

ENGLISH

MADE EASY



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**Parts of Speech . Articles . Determiners . Tenses .
Punctuation**

Comparisons . Comprehension . Composition

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A special thanks goes to my loving wife and friend, Moreblessing, who had to endure the long lonely hours I took to prepare this booklet and to my beautiful children , Tafadzwa and Tinashe to whom the booklet is dedicated.

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PARTS OF SPEECH

These are different kinds of words used in used in a sentence.

There are eight parts of speech which are Noun, Pronoun, Adjective, Verb, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction and In ter jection.

1 NOUN

A noun is a name of a place, person, animal or thing. All naming words are nouns. At primary school level we usually use a proper noun and a common noun.

A proper noun is a specific name of a place or person, for example, Muzenda, Tinashe, Mutoko, Rukau, Zimbabwe. A proper noun always starts with a capital letter.

Examples of common nouns are *boy, girl, city, school, shop, e.t.c.*

2 PRONOUN

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. There are personal pronouns and reflective pronouns. Personal pronouns include : I, we, you, he, she, it and

they. Reflective pronouns include : myself, yourself, himself, herself, ourselves and themselves.

3 ADJECTIVE

An adjective tells us more about a noun. Most adjectives are formed from nouns.

For example, *dirt – dirty*

trouble – troublesome

girl – girlish

Adjectives also change to form the three Degrees of Comparisons.

<u>Positive</u>	<u>Comparative</u>	<u>Superlative</u>
<i>Good</i>	<i>better</i>	<i>best</i>
<i>Beautiful</i>	<i>more beautiful</i>	<i>most beautiful</i>
<i>Smart</i>	<i>smarter</i>	<i>smartest</i>

4 VERB

A verb is a word or phrase that describes or shows an action, condition or experience. Loosely saying, a verb is a doing word. The principal parts of a verb are – the present tense, the past tense and the past participle.

<u>Present Tense</u>	<u>Past Tense</u>	<u>Past Participle</u>
<i>Do</i>	<i>did</i>	<i>done</i>
<i>Throw</i>	<i>threw</i>	<i>thrown</i>
<i>Eat</i>	<i>ate</i>	<i>eaten</i>
<i>Go</i>	<i>went</i>	<i>gone</i>
<i>See</i>	<i>saw</i>	<i>seen</i>
<i>Have</i>	<i>had</i>	<i>had</i>

5 ADVERB

An adverb describes, gives more information or tells us more about a verb, an

adjective, another adverb or phrase.

For example, *"She smiled cheerfully."*

'Cheerfully' is describing how she smiled.

Examples

-The soldiers fought bravely.

-The dog sneered angrily.

-He swiftly turned the car towards Harare.

When adverbs 'too' and 'so' are used to show the degree or extent of the subject , 'to' and 'that' are used respectively after the adjective. 'Too' is followed by 'for' when a noun or pronoun is used after 'for'

Examples

The story was too good to be true.

The test was so easy that everybody got full marks.

The suit was too expensive for him.

6 PREPOSITION

A preposition is a word which is used before a noun or a pronoun connecting it to another word. It literally connects two things.

Examples

The ball is under the table.

-Preposition *'under'* is connecting ball and table.

He drove the car along Samora Machel Ave.

-Preposition *'along'* is the car to Samora Machel Ave.

The preposition connects the subject and the object. The noun or pronoun which is used with a preposition is called its object. In the examples above, the nouns 'table' and 'Samora Machel Ave' are the objects.

(a) Simple prepositions

Simple prepositions include : at, by, for, with, up, to, till, out, through, on, off, in, from.

(b) Compound prepositions

Compound prepositions include : about, above, across, without, within, between, beside, behind, below, inside, e.t.c.

N.B. These prepositions are generally formed by pre-fixing a preposition to a noun, an adjective or an adverb.

(c) Phrasal prepositions

Phrasal prepositions include : in order to, by way of, along with, in front of, in spite of, on behalf of, in addition to.

N.B. 'on' or 'by' and 'of' are used on the same phrase, for example, on behalf of, on account of, by means of.

