**ENGLISH-ICT INTERDISCIPLINARY LESSON**

**Lesson Plan: Christmas letter to be uploaded on eTwinning**

*Level:* lower secondary school

*Time:* 2x 60 min

*Objective*: Understanding the value of written communication, how to write a non-formal letter and how to upload it on eTwinning

*Material:* Hand-outs

*Instructions*:

* Students are asked to write a Christmas letter to a chosen pupil from one of our partners. Their choice should have a good meaning, in order to either start a new relation with a new pupil, or to continue an already settled relation.

*Discussion*:

* How do we write a non-formal letter?
* What could be of interest for your letter receiver?
* The difference between formal and non-formal letters?
* Writing etiquette?
* What is eTwinning?
* How can we use this digital platform?

*Procedure/Activities*:

* Check the genre “letter” and the difference between a formal and a non-formal letter. (See the hand-out)
* Check the list of participant pupils within our partnership (uploaded on Moodle) and make a relevant and meaningful choice when you choose your letter receiver.
* Start to compose your private letter to be addressed to the chosen person.
* Post it on eTwinnig

**Hand-out material**

FORMAL & INFORMAL LETTER

When it comes to writing in English, there are two main styles of writing – formal and informal. Consider these two examples:  
  
*Example 1- Formal style*: This is to inform you that your book has been rejected by our publishing company as it was not up to the required standard. In case you would like us to reconsider it, we would suggest that you go over it and make some necessary changes.  
  
*Example - Informal style*: You know that book I wrote? Well, the publishing company rejected it. They thought it was awful. But hey, I did the best I could, and I think it was great. I’m not gonna redo it the way they said I should.   
  
**Nice to remember:**  
 - It is the style of writing, or the way we use words to say what we want to say.

* Different situations call for different ways of putting words together.
* The way we write in academic and scientific settings differs greatly from the way we write to a friend or close one.
* The tone, vocabulary, and syntax, all change as the occasion changes.

**Formal English** is used mainly in academic writing and business communications.

**Informal English** is casual and is appropriate when communicating with friends and other close ones.

Choose the style of writing keeping in mind what you are writing and to whom. But whichever style you write in – formal or informal – be sure to keep it consistent, **do not mix the two.**

Here's a list of some of the main differences between informal and formal writing: 

Informal: **May use colloquial words**/expressions (*kids*, *guy*, *awesome*, *a lot*, etc.).  
Formal: **Avoid using colloquial words**/expressions

(substitute the previous examples with *children*, *man/boy*, *wonderful*, *many*, etc.)   
  
Informal: **May use contractions** (*can’t*, *won’t*, *shouldn’t*, etc.).  
Formal: **Avoid contractions** (write out full words – *cannot*, *will not*, *should not*, etc.).  
  
Informal: **May use** *first, second, or third person*.  
Formal: **Write in third person** (**except in business letters** where first person may be used).  
  
Informal: **May use clichés** (*loads of*, *conspicuous by absence*, etc.)   
Formal: **Avoid clichés** (use *many*, *was absent*, etc.)  
  
Informal: **May address readers using second person pronouns** (*you*, *your*, etc)  
Formal: **Avoid addressing readers using second person pronouns** (use *one*, *one’s*, *the reader*, *the reader’s*, etc.)  
  
Informal: **May use abbreviated words** (*photo*, *TV*, etc)  
Formal: **Avoid using abbreviated words** (use full versions – like *photograph*, *television*, etc.)  
  
Informal: **May use imperative voice** (e.g. *Remember…*.)  
Formal: **Avoid imperative voice** (use *Please refer to.…*.)  
  
Informal: **May use active voice** (e.g. *We have noticed that…*..)  
Formal: **Use passive voice** (e.g. *It has been noticed that*….)  
  
Informal: **May use short and simple sentences.**  
Formal: **Longer and more complex sentences are preferred** (short simple sentences reflects poorly on the writer)  
  
Informal: **Difficulty of subject may be acknowledged and empathy shown to the reader.**Formal: **State your points confidently and offer your argument firm support**.   
These are just some of the differences between **formal** and **informal** writing. The main thing to remember is that both are correct, it is just a matter of tone and setting.

**Example of informal letter writing**

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| **An informal letter...** |
| begins with: *Dear ...* or *Hi, Hello* |
| refers to reason for writing:  *Thanks for your letter.*  *It was great to get your letter.*  *I’m writing to ask you a favour.*  *Sorry for not writing for so long.* |
| uses contractions : *I’m, you’re, she’s…* |
| uses [abbreviations](http://public.oed.com/how-to-use-the-oed/abbreviations/) (e.g. adv., f.ex. ) |
| uses simple, short sentences |
| uses simple linkers, e.g. *then, later on, but, and* |
| may have paragraphs |
| could use slang |
| could use exclamation marks (!) |
| ends with: *Best wishes / Write soon/ Kisses* |
| ends with a signature |