

An informal letter

You recently visited an English friend in York. Write a letter to Clare.

- Thank Clare for looking after you during your visit.
- Describe your first week at university.
- Ask Clare about her job and tell her your plans to work part-time.
- Invite her to visit.

Dear Clare,

How are things? It was great to see you during the holidays! Thanks for showing me all the sights of York. I had a fantastic time.

I started university here in Boston last week. There's so much information and so many new people to meet. I think the course is going to be really interesting and I'm sure I'll have a lot of fun here.

How is your new job? Are you enjoying it? It must be really nice to be earning some money. I'm going to try to get a part-time job while I'm studying here. A bit of extra cash will be really useful. There's a bookshop in the city centre that's advertising for staff, so I might go there and have a chat with them.

Well, I've got to get back to the books. Write soon.

Best wishes,

Marion

P.S. You are very welcome to come and visit me next year. Do you think you will be able to? I hope so!

- Start the letter with *Dear* and the person's name.
- We sometimes start a letter by asking how the person is. You can use phrases such as *How are you?* or *How are things?*
- Divide the letter into short paragraphs, each with its own topic.
- We can use colloquial words and phrases.
- We often end letters with expressions like *Write soon*, *Best wishes*, *See you soon*, or *Take care*, and your first name. If we know the person well, we can use *Love*, *Lots of love*, or *With love from*.
- Use *P.S.* to add extra information or ask a question at the end of the letter.

An email

You have received an email from an English-speaking friend who has just started university in Cambridge. Write an email reply.

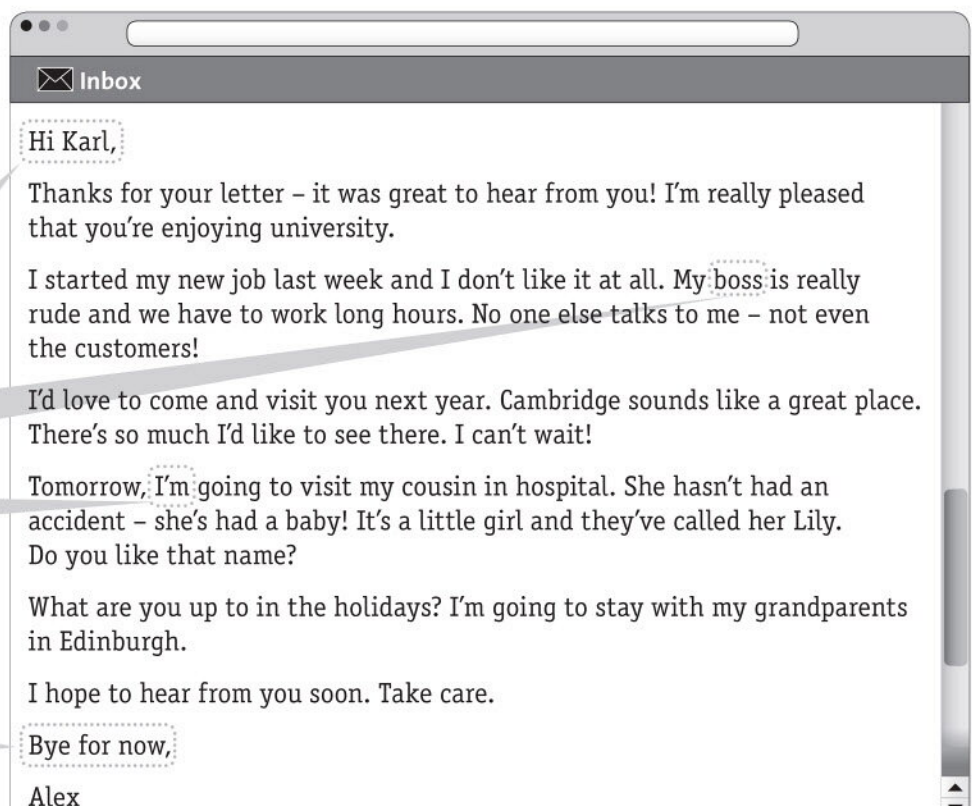
- Describe a job you have recently started.
- Accept an invitation to visit.
- Share some news about your family.
- Ask about your friend's plans for the holidays and describe your own plans.

• In informal email messages, we often start with *Hi* or just the name. We don't usually use *Dear*.

• We can use colloquial words and phrases.

• Use short forms, e.g. *We're* and *I'll*, and abbreviations like *etc.*, e.g.

• We often end informal email messages with expressions like *See you soon*, *See you later* or *Bye for now*.



A blog post

Your English penfriend Lisa came to stay with you during the holidays. Write a blog post.

- Explain how you know Lisa.
- Describe her appearance and personality.
- Describe a memorable day out.
- Speculate about a visit to England in the future.

• Try to use a variety of tenses in your blog post. Covering the different points in the task should allow you to do this.

• Avoid using formal language in a blog post; use informal or neutral language.

• Use phrases like *In my view ...* and *As I see it ...* to introduce your opinions.

• You must cover all of the points in the task.

• If you divide your post into paragraphs, it is a good idea to have one paragraph for each point in the task.

Blogsite.com

Last April, my penfriend Lisa came to stay with me in Bangkok for two weeks. I know Lisa because our schools arranged an exchange programme and we visited each other two years ago. Since then, we have sent regular emails and letters, but we haven't seen each other.

Lisa is the same age as me. She's tall with short, dark hair and green eyes. We get on well because our personalities are very similar. As I see it, we're both easy-going and friendly, but quite shy too. We both hate loud, arrogant people!

Because Lisa visited in April, I wanted to show her how we celebrate the Songkran Festival here in Bangkok. So we went out on to the streets with buckets of water and splashed lots of people. It was great fun and Lisa really enjoyed experiencing a local tradition.

If I can save up enough money between now and August, I'll go to England to visit Lisa for a fortnight. We may go camping for a few days while I'm there. I hope the British weather is better than they say!

An opinion essay / article

Your local authority has decided that a supermarket chain can build a store on some nearby playing fields.

Write an article for an internet discussion forum.

- Explain why you disagree with the decision.
- Present the advantages of green spaces in towns.
- Describe a memorable event that took place there.
- Suggest a better location for the supermarket and give reasons.

YourTown.com

I strongly disagree with the plan to build a supermarket on the playing fields near our school. Firstly, it will mean losing an important facility for recreation. People of all ages use the fields for jogging, playing sports and having picnics. Secondly, it will cause an increase in traffic around the school.

Green spaces are particularly important in towns. They provide a space where people can escape from noise and pollution. Moreover, they make the whole area more attractive.

Last November, there was a firework display on the playing fields. Hundreds of people attended and the event raised a lot of money for charity.

In my view, it would be better to build a new supermarket next to the station. The buildings there are mostly empty. In addition, it would be much more convenient for customers for the supermarket to be on the ring road. A new supermarket would improve this part of town.

In conclusion, I oppose the plan to build a supermarket on the playing fields. I believe the playing fields are important to the local community. It would be better to build the supermarket close to the station.

• Begin by re-stating the main context of the task.

• Use words like *Firstly ...* and *Secondly ...* to sequence your points.

• Avoid using very informal language in an essay or article.

• Use a variety of expressions for introducing opinions like *It seems to me ...*, *In my view*, *In my opinion ...*, etc. and for making additional points, *Moreover*, *Furthermore*, etc.

• Use concession clauses like *although*, *even though* etc. at the beginning or end of a sentence.

• You must cover all of the points in the task.

• If you divide your essay or article into paragraphs, it is a good idea to have one paragraph for each point in the task.

• Finish by summing up your arguments.