

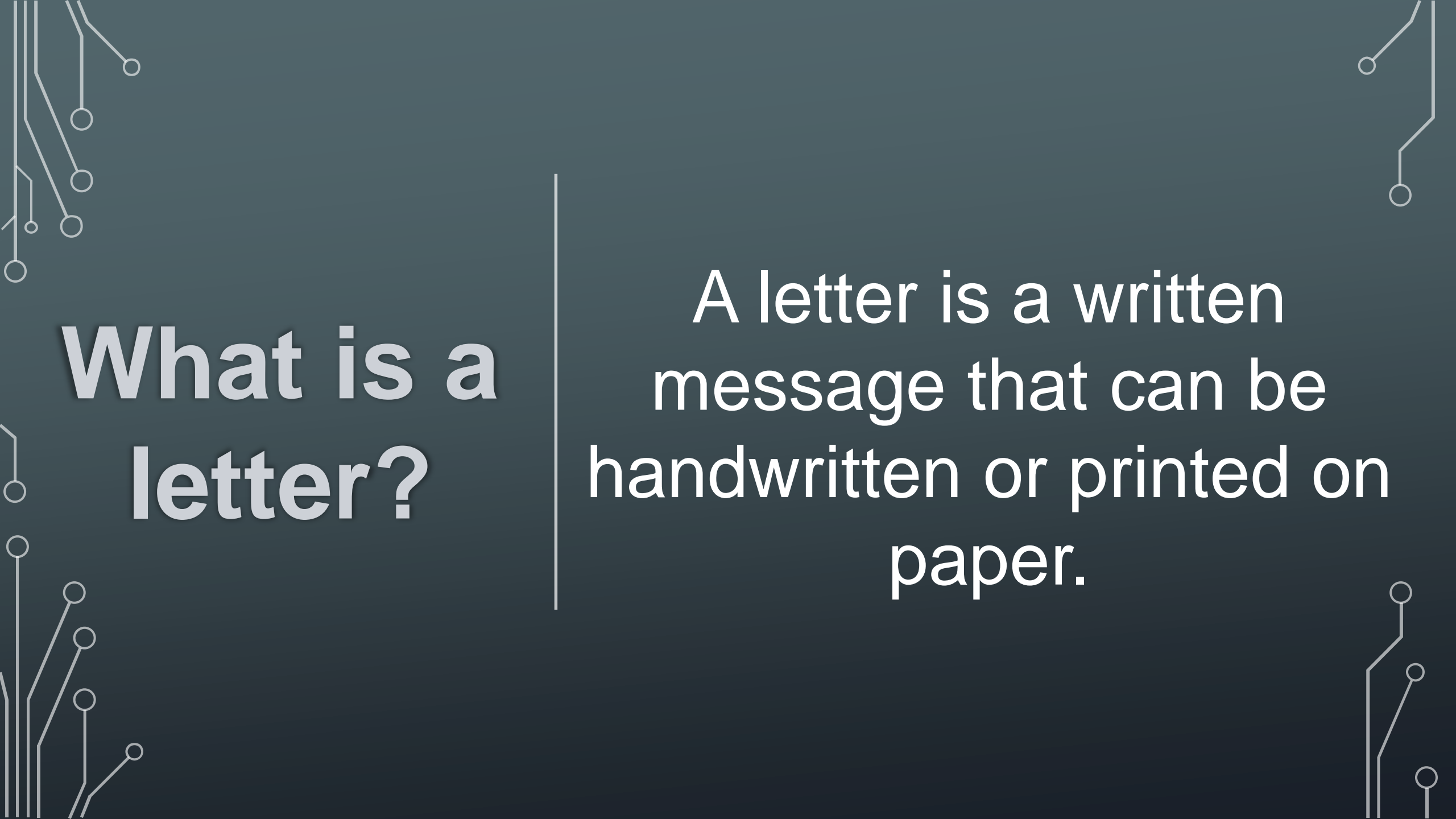


Writing
letters



Objectives:

- to identify difference between formal and informal letters
- to learn letter formats and letter writing strategies
- to produce own letters

The background is a dark blue-grey color with white decorative circuit-like lines in the corners. These lines consist of straight lines and small circles, resembling a network or data flow diagram. The lines are most prominent in the top-left, top-right, and bottom-left corners, with some extending towards the center.

What is a letter?

A letter is a written message that can be handwritten or printed on paper.

Letters




Formal

Informal



Formal letter:



A formal letter is a letter, written in formal language, in the stipulated format, for official purpose.

A letter written in an friendly manner, to someone you are familiar with, is called informal letter.

**Informal
letter:**

Writing A Letter or Email



Formal

Informal

Opening formula

- Dear Mr/ Mrs + surname
- Dear Sir or Madam



- Hello/ Hi + name
- Dear + name
- Hi there!

Starting your letter / email

- Thank you for your letter/ email about ...
Many thanks for your letter/ email.
- I am writing to request information about/ inform you about/ complain about, ...
- I am writing with reference to your letter.
- I would like to offer congratulations on ...
- Let me congratulate you on ...

