

1.3 writing

formal letter requesting information

1 understanding writer's purpose

Read this letter by someone who has lost some luggage and answer the questions.

- 1 Who is Mr Hosken writing to?
- 2 What does he want?

26 Somerville Gardens
Hastings TN34 1DR
3 December 2004

BritAir
309 Kilkenny Street
LONDON W1 3AA

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing with regard to a piece of luggage which was lost when I travelled with your airline company.


On 15 November I flew from London Gatwick to Pisa, Italy on flight BTA445. When I arrived at Pisa, my suitcase did not appear at baggage reclaim. I reported this at the baggage enquiries office, where I was told I would be contacted when my case arrived. It did not arrive during my stay in Italy, and although I have called Pisa airport several times since returning home, they have no news of the suitcase.

I would be grateful if you could give me any information about the lost luggage. It is a small, black trolley suitcase, with a red strap and a label which was clearly marked with my name and telephone numbers. I am obviously very unhappy with this situation, which has caused me great inconvenience, particularly as I was in Italy on business and the case contains files and documents necessary for my work.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully
T H Hosken
T H Hosken

2 transferring information Read the letter again and fill in the luggage enquiry form below.


BritAir
Luggage enquiry

Name of passenger: (1)

Date of travel: (2) / / Flight no.: (3)

Airport where loss occurred: (4)

Description of luggage: (5) Suitcase Bag Rucksack Other:

Large Medium Small Colour:

Identifying features: (6) Wheels Luggage strap Label Other:

Please give details: (7)

Contents: *clothes, toiletries, business files and papers*

1.3 writing

3 identifying formal letter conventions

Look at the letter again. Are these sentences TRUE (T) or FALSE (F) about writing formal or business letters?

- 1 Write your name and full address in the top right-hand corner.
- 2 Put the name and address where you are sending the letter on the left.
- 3 Write *Dear Sir* if you don't know the name of the person you are writing to.
- 4 In the first sentence, introduce yourself (*My name is ...*).
- 5 Don't use contractions (*I'm, isn't*, etc.) in formal letters.
- 6 End your letter *Yours sincerely* if you don't know the name of the person you are writing to.
- 7 Put your signature under the typed (or written) name in the middle of the page.
- 8 The date can be at the end of the letter.

4 using standard phrases in formal letters

- a How does Mr Hosken explain his reason for writing at the beginning of the letter?
- b These phrases can also be used to give the reason for writing a formal letter. Complete them with the correct prepositions.

1 to complain _____ (your company's poor service).

2 with reference _____ (an order I sent you).

I am writing 3 to apply _____ the job _____ (catering assistant).

4 _____ reply to your letter _____ (23 April 2004).

5 to ask _____ some information _____ (your courses).

- c What phrase does Mr Hosken use before ending his letter?

- d These phrases can also be used to close a letter. Match the beginnings and endings of the sentences.

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 I look forward | a you can resolve this situation. |
| 2 I hope | b if you could clarify this. |
| 3 Many thanks for | c to receiving your answer. |
| 4 I would be grateful | d your help. |

5 organizing ideas for writing

Match each paragraph in Mr Hosken's letter to its function.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| Paragraph 1 | a describes the luggage and asks for information |
| Paragraph 2 | b explains the reason for writing |
| Paragraph 3 | c explains when and where the luggage was lost |

6 generating ideas for writing

Imagine the same airline has lost your favourite piece of luggage. Note down the information you would need to complete their form. Invent the journey you went on.



Writing task

Write a letter to the airline requesting information about the piece of luggage they lost, using your ideas from 6. Follow the correct formal letter conventions and use the airline's address from Mr Hosken's letter.