

2.1 Purpose, audience and register

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 12 marks**

KEY WORDS inform 告知 • audience 读者 • formal 正式 • informal 非正式 • register 语域

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on **purpose, audience and register** 目的、读者与语域 — deciding how formal to be, and keeping that decision consistent for a whole piece of writing.

You must be able to:

- work out the purpose and audience from the task before writing anything
- choose formal or informal language to match them
- keep the register consistent, and spot where a draft slips

1 Worked examples

■ **Read the task, then answer three questions**

1. **Who** will read this? A friend? A head teacher? A magazine’s readers?
2. **Why** am I writing? To invite, to complain, to persuade, to report?
3. **What form** is it? An email, a letter, a report, an article, a review?

Those three answers decide everything else.

■ **The register scale**

Informal	Neutral	Formal
Hi Sam	Dear Mr Lee	Dear Sir or Madam
I’m really sorry	I am sorry	I would like to apologise
get in touch	contact me	I look forward to hearing from you
loads of people	many people	a considerable number of people
Can’t wait!	I am looking forward to it	I anticipate the event with interest

■ **Where students slip**

- **Contractions** (*don’t, I’m, can’t*) belong in informal writing only.
- **Exclamation marks** almost never appear in a formal letter.
- A formal letter that begins “Dear Sir or Madam” ends “Yours faithfully”; one that names the reader ends “Yours sincerely”.

- One informal phrase in an otherwise formal letter is noticed. Keep the register **consistent**.

2 Practice

2.1 For each task, state the audience and whether the register should be formal or informal.

- (a) An email to your cousin about your holiday. [1]

- (b) A letter to a company about a faulty phone. [1]

- (c) An article for the school magazine about homework. [1]

2.2 Rewrite each sentence in a formal register.

- (a) “Thanks loads for sorting that out.” [1]

- (b) “I’m writing ‘cause your delivery never turned up.” [1]

- (c) “Get back to me soon, OK?” [1]

2.3 Rewrite this formal sentence so it suits an email to a friend: “I would be grateful if you could inform me of your availability.” [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Read this extract from a letter of complaint to a shop manager. Identify **three** places where the register is wrong, and correct each one. [3]

Dear Mr Osei,

I'm writing about the jacket I bought last week. It's rubbish — the zip broke after two days! I want my money back ASAP.

Cheers, Ana Silva

3.2 Explain why the phrase “I want my money back” is less effective than “I would like to request a full refund” in a formal letter. [2]
