

## 4. Formal letter

Formal letters are written for various official purposes. A formal letter comprises

- ❖ Sender's address – written in the top left-hand corner of the letter.
- ❖ Addressee's address – on the left, starting below your address
- ❖ Date – on the left, on a line after the name and address of the addressee you are writing to

- ❖ Salutation
  - Dear Sir/Madam – if you do not know the name of the person
  - Dear Mr Ghosh – If you know the name, use the title (Mr/Mrs/Miss or Dr) and the surname only. If you are writing to a lady and do not know if she is married or single use Ms, which is for women.
- ❖ Subject – what your letter refers to
- ❖ Body of letter – The first paragraph should be short and it should state the purpose of the letter. The paragraph or paragraphs in the middle should mention the reason behind writing the letter. The last paragraph of a formal letter should state what action you expect the receiver to take.
- ❖ Closing – Yours sincerely / Yours faithfully (We write sincerely if we know the addressee's name, and faithfully if we address as Sir / Madam)
- ❖ Sender's signature and name (Name and designation of the sender if applicable)

### **TIPS**

- ❖ Do not use contractions (don't, I'm, it's, you're). Write the words in full: do not / I am / it is / you are.
- ❖ Do not use informal language (use 'children' or 'pupils', not 'kids').
- ❖ Do not forget to use capital letters and correct punctuation. Remember, only the first word is written in capital letters.

### **FORMAT**

Sender's address

Addressee's address

Date

Dear Sir / Madam

Subject

Body of letter (3 paragraphs)

Yours sincerely/faithfully

Signature

Name

Designation (if applicable)

## SAMPLE

**You are a member of a charitable organization, WE CARE!, which provides free education material to children in the slums. Write a letter to the principal of Silver Bells Public School, appealing to the students to donate their old textbooks and other school items for these children.**

WE CARE!  
9 M G Road  
New Delhi

The Principal  
Silver Bells Public School  
New Delhi

30 May 2008

Dear Madam

Subject: Appeal to students to donate material for slum children

WE CARE! is a charitable organization working to provide education to children living in the slums. We are running many schools in slum areas throughout the city. Our members visit these schools to teach the young children and to distribute free books, stationery and clothes. Many of these children attend our evening classes, but they cannot afford books and the stationery.

We would be really happy if the students of your school could donate schoolbooks, bags, and other school items for the benefit of the slum children. This small gesture of the students would mean a lot to these poor children who have never ever been to school.

We would be grateful if you could arrange to collect these items from your schoolchildren. Our members would be visiting your school next Saturday.

Thank you very much.

Yours faithfully  
Mallika Pillai