7 THE CONJUNCTION

The conjunction is a word that connects words, phrases, clauses or sentences. The chief co-ordinating conjunctions are 'and' and 'but'. Other conjunctions include – if, unless, although, since, until, for, or, nor, also, neither....nor, either....or

(a) and

'and' is used to join two words, phrases or parts of sentences related together or two parts of a sentence, one part happening after the other part.

Examples

Wash your hands and eat your lunch.

He won the race and was given a prize.

(b) but

'but' is used to introduce an added statement, usually something that is different or negative in form from what you have said before.

Examples

He would have won the race but he fell.

I wanted to come earlier but I woke up late.

(c) if

'if' is used to say that a particular thing can or will happen only after something

else happens or becomes true.

Example

We will have the party outside if the weather is good.

(d) unless

'unless' means except if or only if.

Example

You cannot get a job unless you have got experience.

(e) although

'although' means despite the fact that .

Example

He decided to go, although he knew that it was dangerous.

(f) since

'since' means because or as.

Example

Since we have no money, let us go on foot.

(g) until (till)

'until' can be used as a conjunction meaning up to.

Examples

I was up until three o'clock trying to get it finished.

We did not eat till past midday.

8 INTERJECTION

An interjection is a word which is used to show a short sudden expression of emotion (joy, sorrow or surprise)

Examples

Oops! Hurrah! Oh! Waal!

N.B. An exclamation mark (!) is used with an interjection.

TENSES

The word tense comes from the Latin word, *tempus*, which means time. It is any of the forms of a verb which show the time at which an action happened.

There are three main tenses – The Present, The Past and The Future.

1 THE PRESENT TENSE

This is a verb that refers to the present time

(a) Simple Present Tense

Simple present tense expresses a habitual action; something done continually.

Examples

We start school at seven o'clock.

She works at the clinic.

RULE - Present form of the verb

- 's' or 'es' with the main verb if the subject is

third person singular number (he, she, it).

(b) Present Continuous Tense

The present continuous tense expresses an action which is going on at the time of speaking.

Examples

The pupils are writing.

Mother is cooking food.

OR It expresses an action happening in the near future.

Examples

I am going to Mutoko at ten o'clock.

RULE - 'is', 'are', 'am' are used.

- Present form of the verb+ing .
- 'are' is used with all plural subjects
- 'am' is used with I.

(c) Present Perfect Tense

The present perfect tense shows an action just completed.

Examples

I have just eaten my breakfast.

My mother has fried some eggs to eat with our rice.

OR It shows an action continuing to the present

Examples

I have worked at this school for five years now.

RULE - 'have' or 'has' is used.

- 'has' is used with Third Person Singular number
- 'have' is used with all other persons.

(d) Present Perfect Continuous Tense

The present perfect continuous tense denotes an action which began in the past

and is still continuing.

Examples

The child has been ill for a week.

The women have been learning how to drive since last week.

RULE - 'has been' or 'have been' is used.

- Present form of the verb+ing
- 'has been' is useonly with third person singular number (he, she, it) .
- 'have been' is used with all other subjects (I, you, we, they).
- 'since' or 'for' is present.

2 PAST TENSE

(a) Simple Past Tense

The simple past tense shows an action done or completed in the past.

Example

Manchester United won the league last year.

RULE: - Past form of the verb.

(b) Past Continuous Tense

The past continuous tense shows a continuous or ongoing action in the past.

Example

The children were playing.

She was always visiting night clubs.

RULE - 'was' or 'were' is used.

- 'was' is used with all singular subjects and 'were'

is used with all plural subjects.

- Present form of the verb+ing.

(c) Past Perfect Tense

The past perfect tense shows preceding actions done in the past.

Examples

I had gone home when the pupils broke the window.

RULE - 'had' is used.

- Past participle form of the verb.

(d) Past Perfect Continuous Tense

The past perfect continuous tense is used to describe an action that happened before and up to a certain time.

Example

I was told that the baby had been crying since morning .

RULE - ' had been' is used.

