

Format and structure

Worksheet 2: Use formal and informal language to match purpose and audience

Key point When we refer to 'language' we mean the words chosen by the writer to express their ideas. The language needs to be appropriate for the author's purpose – and also for their audience.

Get started

Guided 1. Decide whether these sentences are formal or informal. Circle the correct answer.

a. Thank you for your enquiry. We will get back to you shortly.

Formal / Informal

b. They're such good friends. They're really cool! Formal / Informal

c. When applying for the job, please include a copy of your CV.
Formal / Informal

2. Circle all the **informal** words in the list below.

yeah yes cannot can't hi hello fabulous fab

Hint

Contracted words are words made shorter by using an apostrophe. They are usually informal.

Hint

Think about the language you use to write an email to a friend. How is it different from the language you use in an email to someone you don't know?

Try this

1. Tick the **two** sentences which are examples of formal language.

It'll be okay! ☐

Maintain focus and stay calm. ☐

I think it's cool. ☐

There are wonderful views in the area. ☐

I'll call you for a chat. ☐

Guided 2. Do these statements use formal or informal language?

a. Yes, I totally agree. **Formal**

b. Keeping fit and exercising are important.

c. The kitten is well cute.

d. The weather has been wonderful.

e. I haven't got a clue!

3a. The sentence below uses formal language. Circle all the **formal** words.

The college has obtained funding for a new canteen and computer room.

b. The sentence below uses informal language. Circle all the **informal** words.

Hi and welcome to our fab college. I'm sure you'll enjoy your tour.

c. Rewrite this informal sentence using formal language.

Informal: I'm not going out tonight coz I've got to revise.

Formal:

Watch out!

When you are writing, avoid using incorrect forms of words, such as 'urban slang' terms: coulda, woulda, shoulda, gonna.

d. Rewrite this formal sentence using informal language.

Formal: I will try to finish my homework, but it is so hard!

Informal:

4. Put a tick next to the phrases that are appropriate to use in a job application.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| I would like to apply for the role. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| The job sounds awesome. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I am really interested in the role. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I've got loads of experience. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Thank you for considering my application. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Give me a call. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| See you soon. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I look forward to hearing from you. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Hint

Think about who might be reading your job application and the kind of language you should use.

5. Identify the type of language you should use for the following types of texts.

- A letter to your local council. Formal / Informal
- An email to a friend. Formal / Informal
- A review of a product on an online forum. Formal / Informal
- A job application. Formal / Informal
- A text message to a family member. Formal / Informal

Hint

Consider the audience and purpose of each text. Should you use contractions, slang or other colloquial language in this context?

Aim to pass

1. Write a report for your company newsletter about the healthy-eating options available in your company's canteen.

In your report, you should:

- say what healthy options are available
- explain why eating healthily is important
- make recommendations on what other healthy options could be included.

You should aim to write about 150 to 200 words.

Complete your answer on a separate piece of paper. (15 marks)

Hint

Reports are written in formal language. Remember your audience and purpose, and make sure your writing is appropriate.

Rate yourself

How confident are you at using formal and informal language for the correct purpose and audience?



Got it!

Move on to the next activity.



Not there yet...

Try one of the booster sheets for this worksheet.