



Writing A Formal Letter Lesson One: Planning Teaching Ideas

Lesson Objective: To structure and plan a formal letter.

Success Criteria:

- To understand the difference between formal and informal writing.
- To identify the purpose, audience and format of a task.
- To plan a detailed formal letter.
- To create a Word Bank of useful vocabulary.

Starter

Formal vs Informal

Ask students to imagine they have received two invitations – one to a friend's party and one to a family wedding. What will they wear to both events? Students could either describe or draw their outfits in as much detail as possible.

After five minutes, discuss with the class how the outfits are different. Why have the students made different choices for each event? Use the discussion to create a link with writing and introduce the concept of varying style and tone according to audience.

Main Activities

Your Task

Introduce the FunTown [Job Advertisement](#) and explain the task: this lesson, we will be planning a formal letter of application for the role. Either in pairs or groups, ask students to highlight the most important information on their copy of the advertisement – what will they need to refer to when writing the letter? It is a good idea to get students to stick this in their books, as they will need it next lesson.

Purpose, Audience, Format

To check understanding of the task before proceeding, ask students to write down its Purpose, Audience and Format in their books. This will serve as a useful reminder next lesson, when they come to writing up their drafts.

Your Introduction

Display the three sample introductions on the [Writing a Formal Letter Lesson One: Planning PowerPoint](#). Working in pairs, ask students to identify the best introduction and explain why they have chosen it. Identify the key criteria for writing an introduction (stating intention, setting tone, introducing key topics), then ask students to draft their own introductions to their application.

After students have done this, ask for volunteers to share their writing with the class and ask for feedback.

The Body of Your Letter

Using the [Writing a Formal Letter Lesson One: Planning PowerPoint](#), explain the contents of the body of the letter. Students need to aim to write three developed paragraphs detailing their experience, personal qualities and the reason the job appeals to them.

It can be useful at this stage to explain that they may need to use some poetic licence – even if they would not want the job in real life, they need to pretend for the purposes of the exercise!

It's helpful here to remind students of the formal tone of the letter. Display the sample statements from the [Writing a Formal Letter Lesson One: Planning PowerPoint](#) and ask students to work in groups to rephrase them more formally. Once this task is completed, students can share ideas either as a class, or by sending delegates to other groups who then report back.

Create a Word Bank

The previous task is a useful feed into creating a formal word bank. Set groups the challenge of coming up with a list of useful adjectives, adverbs and phrases which would suit the formal tone of the letter. This task could be incentivised by offering a reward to the group with the best selection of words and phrases.

Your Conclusion

Explain the purpose of the letter's conclusion – to draw together the points made during the letter and make a final, lasting impression on the reader. With the help of the class, model writing a conclusion on the board and then ask students to draft their own.

Plenary

Make a Checklist

Students should make a checklist in their books of key points to remember when writing their formal letter. This will be used next lesson, so they need to ensure they include as much detail as possible!