

Part 3

Informal letter

Example question

This is part of a letter you receive from an English pen-friend

I really like going to the cinema. What kinds of film do you like? Tell me about them Why do you like them?

- Now write a letter to your pen-friend about films.
- Write your letter in about 100 words on your answer sheet.

Example answer

The example letter is written on a pink background and includes the following text:

Dear John

Thanks for your letter. It's always good to hear from you.

I'm glad you like going to the cinema. I like it too, though I don't go very often. I'd rather watch a film in the cinema than on TV, because you can lose yourself in the cinema.

Have you seen Avatar? It's a science fiction film, which is my favourite kind. It's set on another planet and full of exciting action and special effects. While you're watching it, you don't think about anything else.

Please tell me about the films you like.

Take care

Sandra

Annotations on the right side of the letter point to specific parts of the text:

- use a suitable opening** points to "Dear John".
- respond to the letter you received** points to "Thanks for your letter. It's always good to hear from you."
- use first names** points to "John" in the salutation.
- give reasons for your ideas** points to "I'd rather watch a film in the cinema than on TV, because you can lose yourself in the cinema."
- use contractions** points to "I'm" and "I'd" in the third paragraph.
- this is the first content point** points to the start of the paragraph about Avatar.
- this is the second content point.** points to the start of the paragraph asking about the recipient's film preferences.
- use a suitable closing expression** points to "Take care".

Useful language

Openings

*Dear James,
Hi James,
It's always good to hear
from you.
Thanks for your letter.
How are you?
I hope you're well.*

To give advice and make suggestions

*If I were you...
Why don't we/you...?
I suggest ...
I think you should ...
It might help to ...
you could try ...*

To ask for and give information

*Could you tell me about ...
I need to know...
Let me tell you about...
I thought you'd like to know
about*

Giving your opinion

*I agree with you that ...
In my opinion, ...
It seems to me that ...
I believe that
My favourite is*

Closings

*Yours
Best wishes
Write soon.
See you.
Thanks again.
Hope to hear from you
soon.
Love*

Exam help: short message

- Read the instructions very carefully;
- Address your letter to the right person;
- Write your letter in a suitable style;
- Use paragraphs to divide the letter into clear sections;
- Make sure you have included all the content points;
- Try to include interesting vocabulary to make your letter lively;
- Use linking words to join your letter together:
- Count the number of words you have used.
- Try to avoid making spelling mistakes