- 'since' or 'for' is also present in the sentence.
- Present form of the verb+ing.

3 FUTURE TENSE

(a) Simple Future Tense

The simple future tense shows or describes an action that will happen in future.

Example

We shall write our story tomorrow.

She will be the first to sing next week.

RULE - 'shall' or 'will' is used.

- 'shall' is used with 'I' or 'we'.
- 'will' is used with 'you' , 'he' , 'she' , 'it' , 'they'.

(b) Future Continuous Tense

The future continuous tense shows an action which will be going on continuously in future.

Examples

The boys will be playing soccer.

RULE - 'shall be' or 'will be' is used.

-Present form of the verb+ing

(c) Future Perfect Tense

The future perfect tense is used to describe the completion of an action by a certain prescribed time in future.

Example

Mother will have cooked food by evening.

I shall have paid the trip money by month-end.

RULE - 'shall have' or 'will have' is used.

- 'shall have' is used with 'I' or "we".
- 'will have' is used with 'you', 'he', 'she', 'it', 'they'.

(d) Future Perfect Continuous Tense

The future perfect continuous tense shows an action that will begin in future and continue in future.

Example

They will have preparing for the CAPSA games for a long time.

RULE- 'shall have been' or 'will have been' is used.

- 'shall have been' is used with 'I' or "we".
- 'will have been' is used with 'you', 'he', 'she', 'it', 'they'.

- 'since' or 'for' is present in the sentence.
- Present form of the verb+ing.

ARTICLES

The articles used in English are '**a**', '**an**' and '**the**'. 'a' and 'an' are indefinite articles whereas 'the' is the definite article.

(a) Indefinite articles 'a' and 'an' do not refer to any particular person, place or thing.

Examples

A girl (any girl)

A town (any town)

An animal (any animal)

(i) 'a' is used before a singular countable noun beginning with a consonant sound.

Examples

A book , a hoe , a jug , a uniform, a union.

(ii) 'an' is used before a singular countable noun beginning with a vowel sound.

Examples

An orange, an umbrella, an egg, an hour, an honour.

N.B. It is the beginning sound of the word following an article that matters.

(b) The definite article 'the' is used when referring to people, places or things which are particularly known or already been referred to.

Examples

The capital city of Zimbabwe is Harare.

The pupil who stole the book was caught.

(c) '**some**' is also used with things that cannot easily be counted (uncountable nouns).

Examples

Some ink, some water, some sugar

WORD AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE

A word

A word is made up of letters of the alphabet. English language has twenty-six (26) letters of the alphabet. The letters are divided into two groups; the vowels and the consonants. Vowels are *a, e, i, o, u*.

Consonants are *b, c, d, f, g, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, x, y, z*.

A sentence

Every sentence has two parts. The part that names the person or thing we are speaking about is called the subject of the sentence. The part that tells us something about the subject is called the predicate.

Example

I am going to town.

'I' is the subject while 'am going to town' is the predicate.

DETERMINERS

(a) Very little/ a few

These two phrases mean almost the same but cannot be used in place of each other.

'Few' is a plural word and is used on countable nouns

Example

I have very few friends in the class.

There are a few pieces of meat left in the pot.

'Little' is used on uncountable nouns.

Examples

There is very little butter left.

There is very little meat left in the pot.

(b) Scarcely/hardly any

The two mean almost the same but their usage is different.

'Scarcely' is linked to a verb .

Example

I had scarcely sat down when the phone rang.

I could scarcely believe it when she said she wanted to marry me.

'Hardly any' is linked to a noun or naming word.

Example

There were hardly any shops in the village.

(c) Either.....or

'Either.....or' is used to describe a situation in which there is a choice between two different plans of action, but both together are not possible.

N.B. Both objects are in singular, therefore, 'is', 'was' or 'has' are used.

Example

Either James or John is going to herd cattle.

(d) Neither.....nor

'Neither.....nor' is used to show that the two things mentioned are not true.

Examples

Neither my father nor my mother went to university.

Neither James nor John likes football.

N.B. Both objects are in singular, therefore, 'is', 'was' or 'has' are used.

