



Letter Writing Help Sheet



How do I write an informal letter?

Here are some reminders about how to write an informal letter. Like diaries, letters are also historical primary sources of. They include thoughts and feelings and the reader is drawn into the author's experiences through their description of the key events which they are describing.

When you write a letter from a character's point of view, remember to include details which describe what they have seen in order to paint a picture for the reader, what experiences they had and how they felt about them. You should be very particular about the details you choose to include.

Think about what events and experiences you are describing carefully – they do not have to be in the order they occurred but they need to make sense. Forming paragraphs around a theme (for example the different buildings discovered on the Mayan site, the artefacts discovered, evidence of how Mayans lived) is a very good way of ensuring that each event or item is described carefully.

If you are writing to a friend, an informal, 'chatty' style sounds more natural than formal language.

Informal language reminder

Some phrases you might use are:

- At the moment, I'm...
- If I am completely honest...
- I felt so excited
- You'll never guess/believe this
- The thing is...
- It was as if...
- At one point
- I didn't expect to find/to see/that

Features might include:

- Dashes (The building – a Mayan house – was in a clearing)
- Elipses (I'd better not say what happened next...)
- Contractions (can't, shouldn't, won't, didn't, haven't)
- Idioms (let the cat out of the bag, piece of cake etc.)
- Rhetorical questions (You'll never guess what happened?)

Remember

- To include thoughts and feelings
- To use **informal language**
- To use punctuation effectively to make your writing clear for the reader but remember to use informal punctuation
- To include adjectives, adverbs and prepositional phrases to describe what you have seen – paint a picture for the reader
- Use a mixture of different sentence types and lengths to help engage the reader
- Use a lively, chatty style to keep the reader interested and reveal information about you felt and what you saw
- Only write about key events as this is a type of recount

Have you included:

the sender's address?

the date?

an appropriate greeting?

an introduction?

paragraphs around a theme?

first person form?

vocabulary that shows a chatty, informal style?

places where the writer addresses the recipient directly?

a conclusion?

a complimentary close?

the sender's name or signature at the end?

Formal and Informal Writing

Formal writing:

- is clear and to the point;
- has a more serious tone;
- uses correct grammar and punctuation;
- uses specific vocabulary for the subject;
- often uses complex sentence structures.

Informal writing may (but not in all cases):

- have a more 'chatty' tone (conversational e.g. kind of, so...);
- use more contractions and abbreviations (e.g. it's/TV);
- use text-style words (e.g. lol)
- use clichés (e.g. raining cats and dogs)

As a general rule, all the above **should not** be used in formal writing.

Remember: The style in which you write is specific to your reason for writing and the audience you are writing for. In some circumstances, a formal style of writing is appropriate or expected and in others a more informal style can be used.

Formal Writing



Essay for school
Report
Information text

Informal Writing



Text message
Diary

Formal or Informal Writing



Letter
Email
Story

Can you think of any more examples?



Instruction Writing Help Sheet



Features of Instruction Writing

Regardless of their purpose, instructions share many of the same features:

- An introduction to explain what the end result will be (what the instructions will help the reader to do). This will usually include questions to engage the reader.
- A list of things the reader will need, such as ingredients for a recipe, materials for a building project or equipment for a craft activity.
- An outline of the method needed to complete the task (usually in chronological order).
- Imperative verbs are usually used within the method to 'boss' the reader around!
- Conjunctions, prepositions and adverbs to show time, place and cause should be used throughout, e.g. After that, Inside the box, As soon as it has melted, etc.
- Extra tips and advice may be given to the reader for especially tricky parts of a task.
- Pictures or diagrams can be used to provide clarification, e.g. a series of pictures or diagrams corresponding to each step of the method, a single picture or diagram of a tricky part of the process or an illustration of the final product.
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- A conclusion to sum up the task and help the reader check that they have achieved the correct outcome.








Layout devices will also be used to structure and organise the text. These may include headings and subheadings, underlining, bold or italic text, bullet points and numbers.

Is the title included? Is there an introduction?
Does the text tell you what equipment, resources or ingredients you need?
Are numbers/ bullets used? (1, 2, 3, 4...)
Are conjunctions, prepositions and adverbs used to show time, place and cause? (Then, after that, carefully, behind, next to...)
Have imperative verbs been used? (Cut, press, mix, pour...)
Lots of detail included?
Steps in chronological order ?
Does it include a labelled diagram or drawings ?
Does it include hints and tips or warnings ?
REMEMBER: not to use you or your in the actual instructions. You can in your introduction or hints and tips.

Making a Lantern

You will need:

- Paper
- Scissors
- S**ellotape
- Ruler
- Pencil

- Lay the paper portrait and measure 1cm along the top. 
- Carefully cut this strip away- this will make your handle for the lantern. 
- Fold your piece of paper in half so you have a long piece of paper to work with. 
- Using your ruler, measure straight lines leaving the edge of your page clear. These need to be 1cm apart. 
- Using your scissors carefully cut these lines making sure you do not cut off the edge of the page. 
- Now you need to fold your paper round at the short sides so they meet and secure it with a piece of cello tape at the top and bottom. 
- Attach your strip of paper you cut earlier for a handle. 

Have a look at this: [How to write clear instructions](#)