Formal and Personal Letters

KS3 English · Follows the national curriculum

Name _____ Class _____ Date _____

1. Worked example

Choose the right greeting and sign-off for three letters.

Step 1 · To the council, name unknown

Dear Sir or Madam, ... Yours faithfully,

Step 2 · To your head teacher, Mr Adeyemi

Dear Mr Adeyemi, ... Yours sincerely,

Step 3 · To your cousin

Dear Kofi / Hi Kofi, ... Love, / See you soon,

Answer: Unknown name → faithfully; known name → sincerely; personal → a friendly sign-off.

Check: Match the greeting to the sign-off every time.

2. Now try one with the steps

Write the opening paragraph of a letter asking a local business to sponsor a school charity run.

Step 1 · State who you are

Step 2 · State your purpose

Step 3 · Give one key detail

Answer:

3. Practice

Show your working. The marks tell you how much is expected.

1. Which sign-off goes with 'Dear Sir or Madam'? [1]

2. Which sign-off goes with 'Dear Ms Patel'? [1]

3. In the model letter, how many young people use the sessions each week? Write the number. [1]

4. Where does the date go in a formal letter? [1]

5. Give the three jobs of the paragraphs in a formal letter. [2]

6. Why should you avoid contractions (I'm, don't) in a formal letter? [1]

7. Rewrite formally: 'Your new rule is dead unfair.' [1]

8. In the model letter, how far away is the nearest other pool with coached lessons? Write the number of miles. [1]

9. Why does the model letter suggest a different time for the sessions? [2]

10. Write a formal closing sentence for a letter of complaint. [1]

11. Give two differences between a formal and a personal letter. [2]

12. Why is a specific fact more persuasive than 'always' in a complaint? [2]

13. Write the first two sentences of a formal letter to your MP asking for a new cycle path near your school. [3]

14. How would the tone change if you wrote about the same cancelled swimming sessions to a friend? [2]

4. Before you hand it in

'Dear Sir or Madam ... Yours sincerely'
Unknown name → faithfully; known name → sincerely.

Writing a formal letter long, angry rant.
Stay calm and polite; use evidence and a clear request.

Not saying why you are writing until paragraph three.
State your purpose in the first sentence.

Using text-speak or slang in a formal letter: 'ASAP', 'gonna', 'loads'.
Use Standard English and full forms: 'as soon', 'going to', 'many'.