(e) Both.....and

This is used when referring to two people or things with one plan of action.

Examples

Both James and John drink beer.

Both teachers and pupils liked the play.

(f) All

'All' is used to mean and refer to everything without exception.

Example

All the eggs are rotten.

All the girls in the class sing in the school choir.

(g) Every

'Every' is used to refer to all the members the group of three or more (two, we use both). Can be used interchangeably with 'all' but the structuring of the sentence differs.

Example

Every girl in the choir has a uniform.

(All the girls in the school choir have uniforms)

(h) Each

Each is used to refer to everything or every person in a group of two or more but considered separately.

Example

Each girl in the school choir has a school uniform.

(i) No/none

The two words mean not any or not one. When used 'no' is usually followed by a noun, pronoun or adjective. 'None' is usually followed by a preposition, especially : 'of', 'at' and 'whatever'.

Example

There was no free seat on the bus.

There is no butter left in the fridge.

I invited all the church leaders but none of them came.

How many of us can speak English? None at all.

PUNCTUATION

Punctuation is the use of special marks or stops, known as punctuation marks, that you add to writing to separate phrases and sentences, or to show that something is a question, interjection, etc.

The following are the most common used punctuation marks:

Full stop/period	.
Comma	,
Question mark	?
Exclamation mark	!
Apostrophe	'
Semicolon	;
Colon	:

Inverted commas “ ”

Hyphen -

Capital letters

(a) Full stop

A full stop is used to mark or show the end of a full sentence or used at the end of a word that has been shortened or abbreviated.

Examples

There is a full moon tonight.

M.A. Gonzo

Dr. Nyamhunga, Ph.D.

(b) Comma

A comma is used in writing to separate parts of a sentence showing a slight or shortest pause; to mark off a direct quotation from the rest of the sentence or to separate a series of single words or things in the same sentence.

Examples

If you work hard, you will pass.

“Sir, I’ve come to make a report ”, she said to the officer on duty.

We are growing potatoes, butternuts, tomatoes and onions at the farm.

He was angry but managed, with great self-restraint, to reply calmly.

(c) Question mark

A question mark is used at the end of a direct question. A question mark cannot be used in indirect speech.

Examples

Why are you late for school?

Who is your class teacher?

Have you switched off the stove?

N.B. Questioning words are normally used: how, why, what, where, who, when.

(d) Exclamation mark

An exclamation mark is used after an interjection or phrase or sentence expressing sudden feeling of joy, sorrow, surprise or wish.

"You can't leave me now!" she exclaimed.

"Rubbish!" she exclaimed in disgust.

Oops! I forgot my phone at home.

(e) Apostrophe

An apostrophe is used when a letter or a number has been left out (to shorten words and numbers).

Examples

I am ----- I'm

I have ----- I've

Cannot ----- Can't

2015 ----- '15

Or is used before or after 's' in a word to show possession.

Examples

Susan's ball

Jesus' mother

Pupil's books

Pupils' books

Or is used to show the plural of a number or a letter.

Examples

He was born in the 1920's.

Underline all the t's in the sentence.

(f) Semicolon

A semicolon is used in formal writing between two parts of a sentence, usually when each of the two parts could form grammatically correct sentences on their own. It represents a pause of greater importance than a comma.

(g) Colon

A colon is a complete pause used to introduce a list of things or a sentences or phrases taken from somewhere.

(h) Inverted Commas

These are used to enclose and show the exact words of the speaker. They are also used to show that the word or phrase used is not accurate.

Examples

"The food you gave me is not enough", Rudo complained to the cook.

Sick prisoners in the camp were 'cared for' by the guards.

(i) Hyphen

A hyphen is used to join two words together or to connect the parts of a compound word.

Examples

The veteran was wounded during the Anglo-Boer war.

Dozens of well-qualified teachers applied for the headship.

The car was involved in a head-on collision.

(j) Capital letter

A capital letter is used to begin a sentence, to write the pronoun 'I' and to write the proper nouns and adjectives derived from them. It is also used on all nouns or pronouns that indicate the Supreme Being or deity.

