

 <p>Lecture Notes</p>	Name Of Lecturer: Augustine Momoh. Turay
	Course Title: General English
	Course Goal: The goal of this online teaching is to allow students have access to learning materials in order to master Concepts in General English, which in turn will help them speak and write good English.
	Class & Semester: HTC 1^P-2nd Semester Course Status: Core
	Course Code: General English Credit Hours:2
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Date & Time: 15-05-2020	
Topic: Letter Writing	
Week : 6 Lecture No.: 6	
Learning Objective: By the end of this online teaching, students are expected to explain the different types of letters they know.	
Week 6 Questions: 1a. What are the steps we take in writing a formal letter? 1b. How does a formal letter differ from an informal letters in terms of structure, contents and layout? 2. What is the basic layout of a formal letter?	Week 6 LETTER WRITING <p>A letter is a written communication –a way of giving information or exchanging ideas.</p> <p>Even in the visual age that is additionally dominated by the telephone, people still write many letters and many kinds of letters.</p> <p>The trouble is that it is easy to write a poor letter. Fashioning a good one takes a lot of more care and effort. But such conscientiousness is essential because if you write a poor letter, the point of sending it is lost. This is bad enough if you are writing to friends, though they will forgive and give you a further chance to make yourself clear. No such tolerance should be expected from a company or any kind of officialdom. If your first letter is inadequate, you may not get an opportunity to redress things.</p> <p>Regardless of type, function or length, a good letter exhibits these qualities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is clearly set out and comfortable to read • The writer's voice is properly audible • It gives a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction • The points are made with impact and rightness • It makes the reader wants to write • The tone and register must be appropriate to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) the relationship with the recipient ii) the nature of the subject matter iii) the letter's overall circumstances <p>The first thing to get right is the basic layout. The following three considerations apply to all letters:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In handwriting letters, the address of the sender should be ideally placed

in the top right hand corner. With headed papers, as used by businesses or many private individuals, it is now accepted practice to center the address at the top.

2. The date should be clearly stated.
3. Careful attention should be paid to spacing. Many letter writers seem terrified of space and cramp in their design. You should work out in advance all that you want to say in your letter and use the space accordingly.

Other matters of layout depend on the kind of letter being written; there are essentially three broad types

- a) The formal business letter to someone you don't know.
- b) The semi-formal letter, to someone you do know and may indeed know very well.
- c) Informal letter to friends and intimates. These range from chatty notes to family and close friends, to longer passionate love letters.

FORMAL LETTERS

Formal letters are sometimes called official letters or business letters. The presentation of such letter makes an impression on the person who reads it. The letter that makes a good impression will receive a favourable reply. Formal letters are characterized by formal beginnings and endings.

Formal letters are written when applying for a job, admission, making request etc. The recipients of our formal letters are managers, directors, heads of departments, editors, principals etc. The language should have a level of politeness. One should avoid the use of contracted verb forms and abbreviations and employ the use of more appropriate vocabulary. This means that the use of slang and colloquial language is unacceptable. In a formal letter, the address of the sender occurs in the top right hand corner of our paper. Formal letters usually have an inside address. This contains the name and/or the title of the person you are writing to and the company or organization's name, street address, city or town.

The salutation mostly used in formal; letters is Dear Sir/Madam, always use a comma (,)

The topic follows the salutation, it tells the reader what you are writing for – are you applying for a job? Are you making a request? Are you subscribing to a service? Etc.

The body begins below the topic. It consists of paragraphs. Always start new paragraph when you introduce a new idea.

The closing occurs at the end of the body, just before the signature, it is followed by a comma and it is only the first word of the closing that is capitalized.

Your signature is the last part of the letter. It is always written in ink. You write your full name below your signature.

TYPES OF FORMAL LETTERS

Letter to the Editor

Your purpose in writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper is to tell the reader of the newspaper what you think about some controversial issue that many people are arguing about either in conversation or in the press itself. When writing a letter to the editor, you should:

- Distinguish clearly between a letter to the editor of a newspaper and an article for a newspaper or magazine. The article is an essay and must not be written in the form of a letter.
- Set out your letter using the standard form for a formal letter, that is using two addresses, “Dear Sir” and “Yours faithfully”
- Go straight to the subject after the salutation. Do not waste words, e.g. asking for some space in your widely-read newspaper.
- State clearly the problem on your mind and discuss its effects on the public .E.g. “Our sporting activities have been marred by violence to an alarming degree. Spectators sometimes don’t even get to see the end of the match because it is disrupted by violence.
- Discuss the cause(s) of the problem e.g. “One of the most important causes of food shortage in this country is the migration of young people from the rural areas to towns, cities and diamond mining areas.”
- Suggest possible solution to the problem you have stated. Try to stress the practicality of your solution e.g. If you feel that one way to curb violence in sports is to educate the spectators and [players, you should discuss how to educate, where to get the money to finance the campaign.
- Make sure that if you refer to a previous letter or article, you give the date when that letter was published.
- Understand clearly that the editor should not be asked to solve the problem you are discussing. He does not have the power to do so. His role is to publish the letter and the public informed.

LETTER OF COMPLAINT

A letter of complaint is a formal letter which is usually written to the person in charge of some Company or Government Office to complain about some problem you feel has been caused by that Company or office. When writing a letter of complaint, you should

- i) Remember that this is a formal letter so it must be set out using the standard form for formal letters.
- ii) Choose your words very carefully. The tone of the Letter should be firm enough to make it clear that you are annoyed about this particular problem. But you should not be abusive e.g. you might write “I am sure you appreciate the fact that this problem is causing consideration inconvenience.”
- iii) Begin your letter by stating clearly what your complaint is. Be specific, if you are complaining about an item purchased from a shop, describe the article in details, give the receipt number for the purchase and give the date of the purchase.
- iv) Make it clear why you feel your complaint is justified and why you feel the person you are writing to has a responsibility to do something about your problem.

