

## Useful phrases (Writing formal letters and emails)

### **a) Writing formal letters generally:**

#### Greetings:

Dear Sir Dear Madam

Dear Sir/Madam\*1

Dear Mr Brown \*2

Dear Ms Jones etc.

#### Reason for writing:

I am writing in response to your article/advertisement/letter

I am writing with regard to your article/advertisement/letter

I am writing regarding your article/advertisement/letter

I am writing on behalf of

#### Ending the letter:

I look forward to receiving your reply

I look forward to your reply

I look to hearing from you

Yours faithfully\*1

Yours sincerely\*2

### **b) Writing formal letters to complain:**

#### Reason for writing:

I am writing in order to complain about

I am writing to complain about

#### Introducing the complaint:

Firstly

In the first place

First of all

My first complaint is

The first problem is

The first thing I would like to draw your attention to is

My first concern is

#### Introducing further complaints:

Secondly

In the second place

Not only .....but also

In addition

In addition to this

.....was also unacceptable

#### Demanding action:

I suggest that you replace the item

I therefore suggest that I be given a full refund

I would be grateful if my money was refunded

I would be grateful if you could give me a full refund

#### Ending the letter:

I look forward to hearing from you

## The factory of English

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I look forward to receiving a full refund  
I look forward to receiving a replacement  
I look forward to receiving your explanation

### **c) Writing formal letters to make suggestions:**

#### Reason for writing:

I am writing to suggest  
I am writing to arrange  
I am writing to offer suggestions  
I am writing make arrangements

#### Making first suggestion:

My first suggestion is  
First of all I suggest  
I would like to suggest

#### Making further suggestions:

Another possibility is  
A further possibility is  
I further suggest  
I would further suggest  
Secondly

#### Offering a choice:

Would you therefore mind choosing between ....?  
Either.....or  
You might choose either ..... or

### **d) Writing formal letters to request information**

#### Reason for writing:

I am writing to receive further information about  
I am writing to enquire about  
I am writing to receive more detailed information about  
I am writing to receive further details about

#### Requesting first piece of information:

The first thing I would like to know is  
First of all I would like to know  
I wonder if you would mind telling me first of all ....?

#### Requesting further information:

Could you also tell me....?  
Could you also inform me ....?  
Would you also mind informing me ....?  
Would you also mind telling me ....?  
Do you know ....?  
I would also like to know if  
I would also like to know whether  
I hope you might also let me know about ...

#### Thanking for information:

I would like to thank you in advance for this information  
Thanking you in advance for this information  
Thanking you in advance

### **e) Writing formal letters to give information:**

#### Reason for writing:

I am writing to inform you about

I am writing to provide you with information about

I am writing to let you know that

#### Providing first point:

The first thing I would like to inform you of is

The first thing I would like to tell you is

The first thing I wish to inform you of is

I would like to begin by informing you

#### Providing further points:

I would also like to let you know that

I would also like to inform you that

You might also find the following information useful

It might also be useful for you to know that

Another piece of information that might be useful

#### Ending the letter:

If you require further information, please do not hesitate to ask

If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to ask

I will willingly provide further information on request

I am at your disposal should you require further information

I am at your disposal should you need further assistance

Please do not hesitate to ask should you require further information

### **f) Writing formal letters to request permission**

#### Reason for writing:

I am writing to ask permission to

I am writing to ask permission for

I am writing to request permission to

I am writing to request permission for

I am writing to ask if I might

#### Making first request:

Firstly I wonder if you would

First of all I wonder whether you would mind

The first request I would like you to consider is

#### Making further requests:

I would be grateful if you would also consider

I wonder if it might be possible for me to

I would also like to request permission for

I would also like to request permission to

#### Thanking for permission

Many thanks for kindly considering my requests

Thank you for considering my requests

## Writing informal letters and emails

### Informal Letters - Greetings:

Dear Jim  
Hello Jim  
Hi Jim

### Informal Letters - Introductory paragraph:

Sorry I haven't written for ages  
Sorry it's taken me so long to write  
How's it going?  
How are you?  
How are things with you?  
How are things?

### An informal letter referring to good news:

Glad to hear about  
I'm really glad to hear about  
I'm very happy to hear about  
I was very happy to read about  
Great news about your

### An informal letter referring to bad news:

I'm extremely sorry to hear about  
I'm very sorry to hear about  
Sorry to read about  
Its very sad to hear about your  
I can't tell you how sad I am that

### Informal letters - Introducing points

By the way  
Did you hear about  
Did you see  
Have you seen  
Tell me about  
Oh, another thing

### Ending an informal letter or email:

Well, time to go  
Well, it's time to go  
Well, got to go  
Well, time to close  
I've got to leave off now  
Write soon  
Make sure you write soon  
Love  
Lots of love  
All my love  
Will write again soon  
Look after yourself

