

3.1 Informal email — purpose and audience

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

Total: 16 marks

KEY WORDS informal 非正式 • tone 语气 • informal email 非正式电子邮件 • example 例子 • reason 原因

Objective

Build the skills to answer exam questions on the **purpose and audience of an informal email** 目的与读者 — writing to someone you know, for a reason the task specifies.

You must be able to:

- identify the reader and the reason for writing from the task
- cover every content point the task lists, and develop each one
- keep a friendly, natural tone throughout

1 Worked examples

■ Find the content points first

The task always lists what to include. Underline them and count them.

*Write to your friend. Tell them **what you did last weekend**, describe **a person you met**, and invite them **to visit next month**.*

Three points. Three paragraphs. Nothing else is required, and nothing may be left out.

■ Develop, do not merely mention

- **Mentioning:** *I went to the beach.*
- **Developing:** *I went to the beach on Saturday with my cousin. The water was far colder than it looked, and we lasted about four minutes before giving up and eating chips instead.*

Content marks reward development. One sentence per point is the commonest reason a competent email scores in the middle band.

■ Tone

- Contractions are expected: *I'm, don't, can't, we'd.*
- Ask questions — an email is an exchange, not an announcement.
- Reactions make it sound real: *you would have laughed, I still cannot believe it.*

2 Practice

2.1 For this task, list the content points: *Write to a friend who has been ill. Ask how they are, tell them what they have missed at school, and offer to help them catch up.* [3]

2.2 Develop this sentence into three sentences that would earn content credit: “I went to a concert.” [2]

2.3 Rewrite this opening so it sounds like an email to a friend rather than a formal letter:
 “I am writing to inform you of recent events at school.” [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Write an email to a friend who has moved to another country. In your email you should: say what has changed since they left, describe something you have done recently, and ask about their new life. Write about 120 words. [8]

3.2 Explain why an email that covers all three content points in a single short paragraph is likely to score poorly, even if it has no grammatical errors. [2]

Solutions

2.1 Ask how they are; tell them what they have missed at school; offer to help them catch up.

2.2 Any development that adds specific detail and a reaction, for example: “I went to a concert on Friday with Yusuf. The band played for two hours and the last song was so loud I could feel it in my chest. I lost my voice completely and had to write notes to my mother the next morning.”

2.3 Any natural informal opening, for example “Hi Sam — you will not believe what has happened here.”

3.1 Content (4 marks): all three points covered and each developed with detail. Language (4 marks): consistently informal register, a range of vocabulary and structures used accurately, clear paragraphing, and the whole roughly within the word limit. A model answer covers each point in its own paragraph, includes at least one question to the reader, and ends with a natural sign-off.

3.2 Content marks are awarded for DEVELOPMENT, not coverage, so three mentions in one paragraph cannot reach the higher content band. Paragraphing is also assessed as part of organisation, so a single block loses credit there as well.