

English work for year 11 – Writing a formal letter

Being able to write a formal letter is still very important. Often, people are asked to write a formal letter when applying for jobs as well as a C.V. There are strict rules about how to write them and set them out on the page.

Have a look at page 2 for an example of a letter. Read the notes around the letter to learn about how to set out a letter correctly.

Stopping climate change	Everyone should be made to vote	Taxing sugary drinks is a good/bad idea
Bringing about world peace	The voting age should be over 16 not 18	Human cloning should be banned
Showing the importance of reading	Banning homework	Showing graffiti is art
The death penalty should be banned	We should spend more money on space exploration	The government should spend more money on public transport
Female athletes should be paid the same as male athletes	Boxing should be legal/illegal	Self-driving cars should be legal/illegal
Violent computer games should be banned	Violent computer games should be banned	Violent computer games should be banned
Performance-enhancing drugs in sport are right/wrong.	Money ruins sport.	Guns should be banned.

Choose one of these topics and write a formal letter about it.

Remember to include:

addresses (you can make these up – they don't need to be real!)

the date

Dear..... – who is the recipient? Who are you writing to?

An introduction – explain why you are writing.

A new paragraph for each new idea.

A conclusion – sum up your points or argument.

Yours faithfully if you've started Dear Sir / Madam, or Yours sincerely if you started with the recipient's name – Dear Mrs Brindle,

A signature and then your name.

Good luck! I look forward to reading your letters.

Mrs Brindle x

The address of the receiver This is included on the left below the writer's address.

Writer's address at the top right and the date written below.

Directly addressing the receiver: If you know the name of the person you are writing to, you write it down formally (Mr A Name, Mrs A Name). However, if you don't know their name you would put 'Dear Sir/Madam'.

Clear indent at the beginning of the introductory paragraph: Most formal letters will include a large gap or indent at the beginning like this.

Paragraphs linked with connectives: This is to ensure your writing flows well for the reader and links your ideas together. It provides a clear structure to your letter and writing.

Signed off with 'Yours sincerely', a signature and the writer's formal name. If you were writing to someone whose name you don't know, you would sign off with 'Yours faithfully'. A signature shows the letter is genuine and authentic.

420 Where I Live Street
Town Name
City Name
Country
Postcode/ZIP
Monday, 15 June 2020

School name
123 Fake Street
Town Name
City Name
Country
Postcode/ZIP

Dear Mr [Receiver],


I am writing to you concerning the amount of homework that my daughter has been set during the past week in English. While I do not doubt the importance and significance of homework being given additional work to further their knowledge and understanding at home, I feel setting 45 hours of homework a week to be excessive, unnecessary and even absurd.

Last week my daughter Gertrude was asked to read 15 books (across a range of genres including science fiction, crime, adventure and sport) and to write detailed presentations on each. Obviously she would well into the early hours of the morning, but I feel no child should be put under this amount of pressure.

Can you not understand that these levels of extra work allow a child no time to enjoy their leisure, relax and deal with the hectic days they have everyday? As adults we have to detach ourselves from our workplace each evening and in weekend, in order to allow us to perform our best when we are in the office or whenever we are employed. Similarly, the same approach should be applied to our children.

Therefore I would ask that you reconsider your homework practices and take into greater consideration the needs and views of each student. I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,
Mr A Parent



Introductory paragraph: This sets out why you are writing to the receiver and what you hope to achieve through the letter.

The language used is very formal, so extensive vocabulary is employed and a serious tone is established.

However, the writer also uses persuasive techniques like rules of three and rhetorical questions to attempt to persuade the reader to agree with them.