ENGLISH, LITERACY, AND COMMUNICATION

Email and professional communication

Difficulty level: Intermediate

English, Literacy, and Communication

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Overview of the concept

This is how you write a clear, polite email that gets answered. Asking a teacher for help or applying for a job both need a subject line that says what you want and a message that gets to the point. A polite, short email is far more likely to get a reply than a long, vague one. It is a skill you will use for the rest of your working life.



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Worked examples

EXAMPLE 1

Q Fix this email opening: 'hey' (to a teacher).

SOLUTION

Identify the situation: writing to a teacher, so a polite greeting is needed.

Use a greeting with a title and name, plus a comma.

So: 'Dear Ms. Lee,'

EXAMPLE 2

Q Fix this email subject: '(no subject)' for an email asking about homework.

SOLUTION

A subject should say what the email is about, briefly.

The topic is homework, so name it.

So: 'Question about homework'

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Practice questions

1 Fix this greeting to a teacher: 'yo'

- A 'Hey Ms. Lee!'
- B 'Dear Ms. Lee,'
- C 'Hey!'
- D 'Hi there'

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2 Fix this subject for an email about a missed class: '(no subject)'

- A 'Hello'
- B 'hi'
- C 'Missed class on Monday'
- D 'stuff'

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3 Fix this closing: 'bye' (to an employer)

A 'See ya'

B 'Thank you,'

C 'later'

D 'thx'

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4 Fix this greeting to an unknown recipient: 'dear sir'

A 'Hi sir'

B 'hey there'

C 'Dear Sir,'

D 'yo'

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5 Fix this subject: 'important!!!' for an email to a teacher about a missed test

- A 'IMPORTANT!!!'
- B 'Missed test on Friday'
- C 'hey'
- D '(no subject)'

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6 Which closing is best for a job application email?

- A 'Love,'
- B 'Kind regards,'
- C 'See ya'
- D 'thx'

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7 Fix this greeting to a class: 'hey guys'

A 'Dear class,'

B 'Yo'

C 'Hey everyone!'

D 'Hi guys'

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8 Fix this subject: 'asap' for an email about a library book that is overdue

A 'Overdue library book'

B 'asap'

C 'hello'

D 'my book'

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9 Which of these closings should you NOT use in a professional email?

- A 'Thank you,'
- B 'Best wishes,'
- C 'xoxo'
- D 'Kind regards,'

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10 Fix this opening line: 'I want homework answers now.' (rewrite politely)

- A 'I need the answers.'
- B 'Give me the answers.'
- C 'Could you please help me with the homework?'
- D 'Do my homework.'

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ANSWER KEY

1. 'Dear Ms. Lee,' (or 'Dear Mr. Smith,' with the teacher's actual name)
2. 'Missed class on Monday' (or any clear subject naming the missed class)
3. 'Thank you,' (followed by your name; or 'Sincerely,')
4. 'Dear Sir,'
5. 'Missed test on Friday'
6. 'Kind regards,'
7. 'Dear class,'
8. 'Overdue library book'
9. 'xoxo'
10. 'Could you please help me with the homework?'

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