- Thanks for your letter/ email.
Thanks for writing to me.
It was great to hear from you again.
- I am writing to tell you about ...
- Guess what?
- How are things with you? What's up?/ How are you?/ How was your holiday?
- I'm sorry I haven't written for a while ...



Final remarks

- I look forward to hear from you without delay.
- I look forward to meeting you.
- I hope to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

- Hope to hear from you soon.
- Looking forward to seeing you/ hearing from you.
- I can't wait to meet up soon.
- Write back soon.

Closing formula

- If you start with "Dear Sir or Madam", finish with "Yours faithfully".
- If you start with "Dear Mr/ Mrs ...", finish with "Yours sincerely".
- Regards/ Best regards/ Kind regards.

- Best wishes.
- Love.
- All the best.
- Xoxo
- Keep in touch.



Parts of a letter

Greeting

Heading

February 3, 2013

Dear Mom,

Body

I am having so much fun at summer camp! Yesterday, we made bird feeders out of pine cones, peanut butter, and birdseed. Today we are going swimming in the lake. I am excited because there is a big water slide to go on!

I miss you and dad! I will see you in another week!

Closing

Love,
April

Signature

52 Green Lane
Winchester
SO23 9FR

16th November

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing to complain about the holiday your agency arranged for me and my family.

Because you spelt our name 'Brawn' instead of 'Brown' on the booking form, the hotel took two and a half hours to check us in. As a result of this, the hotel gave our room to someone else. Moreover, the room we got was much smaller. Therefore, our youngest child had to sleep in our bed. Consequently, no one got much sleep.

For these reasons, we would like a refund on the money we paid for our 'once in a lifetime' holiday. Furthermore, we would like a letter of apology from your agency for making our holiday so miserable.

Yours faithfully,

■ Activity on formal letter

You need to arrange the boxes below to make a formal letter to thank a hotel for an excellent holiday. Some boxes contain the main body of the letter whereas others contain the formatting. Your final letter should contain three paragraphs.

27 september 2009

j brown

yours sincerely

dear mrs taylor

mrs r taylor
four oaks hotel
torquay
tq12 8rb

27 high street
exmouth
ex6 3ky

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

we hope to visit you again next year

we had such a lovely holiday that i thought i must write and thank you.

my friend and i stayed at your hotel for a week in august

not only that, but the food was delicious.

our bedrooms were spotlessly clean and each had a beautiful view of the sea

27 High Street
Exmouth
EX6 3KY

27 September 2009

Mrs R Taylor
Four Oaks Hotel
Torquay
TQ12 8RB

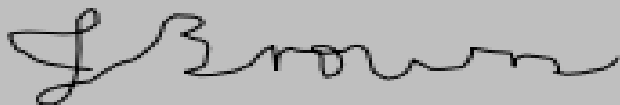
Dear Mrs Taylor,

My friend and I stayed at your hotel for a week in August. We had such a lovely holiday that I thought I must write and thank you.

Our bedrooms were spotlessly clean and each had a beautiful view of the sea. Not only that, but the food was delicious.

We hope to visit you again next year.

Yours sincerely,

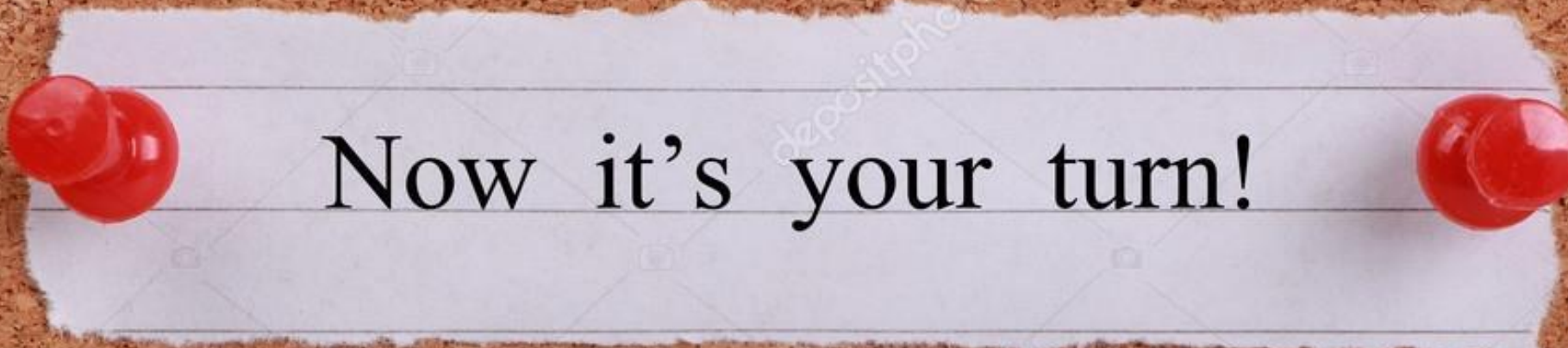
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J Brown". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

J Brown

Conclusion



So, before start writing letter, first of all, you should identify, Who is your recipient? If you are having a professional relationship with the recipient, then you should go for a formal letter, whereas if the recipient is someone very close to you or you know the recipient well, then the informal letter is the right choice for you.



