

Writing file 4 | Teacher's notes

Learning objectives in this lesson

Responding to a letter of enquiry.

- 1 You may wish to introduce the topic by asking students how often they / their companies receive emails or letters asking about goods or services their company supplies. Ask what type of information these letters ask for and how quickly a response is sent.

For the first question, ask students to have a quick look at the letter to find out how well Claude and Tony know each other. Ask them to give reasons for their answer.

Answer

- 1 They have had some contact: ('from our previous communications') but have probably not spoken to each other on the phone or met in person as the letter is addressed to *Mr Fuchs* and signed *Yours sincerely* rather than, e.g. *Best regards / Best wishes*.

For question 2 ask them to skim the text very quickly to discover what information is *not* specifically mentioned in the letter.

Answer

- 2 Prices and delivery details (though these may be included in the 'enclosed' leaflets).

- 2 Ask students to read the text and from the information contained in the reply ask them to guess what the original letter said. Ask them to discuss this in pairs before taking class feedback. Ask if they think it is a positive and polite response.

Answers

Tony will have

- asked for more information about the system – when and how it differs from the current system
- expressed concern about the amount of retraining
- asked about any promotions or support.

- 3 Ask students to refer back to the text and match the words from the text with their definitions. Get them to work in pairs before taking some class feedback.

Answers

- 1 at their fingertips
- 2 downsides
- 3 hesitate
- 4 intuitive
- 5 significantly

- 4 Tell students to look at the reply again and work out what the purpose or function of each paragraph is. Encourage them to discuss this with a partner.

Answers

- Paragraph 1 – Acknowledge receipt of letter
Paragraph 2 – Give information about the subject of the enquiry
Paragraph 3 – Address specific points in the enquiry
Paragraph 4 – Mention a special offer / promotion
Paragraph 5 – Highlight action taken and invite response / further contact

- 5 Instruct students to look at the text again and find the words or phrases that help the writer to achieve the things that he wants to. Ask them to discuss these in pairs. They might come up with other ideas so be willing to discuss alternative answers.

Answers

- 1 Welcome the enquiry: *Thank you for your letter dated 29.01 ...*
- 2 Acknowledge points made in the original enquiry: *As you point out ...*
- 3 Try to avoid using the first person; *I or me: Please find enclosed the latest information ...*, (rather than *I am enclosing*)
- 4 Refer to something that has already been talked about: *mentioned above*
- 5 Introduce solutions: *The good news ...*
- 6 Introduce a special offer: *You might be interested to know that ...*
- 7 Mention enclosures / attachments: *Please find enclosed ...*
- 8 Invite further contact: *If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.*

- 6 Ask students to read the short letter of enquiry and highlight the areas that they would need to address if they were replying to it. Once they have read it, get them to compare their answers with their partner's and then ask how they think their own bank would answer the question.

Answers

*Would it be possible for you to send the password again or will I have to re-register at the local branch?
Also, once I have access to the website will I be able to set up regular cash transfers overseas online?*

- 7 Ask students to write the letter making sure they include an extra paragraph on a special offer. This can be done collaboratively in class or as homework.

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Evaluation tips

Look for appropriate layout and appropriate language. Remember to comment on content as well as accurate language use.

Sample answer

Dear Ms Park

Thank you for your letter dated 31 January regarding your lost password.

Unfortunately we are unable to resend the passwords as they are computer generated so I am afraid you will have to reapply for our Internet Banking Service. However, the good news is that you can do this yourself online; so you don't have to go to your local branch.

Regarding your second question, I am pleased to tell you that once you are registered it will be easy for you to transfer cash overseas.

You might be interested to know that we now offer a no-commission service on all foreign exchange transactions ordered online. Click on the FEX link on our website for more details.

If you have any further problems with our Internet banking services, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Justin Tame