Examples

My sister's name is Nakai.

I am a Zimbabwean.

Tinashe and I are going to Kariba next week.

John 3 vs 16: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

COMPARISONS

As was discussed before, we have three degrees of comparison which are : Positive, Comparative and Superlative.

(a) Positive

This is the root word which is used to describe one thing.

e.g. *Honey is sweet.*

Tafadzwa is tall.

(b) Comparative

This is a form of an adjective (or adverb) used to compare two things.

e.g. *Honey is sweeter than sugar.*

Tafadzwa is taller than Tinashe.

(c) Superlative

This is used to compare more than two things. It expresses that the thing or person

being described has more of the prescribed quality than anything or anyone else.

e.g. *Honey is the sweetest of them all.*

Tafadzwa is the tallest girl in the girls.

<u>Positive</u>	<u>Comparative</u>	<u>Superlative</u>
Good	better	best
Bad	worse	worst
Ugly	uglier	ugliest
Beautiful beautiful	more beautiful	most
Difficult difficult	more difficult	most
Wise	wiser	wisest

COMPREHENSION SKILLS

Comprehension is an exercise or a test to find out how well students understand written or spoken language. In English a comprehension passage aims at testing our abilities to:

- ▶ Read and fully understand the comprehension passage.
- ▶ Provide punctuated, grammatically correct answers to given questions.

Pupils must be equipped with the necessary skills so that they are able to tackle the hard task of interpreting the passage.

The following comprehension skills are necessary for a pupil to be able to understand given passages.

- ▶ Understanding word meanings in context.
- ▶ Finding the main idea.
- ▶ Making inference about information implied but not stated.

(a) Context of word

Context is the text that comes immediately before or after a particular word or

phrase; and helps to explain its meaning. The reader may find it difficult to find the meaning of a word, as used in the passage, by defining it in isolation. In this case the words in the same context will help the reader to find the clear meaning of the word or phrase.

Examples

*Come on, Tsitsi, **dry** your eyes and we will go and find your mother.*

*I used the last cent I had , now my pockets are **dry**.*

In the first sentence the word 'dry' means stop crying. In the second sentence the word 'dry' means the person is now broke or has no money on him/her.

(b) Finding the main idea

Pupils may be asked to find the main idea of the whole story of paragraph. A pupil need to read the story more than once so that he or she understands the story fully. By so doing, the pupils will be able to;

- ▷ Summarise the story.
- ▷ Make inference, thus deduce the main ideas of paragraph s and/or the whole passage.
- ▷ Simply and easily answer questions from the passage.
- ▷ Understand and define word meanings in context.

(c) Making inference about information implied but not stated.

An understanding pupil is able to deduce information from the read passage even though it is not directly implied. A pupil must be able to make an opinion from the passage read. A reader must be able to uncover hidden information.

APPROACHES TO COMPREHENSION EXERCISES

Pupils are encouraged to read the passage more than once before reading the questions. They read all the questions and read the passage again this time with the questions in mind. When they start answering the questions it becomes easier for them to refer to the passage for answers.

QUESTIONING WORDS

(a) How

'How' is used to ask what an experience or event was like. A pupil is required to explain the way or method in which something was, is or will be done.

(b) When

'When' is used to ask for the time at which something happened, is happening or will happen.

(c) Where

'Where' is used to ask about the place something is in, is coming from or going to.

(d) Which

'Which' is used to determine between two or more possible alternatives.

(e) Why

'Why' means for what reason. The pupil must give a reason for something.

(f) Who (whom, whose)

'Who' is used when asking which person or people, or when asking what someone's name is.

Example

Once a man lived alone in a hut near the forest. Everyday he walked through the forest and crossed a river. His farm was on the far side of the river. There he grew a lot of maize. On market days he sold his maize to the fishermen.

One morning he noticed a nasty smell. It was a smell of death. He was not surprised. It was a common smell in the forest. The animals often destroyed one another. As he walked on he thought about his day's work.

(a) How did the man earn his living?