Now it's your turn!

Exercise 1

1 (Extended Response to Reading) Imagine that you were visiting San Francisco and survived the earthquake. You were able to escape from the city on the ferry. Write a letter to your older sister telling her about your experience.

In your letter:

- give your impressions of the effects of the earthquake
- describe the suffering of the people you have met
- describe how you managed to escape from the city.

Base your letter on what you have read in the passage. Be careful to use your own words.

DESTRUCTION IN THE CITY

Businessman Jerome B. Clark lived in Berkeley across the bay from San Francisco. He experienced a minor shake-up at his home in the early morning but this did not stop him from making his regular trip to the city. He describes what he saw as he disembarked from the ferry:

'In every direction from the ferry building flames were seething, and as I stood there, a five-storey building half a block away fell with a crash, and the flames swept clear across Market Street and caught a new fireproof building recently erected. The streets in places had sunk three or four feet, in others great humps had appeared four or five feet high. The street car tracks were bent and twisted out of shape. Electric wires lay in every direction. Streets on all sides were filled with brick and mortar, buildings either completely collapsed or brick fronts had just dropped completely off. Wagons with horses hitched to them, drivers and all, lying on the streets, struck and killed by the falling bricks. Warehouses and large wholesale houses of



all descriptions either down, or walls bulging and buildings moved bodily two or three feet.

Fires were blazing in all directions, and all of the finest and best of the office and business buildings were either burning or surrounded. They pumped water from the bay, but the fire was soon too far away from the water front to make efforts in this direction of much avail. The water mains had been broken by the earthquake, and so there was no supply for the fire engines and they were helpless. The only way out was to dynamite, and I saw some of the finest and most beautiful buildings in the city,

new modern palaces, blown to atoms. First they blew up one or two buildings at a time. Finding that of no avail, they took half a block; that was no use; then they took a block; but in spite of them all the fire kept on spreading.'

A Narrow Escape

The quake awoke G.A. Raymond as he slept in his room at the Palace Hotel. He describes his escape:

'I awoke as I was thrown out of bed. Attempting to walk, the floor shook so that I fell. I grabbed my clothing and rushed down into the office, where dozens were already

congregated. Suddenly the lights went out, and every one rushed for the door.

Outside I witnessed a sight I never want to see again. It was dawn and light. I looked up. The air was filled with falling stones. People around me were crushed to death on all sides. All around the huge buildings were shaking and waving. Every moment there were reports like 100 cannons going off at one time. Then streams of fire would shoot out, and other reports followed.

I asked a man standing next to me what happened. Before he could answer a thousand bricks fell on him and he was killed. All around me buildings were rocking and flames shooting. As I ran people on all sides were

crying, praying and calling for help. I thought the end of the world had come.

I met a priest, and he said: "We must get to the ferry." He knew the way, and we rushed down Market Street. Men, women and children were crawling from the debris. Hundreds were rushing down the street and every minute people were felled by debris.

At places the streets had cracked and opened. Chasms extended in all directions. I saw a drove of cattle, wild with fright, rushing up Market Street. I crouched beside a swaying building. As they came nearer they disappeared, seeming to drop out into the earth. When the last had gone I went nearer and found they

had indeed been precipitated into the earth, a wide fissure having swallowed them. I was crazy with fear and the horrible sights.

How I reached the ferry I cannot say. It was bedlam, pandemonium and hell rolled into one. There must have been 10000 people trying to get on that boat. Men and women fought like wildcats to push their way aboard. One big, strong man, beat his head against one of the iron pillars on the dock, and cried out in a loud voice: "This fire must be put out! The city must be saved!" It was awful.

Source: The San Francisco Earthquake, 1906, EyeWitness to History, www.eyewitnesstohistory.com (1997)

Answer techniques



It is important to remember that questions of this type test both reading and writing skills and that very often the marks allotted to the reading elements are greater than those allotted to writing.

When approaching a task such as this, you should ensure that you have a clear understanding of the precise details on which you should focus in the original passage. If the questions contains bullet points (●- dot symbol) indicating key topics /see Exercise 1 above/ than it is good idea to use the bullet points in structuring your response.

Answer techniques

Questions such as question 1 require you to adopt a **persona** (in this case, that of a visitor to San Francisco) and provide you with a genre for writing (a friendly letter) and an audience to whom your writing should be addressed (an older sister).

- Remember, the letter is to a close relative so you will be expected to adopt an **informal** tone and use appropriate **salutation** and **valediction**. However, you should also keep in mind that you need to show your ability to write accurately and clearly in English in English, so your letter should not be so full of colloquial expressions.

Answer techniques

It is also highly unlikely that you will be required to put an address at the top of your letter but will simply be instructed to begin your letter with 'Dear Sister...' or something similar.



Persona:

The role or character adopted by an author.

Informal tone:

Writing that is close to colloquial expression.



Salutation:

The words used at the beginning of a letter to address the person being written to, e.g. *Dear Nanny...*

Valediction:

The words used to sign off a letter, e.g. *Yours sincerely,*
Yours faithfully.



Good luck!