoned your shop to report the problem, I spoke to an assistant who did not know the procedure for repairs or returns. He assured me that he would report the issue to the store manager, and that I would be contacted the same day. That was two days ago, and I am still waiting for your call.

As the appliance is under warranty, I am entitled to ask for it to be repaired or replaced. I have decided that I would like a replacement washing machine. I would also like you to phone me personally when you receive this letter.

I await your prompt response.

Yours faithfully,

John Smith

(175 words)

Sunday, May 13, 2012

IELTS General Training: informal letter

Last month you had a holiday overseas where you stayed with some friends. They have just sent you some photos of your holiday. Write a letter to your friends. In your letter

- thank them for the photos and for the holiday
- explain why you didn't write earlier
- invite them to come and stay with you

Dear John and Jane,

I hope this letter finds you well. I'm just writing to thank you both for the holiday and for the photos you sent.

The photos arrived this morning in the post. They reminded me what a great time I had during my stay with you last month. You really were fantastic hosts, and I couldn't have asked for better guides to show me around.

Sorry I didn't write to you earlier, but I've been working flat out since the moment I arrived home. Do you remember I told you I had an assignment to finish? Well, the deadline was two weeks earlier than I thought it was!

Anyway, I'm back to normal now and I've handed in all of my assignments. In fact, now that I'm free, why don't you both come and stay? There's a spare room here, so you're welcome to use it whenever you like.

Hope to see you soon,

Peter

(158 words)