## Writing Stories

### Time phrases:

It all began  
Shortly afterwards  
Meanwhile  
Not long afterwards  
Some time later  
Later that day  
A little later  
Finally

In the end  
Eventually

### Phrases for dramatic effect:

Suddenly  
All of a sudden  
Without warning  
Out of the blue  
Just at that moment  
Quite unexpectedly  
As if from nowhere

### Direct speech:

".....", said Fred  
".....", shouted Fred  
".....", screamed Fred  
".....", whispered Fred  
".....", announced Fred.  
".....", thought Fred  
".....", cried Fred  
".....", promised Fred

### Concluding stories:

When it was all over  
Looking back now  
In retrospect  
In the end  
After all that had happened

Take care of yourself

## Writing articles

### Rhetorical phrases:

- Have you ever .....
- What do you think about .....
- Are you one of those people who thinks that
- Are you one of those people who .....
- What would life be like if .....
- Will the future bring us ..... ?

### Introducing your first point:

- Firstly
- In the first place
- First of all
- The first thing to consider is
- One thing to consider is
- To begin with

### Introducing more points:

- Secondly
- Another consideration
- Yet another consideration
- Another thing to consider is
- Added to that
- Apart from that
- In addition to this

### Introducing your final points:

- In conclusion
- To conclude
- To sum up
- So

### Introducing your opinion:

- I think
- In my opinion
- Personally I believe that
- In my view
- If you ask me
- To my mind
- My personal opinion is

## Writing reports

### Introductory Paragraph

- As requested I have .....
- This involved visiting .....
- This involved looking at .....
- This involved investigating .....
- My findings are outlined below.
- My findings are presented below.
- I outline my findings below.

### Recommending:

- I would like to suggest .....
- I would like to recommend .....
- I therefore suggest .....
- I therefore recommend .....
- I therefore suggest that we do not .....
- I therefore recommend that we do not .....
- I therefore do not suggest .....
- I therefore do not recommend .....
- I therefore recommend .....
- I believe we should recommend .....
- I believe we should not recommend .....
- You may wish to consider .....

## Writing essays

### Presenting two advantages or disadvantages

- not only ... but ... also
- not only ... but also

### Presenting two opposing views

- on the one hand, on the other hand

### Expressing Contrast:

- nevertheless
- even so
- even though
- however
- in spite of
- despite
- but
- although

### Expressing results:

- because of this
- therefore
- thus
- as a result
- for this reason
- consequently

### Giving examples:

- such as
- like
- for example
- for instance

This means that...

This is largely due to...

### Expressing the opinion of someone else:

- some people say that
- many people say
- people often say
- it is said that

### **These words and expressions are especially useful essays and articles.**

#### **Opening phrases**

People (sometimes) claim that ... but I feel that ...  
It is often said/argued that ... However, it seems to me that ...

It is a fact that ...

Over the past few months/years, it seems that ...

Recently, we have all become concerned that ...

Nowadays, we are all realising that ...

In the past, people used to ..., but now ...

These days, it seems that ....

#### **Making statements**

It is clear that ...

On the whole, it appears/seems that ...

We must take into account the fact that ....

It goes without saying that ...

It is important to remember that ...

#### **Listing arguments**

Firstly/In the first place / To begin with, ...

Secondly/A second area to consider is ...

Another point to remember is ...

Finally, ...

In conclusion, ..

Last but not least, ...

#### **contrary arguments**

It is true that ... On the other hand, ...

While nobody can deny that ... , I would like to point out that ...

I agree that ... However, ...

Although it is true that , we must remember that

## Writing reviews

### What I liked

- What I liked most was .....
- The thing I liked most was ....
- I was pleasantly surprised by .....
- ..... would appeal to .....
- If you get a chance to ....
- ...was impressed by ...

What struck me most was ...

I would have no hesitation in recommending .

### What I disliked

- What I disliked most was .....
- I was disappointed by .....
- I was disappointed with .....
- I was very disappointed by .....
- I was very disappointed with ....

### Reviews of books:

- main character
- is set in
- comedy
- science fiction
- thriller
- romance
- comedy
- author
- written by
- chapter
- fiction
- unbelievable
- bestseller
- chapter
- ending

### Reviews of films, tv programmes, plays:

- lead role
- star role
- star
- star actor
- star actress
- starring
- secondary role
- He plays a .....
- She plays a .....

- written by ....
- is set in .....
- based on a true story .....
- believable
- true to life story
- not very believable
- far-fetched
- comedy
- romance
- science fiction
- ending

### Reviews of hotels, restaurants, etc:

- location
- service
- setting
- attractive setting
- disappointing setting
- owned by
- run by
- head chef (restaurant)
- waiters (restaurant)
- staff .....
- staff at reception .....(hotel)
- hotel facilities ....
- reasonable prices .....
- good value for money .....
- excellent value for money .....
- expensive
- a bit expensive
- overpriced
- not worth the money
- poor value for money
- always fully booked
- book in advance