(b) When did the man sell his maize?

(c) Where was the smell coming from?

(d) Which group of people bought his maize?

(e) Why was the man not surprised?

(f) Who helped the man plant the maize?

(g) Give the meaning of the word 'nasty' as used in the passage.

COMPOSITION WRITING

A composition is a piece of writing composed by a pupil to address a question or a topic within a set word limit. Composition type questions and topics are subjective. Composition writing is an important entity in achievement measurement since they reflect the pupil's reasoning to communicate in the language tested. Composition writing also demands skills such as grammar, sentence construction and paragraphing.

TYPES OF COMPOSITIONS

(a) Descriptive compositions

A descriptive composition is a piece of writing that tells us what something or someone is like. You may be asked to describe a thing or an event which is the subject of the composition.

Examples

My favourite pet.

Our school.

The teacher I like best.

(b) Situational Composition

These types of compositions mainly focus on events or experiences happening at a particular or prescribed time and place.

Examples

The wedding.

My journey to Chivhu.

(c) Narrative composition

These types of compositions gives an account of events or a series of experiences.

Examples

The day I got lost.

A day I will never forget.

An accident.

(d) Report writing

A report is a description of an event or situation to someone in particular or in general.

Format

- ▷ Report title
- ▷ Date on which the report was written
- ▷ To whom the report was written (when writing to a specified person)
- ▷ Who compiled the report

Examples

You witnessed a fight between a new boy and a bully at your school. Write a report describing how the bully was defeated.

There is an outbreak of rabies in your area or village. Animals are dying of rabies. Write a report to the District Veterinary Department concerning this issue.

(e) Letter writing

(i) Business letter/ Formal letter

A business letter has the following:-

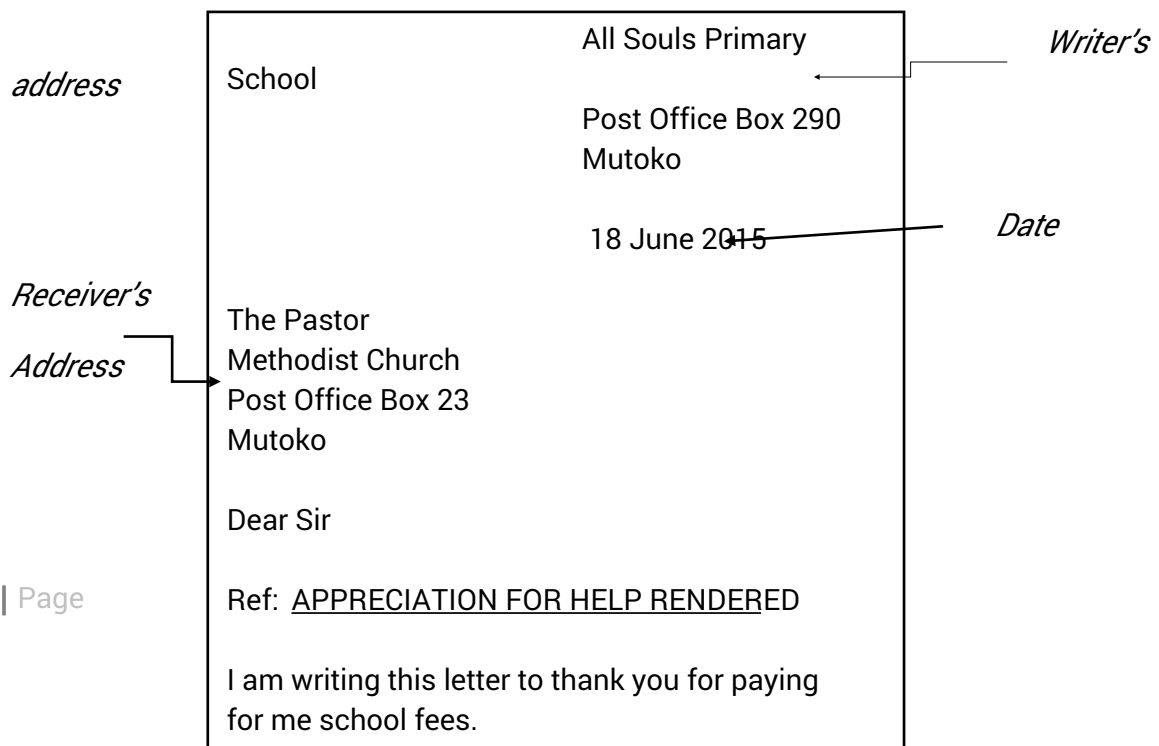
- ▷ Address of the writer on top right hand corner. Skip a line.
- ▷ Date under the address on your right. Skip a line.
- ▷ Address of the institution where the letter is going on the left hand side. Skip a line.
- ▷ Greeting or salutation. (Dear Sir/Madam) skip a line.
- ▷ The subject in capital letters and underlined. Skip a line.
- ▷ The main body of the letter, block paragraphed. Skip a line.
- ▷ The ending (Yours faithfully/ Yours sincerely). Skip a line.
- ▷ Writer's name and surname.

