

3.3 Improving your email

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 15 marks

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **improving your email** 改进你的邮件 — turning a correct but flat draft into one that earns the higher bands.

You must be able to:

- spot a draft that mentions rather than develops
- replace vague wording with specific detail
- vary sentence length and openings

1 Worked examples

■ The same email, twice

Draft (middle band):

Hi Ana, How are you? School is fine. I did a lot of things last weekend.
It was good. Please come and visit. Bye, Lin

Nothing here is wrong. It scores in the middle because every sentence is short, nothing is developed, and no reader learns anything.

Improved (upper band):

Hi Ana,

How are you settling in? I keep imagining you eating breakfast while I am already at lunch.

School is much the same, except that Mr Baye has retired and the new teacher makes us do presentations, which is either the best or the worst thing to happen this year — I have not decided.

Last weekend I finally went camping with my brother. It rained for eleven hours, the tent leaked, and we came home a day early, but I would do it again tomorrow.

Any chance you could come in the holidays? There is a spare bed and I owe you a proper answer about the presentations.

Love, Lin

■ What changed

- **Specific detail** replaced vague words: *a lot of things* became a camping trip with a leaking tent.
- **A reaction** was added to each fact, so the reader learns what the writer thinks.
- **Sentence length varies**: some short, some long with two or three clauses.
- **The closing asks a question**, so the email invites a reply.

2 Practice

2.1 Improve each sentence by adding specific detail and a reaction.

(a) “I saw a film.” [2]

(b) “The new teacher is nice.” [2]

2.2 This paragraph is made only of short sentences. Rewrite it as two sentences of varied length. [2]

I went to the market. I bought some fruit. It was expensive. I did not buy much.

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Read this email and identify **three** ways it could be improved. Do not correct grammar; comment on content and style. [3]

Hi Sam, Thanks for your email. My holiday was good. We went to the beach and it was nice. We also went to a museum. The food was good too. See you, Ali

3.2 Rewrite the email above so that it would reach the upper band. Write about 100 words. [6]

Solutions

2.1 (a) Any version adding a named film or detail plus a reaction, e.g. “I finally saw the film everyone has been quoting at me for a month, and I still do not understand the ending — I may have to watch it again.” (b) e.g. “The new teacher, Ms Adeyemi, learned all thirty names in one lesson, which none of us expected and which makes it much harder to hide.”

2.2 Any accurate combination with varied length, e.g. “I went to the market to buy fruit, but the prices had gone up so much that I came home with three apples and a bad mood.”

3.1 Any three: every point is mentioned but none developed; the word “good” or “nice” is used for three different things, so the vocabulary shows no range; there is no reaction or opinion, so the reader learns nothing about the writer; there is no closing question or invitation, so the email does not invite a reply; it is written as one block with no paragraphs.

3.2 Content (3): each point developed with specific detail. Language (3): varied sentence length, precise vocabulary replacing “good” and “nice”, clear paragraphing, and a closing that invites a reply.