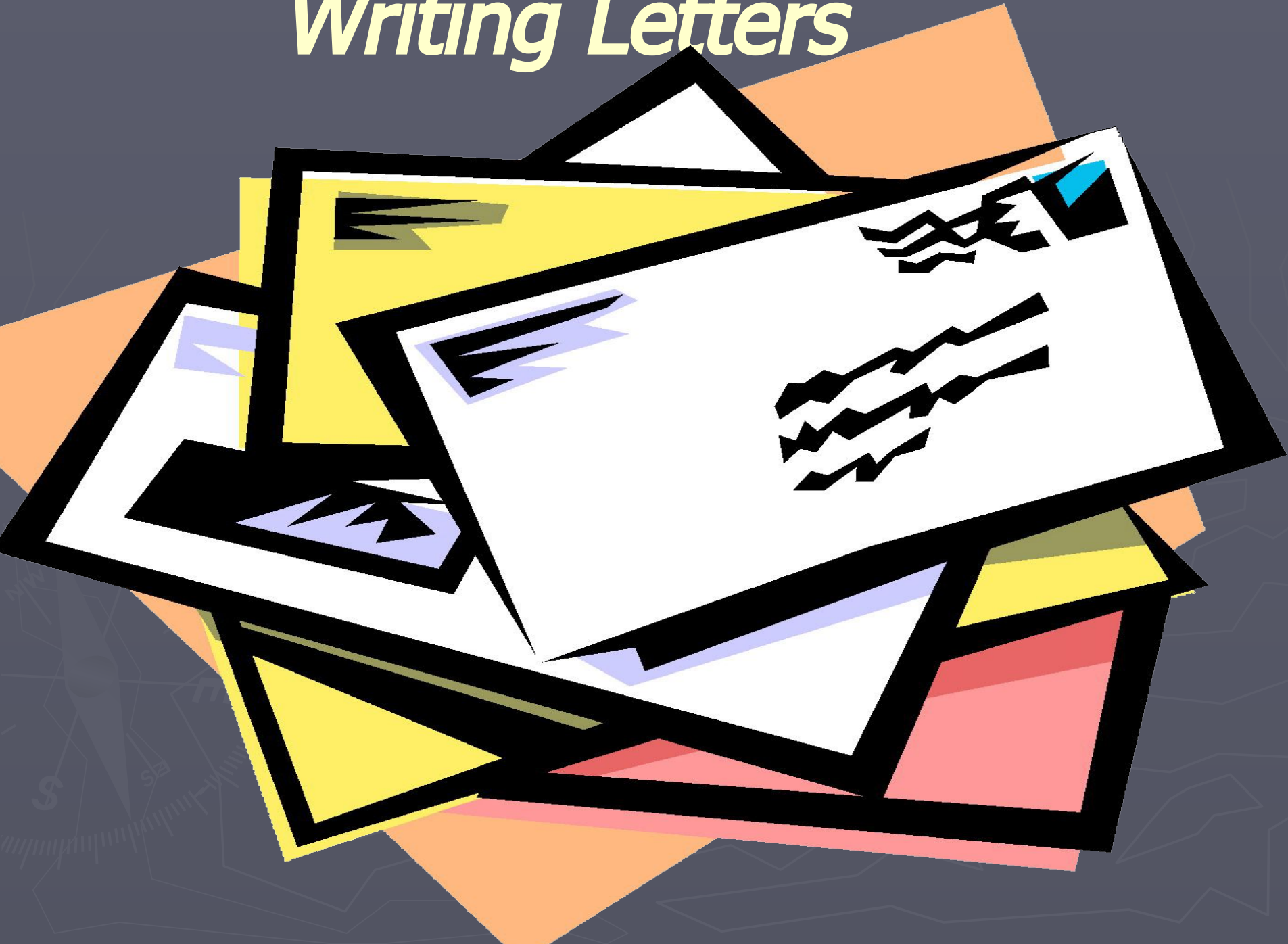


Writing Letters



The aim of my presentation is

- ▶ getting students to understand the differences between formal and informal letters;
- ▶ help students master differences in register required for writing in English;
- ▶ prepare students for taking the state exam.

Layout (address)

▶ Formal

Moscow, Russia
March, 24, 2011

Sales Manager,
Brown & Smith Ltd.,
1304 Sherman Ave.,
Madison, Wisconsin.

▶ Informal

Moscow, Russia
March, 24, 2011

Greetings for the informal letter

Dear Clara,

Hi Tania,

Hello Bill,



Greetings for the formal letter

Most commonly used salutations are as follows:

Sir,

Sirs,

Dear Madam,

Dear Sir,

Dear Sirs,

Dear Mr. Brown,

The introductory paragraph (informal style)

should be started with a sentence that piques the interest of the reader. Make a few chatty comments or ask a few personal questions.

- How are you getting on?
- I'm really sorry for not getting in touch sooner...
- Thanks for writing back so quickly...
- I just wanted to let you know...
- Sorry I haven't written for ages...
- Thought I'd better drop you a line to thank you for helping me...