(ii) Friendly letter/ Informal letter

A friendly letter has the following:-

- ▷ Writer's address on top right hand corner. Skip a line.
- ▷ Date under the address. Skip a line.
- ▷ Salutation or greeting from the far left(Dear Susan). Skip a line.
- ▷ The main body of the letter, block paragraphed. Skip a line.
- ▷ The ending (Your sister, Your cousin). Skip a line.
- ▷ Writer's first name only.

Business letter



Salutation

Reference

Body of letter

Writer's name

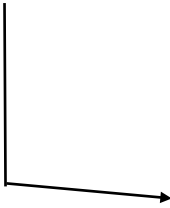
Ending

Friendly letter

Writer's	All Souls Primary School Post Office Box 290 Mutoko
Address	25 September 2014
Salutation	Sister Rosa
Date	I am writing this letter to inform you about our father's illness.
	He started vomiting a couple of days ago and was sent to the hospital by uncle Sam. Upon arrival at the hospital, he was tested for malaria and it was positive. Due to his high temperature and severe headache, he was admitted at the hospital for further observation.
	If you can, please sent us some cash to pay the hospital bills. We do not know yet how much they will charge altogether but as of now they need one

Body

Ending



Writer's name



STRUCTURE OF A COMPOSITION

INTRODUCTIC
N

2ND
PARAGRAPH

3RD
PARAGRAPH

COMPOSITION

THE BODY

(a) Introduction

A good composition must start with an interesting introduction. The introduction must be brief, interesting, thought provoking, accurate and a suspense builder.

Examples of good introductions

The day I got lost

It was on a Saturday morning. Though it was chilly, the birds were chirping excitedly. I woke up feeling fresh and relaxed. I was in a jovial mood not knowing that the day was going to be sad for me.

I woke up late. The sun had already risen. My heart was beating fast. "I am going to be late", I thought to myself. My luggage had not yet been packed. I had to pack, bath and rush to the bus stop. I quickly gathered myself together. Time was not on my side.

(b) The Body

This is the part where details of the experiences or events are discussed. This is where the whole story unfolds. Each paragraph of the body should constitute ideas that are interconnected to each other for meaningful unfolding of the story.

(c) Conclusion

This is the settling part of the composition. Here the writer ties all the ends of the story together.

Example of a good conclusion

The Dream

I woke up with a start. I was screaming. My whole body was drenched in sweat. My mother was standing at my bedroom door. She stood there her eyes not blinking. I knew that look. It was a look of concern. "What had happened?" I tried to reason. That was when I realised it was just a dream.

POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN WRITING A COMPOSITION

- ▶ Use simple, meaningful words.
- ▶ Sentences must be short, clearly written with good grammar, tenses and punctuation.
- ▶ Paragraphs must not be too long and must be arranged in chronological order.
- ▶ Use of comparisons, similes, proverbs, metaphors and figurative expressions must be encouraged. Make sure you understand these before using them.
- ▶ In letter writing no punctuation is required on address, date, salutation, ending and name.