

**DIRECTIONS:** Read and do the work which follows. Attach the checklists on the following pages to each letter you hand in for your teacher to mark to get feedback on how you are doing. Be sure to hand them all in at once. They don't count toward your final grade, but are very useful practice for the kind of question you will find on the Unit test and the provincial exam.

**FORMAL LETTERS**

Formal or business letters are written to a much more specific set of rules than informal letters. They should never contain casual language or slang, and should be typed on the computer. Spelling, punctuation and letter format are very important. Remember, you are trying to make a good impression.

**Letter of Application**

A letter of application accompanies your résumé when you apply for a job. It is also sometimes called a cover letter. Letters of application should be polite, brief, absolutely, positively free of typos and errors of any kind, and tell the prospective employer why you are a good candidate for the job for which you are applying. Describe the reasons why you are the best candidate for the job. Tell the prospective employer what is in it for them – why hiring you will be to their advantage, and benefit their organization. Always make the letter of application personal; take the time to find out exactly to whom it should be addressed. Letters addressed *To Whom it May Concern* just don't cut it! If the job posting you are replying to doesn't include the particulars of the person you should be contacting, you should telephone the company and ask. You **must** find out the person's name, title, and complete address. A poor second choice, when you have tried and failed to find the name of the person you should address your letter to, is to use *Dear Sir or Madam* as the salutation.

The letter should be written in the block style, like in the sample to the right. Everything lines up with the left margin.

John Smith  
4567 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Grand Forks, BC  
V1K 1R9

October 8, 2003

Mrs. Betty Anderson  
Food Court Manager,  
Downtown Mall  
Grand Forks, BC V1K 1S8

Dear Mrs. Anderson

This letter is in response to your recent advertisement in the paper for an assistant cook at the food court. I am extremely interested in the food service industry and plan to train as a chef once I have completed my high school education. I am looking to obtain as much experience in this area as possible before graduation.

I attend Grand Forks Secondary school, where my classes include Foods 11, Catering 11, and Chef's Training 11. I am doing very well in all of these courses. I am available on short notice, but especially on Fridays after school, and all day Saturday and Sunday.

I have enclosed my résumé, which shows my experience and qualifications for the position. I would be pleased to arrange an interview at your convenience.

Yours truly,

John Smith  
enclosures

**Letter of Complaint**

A letter of complaint is written when you are unhappy with a service you received, or goods you purchased. It is always polite, brief, and to the point. Don't whine. Don't threaten or use abusive language, no matter how upset the situation makes you. Be courteous. You are far more likely to achieve your goal of resolving the problem to your satisfaction if the person reading your letter of complaint is treated with respect. Your letter should contain a call to action – that is, a description of what you would like done to fix the problem you are complaining about. Be sure that your contact information is complete and accurate, because you want the recipient to be able to respond to your letter.

## Letter of Inquiry or Request

A letter of inquiry or request is sent when you are asking a question of a person or organization, or are wanting action of some kind. You might be asking if someone is available as a speaker for your club, checking on the availability of a room for your meeting, or trying to determine whether an organization would be interested in sponsoring your activity. As always, your letter should be brief and to the point. It should contain a politely worded question that you want the person to answer. Be sure that your contact information is complete and accurate, because you want the recipient to be able to respond to your letter.

## INFORMAL LETTERS

Informal letters are those you write to friends and relatives. Sometimes they are called personal letters. They can be typed or handwritten. The layout of the letter doesn't have to be as formal, and casual language or slang is okay to use so long as it doesn't obscure your meaning. Informal letters include letters of thanks or appreciation, letters of congratulations, letters of condolence, and letters of invitation.

## Letter of Thanks or Appreciation

A letter of thanks or appreciation is written to someone who has done something nice for you or gone out of their way to accommodate you in some way. It expresses your gratitude to another person. It is informally written, yet conveys honest feelings to the reader. The format is not nearly as rigid as in the formal letters; you have much more leeway in how your letter looks. The language you use can be much more casual, and slang is okay so long as you know the reader will understand what you are saying. Notice in the example to the right, that the letter contains only the address of the sender, not the recipient. The signature block at the end of the letter is also much more casual. It contains a closing, such as *Love*, or *Sincerely yours*, and then the writer's signature below. There is no need for the name of the writer to be typed after the signature space. You still can't go too far wrong using the block format, because it is really easy to remember.

4567 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue  
Grand Forks, BC  
V1K 1R9

October 8, 2003

Dear Aunt Josie:

Ralph and I would like to thank you and Uncle John for your hospitality last weekend. It isn't often that we get down to Vancouver, and it was nice of you to allow us to stay with you for the weekend. We particularly liked our visit to Stanley Park and the walk along the sea wall.

Should you make it up to Grand Forks next summer, we would be delighted to have you stay with us.

Again, thanks for your hospitality. It is truly appreciated. Say hi to Nathan and Sarah for us.

Love,

## Letter of Congratulations

A letter of congratulations is sent to someone who has achieved an honour or won an award. It should express your sincere good wishes on their accomplishment. It doesn't have to be long.

## Letter of Condolence

When a friend or relative has experience a loss, a letter of condolence is always appreciated. A brief, sincere expression of sadness or statement of sympathy on the death of a loved one can help during a difficult time.

## Letter of Invitation

Whenever you are holding a special function, such as a birthday or anniversary party, a letter of invitation is always appropriate. Be sure to include all the relevant details about the event, such as the date, time, place, and any other information the recipients should know. Also be sure to send you letter out in plenty of time so that people have time to respond.