The introductory paragraph (formal style)

The first paragraph will generally outline the purpose for the letter and the reason that the letter is being sent.

- I am writing to you with reference to...
- I am interested in applying for the job/position of...
- We are pleased to receive...
- This is to inform you that I have received your letter of...
- I very much appreciate having a reply from you...
- I am most grateful to you for...

The body of the informal letter

The introduction should flow smoothly into the body, where you will talk about the main subject of your letter. If you are going to be discussing more than one topic, you can say "To begin with, I need to tell you..." Keep the tone of your informal letter on the conversational level.

The body of the formal letter

The body of the letter is the subject matter. It may consist of only one paragraph or as many as necessary to convey the message. Many-paged letters should be numbered. The body of a formal letter is brief. This is because business writing is straight to the point. When we write a formal letter, we want to hit the nail on the head, and not beat about the bush.

The complimentary close of the informal letter

Finish the letter with an excuse to stop writing. The appropriate phrases are:

- Must dash now, I have to write my History report...
- Please give my regards to...
- All the best,
- Love,
- Best wishes,
- With love from,

The complimentary close of the formal letter

It is customary to close a letter with a closing salutation. Most commonly you will find:

- Yours faithfully,
- Yours sincerely,
- Yours truly,
- Best regards,
- Kindest regards,

The complimentary close of the informal letter

Finish the letter with an excuse to stop writing. The appropriate phrases are:

- Must dash now, I have to write my History report...
- Please give my regards to...
- All the best,
- Love,
- Best wishes,
- With love from,

The signature

Formal

After the complimentary close, leave about two lines, and then write your full name

Yours faithfully,

Helen Lisova,
English teacher

Informal

Whether you sign only your first name, nickname or full name will depend on the relationship.

Love,
Helen

Informal

- ▶ the use of contracted verb forms
 - I've done...
 - Why don't we...
- ▶ The use of phrasal verbs and idiomatic language
 - It's a piece of cake to do the History project for me.
- ▶ Appropriate formulas for writing informal letters
- ▶ (linking words)

Formal

- ▶ using the passive forms
 - I have been offered ...
 - I am prepared to come for an interview at anytime...
- ▶ Avoid contractions
- ▶ Linking words

The informal letter sample (Zina Romashkina 10A)

Moscow, Russia
3.02.2011

Dear Tom,

I'm glad to hear from you. Thanks for your letter. How are you getting on? I'm writing to you to answer your questions about students' independence from their parents. As a matter of fact, the allowance in Russian universities is so low that It's not enough for pocket money. And it's absolutely unreal for students to get a well-paid job, so Russian students have to be financially supported by their parents even though they want to be independent. Students can rent a flat only if parents give them money for that. And only nonresident students can live in university hostels.

By the way, did you enjoy your trip to Scotland? What places of interest have you visited? Have you seen the Loch Ness monster?

I'm sorry but I must dash now. My mum is coming, we are gonna have dinner soon.

Best wishes,
Zina

The formal letter sample (a letter of application)

Dear sir,

I am writing for the position of volunteer worker which I saw advertised in the Guardian last week . I would be interested in teaching Maths to primary children in your camp in Bangladesh. I enclose a copy of my CV.

I would like to work for you because I am very interested in teaching. I would also like to learn about a different culture as I feel that intercultural understanding is extremely important.

I am hard-working and committed person. For the last three years, I have done voluntary work visiting elderly people in my local area. I have also taught immigrant children so I feel confident I can get on well with people from other cultural backgrounds.

I think I could be a good primary teacher of maths due to my teaching experience and since I have Maths 'A' level. In addition, I hold a certificate in first aid, which might be useful.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Maureen Taylor

Maureen Taylor (Ms)

Typical errors when writing an informal letter

1. The questions are grammatically incorrect;
2. Inconsistency in the tenses:
e.g. I was going to town yesterday when a dog bite me and I ran all the way to the hospital.
3. The apostrophe is in the wrong place;
e.g. The dog lost it's collar.
4. The complimentary close is not punctuated, the name is written on the same line;
e.g. Take care Michael

Typical errors when writing a formal letter

1. Contractions are often used;
e.g. I`m writing to inform you of...
2. The ignorance of passive constructions
3. Formal expressions are substituted with colloquial words;
e.g. obtain-get
inform me-let me know
contact-get in touch

Vocabulary difference

▶ Formal

Inform me
Cancel
Contact
Obtain
Apologise
Postpone
Compensate
Establish
Discover
Handle
Investigate
Tolerate
Increase
Children
Many/much

▶ Informal

Let me know
Drop
Get in touch
Get
Say sorry
Delay
Make up
Set up
Find out
Deal with
Check up on
Put up with
Go up
Kids
A lot of

Linking words

► Formal

As far as I am concerned,
Furthermore,
Nevertheless,
Despite the fact that,
Firstly,
Secondly,
In addition,

► Informal

Also,
However,
Actually,
In fact,
As a matter of fact,
Anyway,
As you know,