

Writing skills: Informal texts

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What to expect?

During this session you will learn about:

- formal and informal language
- common informal text formats
- practical exercises
- tips for better writing

M U N I
C J V

Formal vs informal language

Task 1

In pairs - discuss the differences between formal and informal language. Think about vocabulary, grammar, etc. Take notes if necessary, be ready to present your ideas.

M U N I
C J V

Formal vs informal language

The register continuum

Informal

Neutral

Formal



usually spoken

usually written

mostly unplanned

mostly planned

more ambiguous

less ambiguous

Formal vs informal language

Formal language	Informal language
Single-word verbs	Phrasal verbs
Formal vocabulary (e.g. abstract nouns, formal connectors, words of Latin and Greek origin)	Informal vocabulary (slang, colloquialisms, neologisms, idioms)
No contractions	Contractions
Complex sentences (long)	Simple sentences (short)

Formal vs informal language

Formal language	Informal language
Impersonal language (passive voice, authoritative, objective, 3 rd person pronouns)	Personal language (active voice, 1 st person pronouns, subjective, means of involving the audience)
Highly formulaic language	Freely constructed
Serious and official	Friendly

M U N I
C J V

Writing - over to you

Task 2

Individually - write down a list of everything you wrote in the past 2-3 days. When you're ready, share your list with the person sitting next to you.

Task 3

In pairs - look at your lists and decide if the texts you wrote (and typically write) are formal, neutral, or informal.

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Informal writing formats

This type of communication is typical in communicative situations that involve people who know each other well, share the same social status, and in casual context.

- some business /academic correspondence
- personal emails/messages
- memos
- social media

M U N I
C J V

Writing - over to you

Task 5

Work with the handout.

General tips on improving your writing

Task 4

Writing and you

1. Discuss the following questions with a partner:
2. Is writing your favourite skill?
3. Do you find it easy or difficult? Why?
4. What's the biggest problem for you when it comes to writing?
5. How do you work on improving your writing skills (if necessary)?
6. What tips would you give someone who wants to improve their writing?

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C J V

Tools for better writing

Online sources

<https://writeandimprove.com/>

<https://emedia.rmit.edu.au/learninglab/content/writing-skills> (academic writing)

<https://brians.wsu.edu/common-errors/>

M U N I
C J V

Exit ticket?

Thank you for your attention!