- v) Explain clearly what corrective measures you want to be carried out. If you are complaining about fault merchandise, make it clear whether you want the merchandise repaired or replaced, or whether you want your money back.

Conclude your letter firmly but without being abusive

LETTER OF APPLICATION

A letter of application for a job is a formal or business letter in which you state your desire to obtain a particular job and outline your qualification for that job.

When writing an application letter you:

- Must layout your letter using the standard form for a formal letter or business letter.
- Must keep the tone of the letter formal. Do not include greetings or anything that does not pertain directly the main purpose of your letter.
- Should use polite language but don't beg. Don't use phrases such as "with deep humility and respect".
- Should state clearly at the beginning of your letter what job you are seeking and how you came to know about the vacancy.
- Should state your age, qualifications, educational background, previous work experience and your interests or attitudes which are relevant to the job you are seeking.
- Must give the name and addresses of at least two referees – people who are willing to recommend you for the job.

Curriculum Vitae

An alternative to writing a lengthy letter of application is a outline background and experience in curriculum vitae and attach a short cover letter. The curriculum vitae should include the following information:

1. Personal information or Bio data: This includes your name, sex, age, date and place of birth, nationality, religion and languages spoken.
2. Educational background: List the names of all educational institutions you attended, the year and the highest qualification attained at each institution. It is advisable to begin with the most recent.
3. Previous work experience. State whether you have gained any experience in the job you are applying for.
4. Other experiences: State the experiences you have outside job experience
5. Hobbies: State what your interests are.

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL DETAILS

NAME: Mohamed S. Sesay
SEX: Male
ADDRESS: 1 Horseshoe Road, Ferry Junction.
DATE OF BIRTH: 2/12/1976
PLACE OF BIRTH: Bo Southern Province
NATIONALITY: Sierra Leonean
MARITAL STATUS Married with two (2) Children

PERSONAL PROFILE

I am reliable, well organized and used to working on my own initiative. I am

able to prioritize my work load. I am comfortable working on my own or as part of a team.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

2015-2018- Port Loko University College, Port Loko-Higher Teachers' Certificate.

1996-2007-Christ the King College, Bo-GCE O' level, 2 A levels

WORK EXPERIENCE

2018-Present- Teacher, Kankalay Islamic Secondary School, Freetown. Duties include Teaching Language Arts at JSS 1, 2 and 3 levels, monitoring students' performance and helping to foster discipline in school.

August-November 2017- Two month placement for practice teaching at the Port Loko University College Practicing School.

HOBBIES- Reading, football, Landscape painting.

REFEREES

Mr. Albert T. Mansaray

Principal

Port Loko University College Practicing School

Port Loko University College Campus

Port Loko.

Mobile 07750000

Mr. Mark Mans

Principal

Kabala Secondary School

Kabala

Mobile: 030458026

SEMI-FORMAL LETTERS

A semi-formal letter is the type of letter you would write to a person you know reasonably well but not intimately. Such a letter might be written, for example, to your uncle or to a pen-friend overseas. This is an "in-between" letter. It should be more formal, or serious, in tone than an informal letter, but it is not as formal as a business letter. When writing a semi-formal letter, you should remember to:

1. put your address and date in the top right-hand corner. But do not write the full name or the address of the person to whom you are writing.
2. begin your letter with an appropriate salutation, or greeting, such as: Dear Uncle Alpha, My dear Aunt, Dear Patrick, (a pen friend) etc.
1. choose an appropriate tone for your letter. For example, in a friendly letter to a close friend you might write: "Hi! How things doing? And similar tone might be suitable in a letter to a pen-friend with whom you have corresponded for a long time.
2. use an appropriate closing. If you feel you know the person quite well, use a friendly ending such as "Yours affectionately" or "Your friend" and sign your first name only. But if you feel you don't know the person well,

use a more formal ending such as “Yours sincerely” and sign your name. But don’t use “yours faithfully” because it is too formal for a semi-formal letter.

INFORMAL LETTERS

Informal letters are letters that we write to our close friends, groups and family relation of the same age. Informal letter do not follow any one standard format. This means that there is no one standard for salutation or conclusion as in the case of formal letters. An informal letter has five parts:

- i) **Heading:** Usually, the heading has three lines; the first line contains the writer’s street or institution’s address, the second line contains the writer’s city or town and the third line contain the date on which the letter is written. We have the address in the top right hand corner of the paper.
- ii) **Salutation:** A comma follows the salutation. In the salutation, we use the first name of the person we are writing to Dear Joe, Dear Betty,. It occurs at the left hand corner of the paper just below the address line.
- iii) **Body:** This is the content of the letter; the part that carries the writer’s message. There should be no heading. The body consists of paragraphs. The first paragraph usually tells why you are writing; whether you are replying or writing for the first time. Example if writing for the first time – “I am writing to confirm rumours around that your hall won the 2010 Inter Hall Sports meet and that you were a brain behind the success.” If replying

“Thank you very much for the letter you wrote to me last week, asking about my result. From its content, I now know how much you care”

Summary: We have successfully explained the different kinds of letters and the features of each type have also been discussed in detailed

Assignment:

1. List the features of the following letters:
 - a. Formal letter
 - b. Informal letter
 - c. Semi-formal letter

Further Reading: Read on letters.

1. Judith Dwyer (1997) the Business Communication Handbook (4th Edition): Prestige Hall-Sydney, New York, Toronto.

Raymond Murphy (2004) English Grammar in Use (3rd Edition): Cambridge University Press.

References: