

# Fast Five

Decide whether each of these texts would be formal or informal:

- 1) A job application
- 2) A text message to your friend
- 3) An email to the headteacher
- 4) A phone call to complain about a purchase

# Fast Five

Decide whether each of these texts would be formal or informal:

- 1) A job application- **formal**
- 2) A text message to your friend- **informal**
- 3) An email to the headteacher- **formal**
- 4) A phone call to complain about a purchase- **formal**

Can I use formal language?

# What is formal language?

We use formal language when we need to sound more serious and professional. Often, this is when communicating with adults, businesses or important people.

That means:

- No contractions
- No slang/abbreviations
- Use technical vocabulary
- Aim to sound professional

The passage below might be how you would tell your friend about something that happened.

If we wanted to write this formally, how could we change the words/phrases in bold?

**You know** that **rubbish** game I bought last week? I had to **moan** to the shopkeeper because it **randomly** stopped working. I am **so annoyed**.

**‘You know’**

**‘rubbish’**

**‘moan’**

**‘randomly’**

**‘so annoyed’**

**Here is one solution:**

You know- I am writing to inform you

Rubbish- unsatisfactory

Moan- complain

Randomly- unexpectedly

So annoyed- extremely disappointed

**I am writing to inform you about the unsatisfactory game I bought last week. I had to complain to the shopkeeper because it unexpectedly stopped working. I am extremely disappointed.**

Compare the two passages. Notice the difference in how they sound. This week, you are aiming to write formally.

### Informal

**You know** that **rubbish** game I bought last week? I had to **moan** to the shopkeeper because it **randomly** stopped working. I am **so annoyed**.

### Formal

**I am writing to inform you about** the **unsatisfactory** game I bought last week. I had to **complain** to the shopkeeper because it **unexpectedly** stopped working. I am **extremely disappointed**.

Depending on how confident you feel, choose one of the tasks below:

Red

In the passage below, replace the words/phrases in bold to make them sound more formal. Use the word bank to help you.

should

could not

as a result

call

will not

companion

frustrating

unsatisfactory

unreliable

It was **so annoying** to hear that my train was cancelled. I **couldn't** believe that I would have to wait one hour for the next train. My **mate** was expecting me to arrive for lunch and my **stupid** phone ran out of battery so I was unable to give them a **bell**. I **won't** be using that train company again: they are **useless**. **Anyway**, I am going to write a formal letter of complaint: they **better** give me a refund.



## Yellow

In the passage below, replace the words/phrases in bold to make them sound more formal. Once you have replaced the words/phrases, you may need to edit other parts of the passage to ensure it makes sense.

It was **so annoying** to hear that my train was cancelled. I **couldn't** believe that I would have to wait one hour for the next train. My **mate** was expecting me to arrive for lunch and my **stupid** phone ran out of battery so I was unable to give them a **bell**. I **won't** be using that train company again: they are **useless**. **Anyway**, I am going to write a formal letter of complaint: they **better** give me a refund.

## Green

**Edit the passage below to make it sound formal.**

It was so annoying to hear that my train was cancelled: I couldn't believe that I would have to wait one hour for the next train. My mate was expecting me to arrive for lunch and my stupid phone ran out of battery so I was unable to give them a bell. I won't be using that train company again: they are useless. When I eventually got my train, it was squashed and way too hot. I've got to say, I thought the day couldn't get any worse until the return train was also cancelled. From now on, I'm leaving my house much earlier to avoid being late. Anyway, I am going to write a formal letter of complaint: they better give me a refund.