



Standards & Testing Agency

This is part of a suite of materials produced to support national moderation training. It is not intended to inform teaching. Many of the examples are taken from the pupil scripts used in the training materials.

Some features that may indicate informality	Some features that may indicate formality
Contracted forms, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Let's get you an ice pack...</i> • <i>They wouldn't have...if they hadn't...</i> • <i>They've taken the sheep!</i> 	Some modal verbs in certain grammatical structures, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Should it rain, we may have to cancel the picnic.</i> • <i>This village would appear normal...</i> • <i>Most people might ask...</i>
Question tags, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>He's your friend, isn't he?</i> • <i>These are your shoes, aren't they?</i> 	The subjunctive, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If I were to come in...</i> • <i>Were they to come in...</i> • <i>They requested that he leave immediately.</i>
'Multi-word' verbs, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>find out</i> rather than <i>discover</i> • <i>ask for</i> rather than <i>request</i> 	Some use of abstract nouns, and noun phrases used as the subject of the verb, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Darkness was being whispered in...</i> • <i>...full of despair.</i> • <i>Of course, the most significant matter of evacuation is...</i>
Passives using 'get', for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I got my hair cut last week.</i> • <i>He got told off by the teacher.</i> 	Some passive constructions, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>It is widely believed that...</i> • <i>You are provided with a life-jacket...</i> • <i>Flocks of sheep have been taken...</i>
Second person direct address to the reader, and some usage of first person, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>If you love a challenge – however difficult – then you will...</i> • <i>Are you nervous about the London trip?</i> • <i>When we arrived at school we...</i> 	The personal pronoun 'one', for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>One should not be concerned about...</i> • <i>It is better to do this oneself.</i>
Vernacular (everyday) language, including idioms, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>...do your bit for the war.</i> • <i>...the words are stuck in my throat.</i> • <i>Take selfies with no teacher in!</i> 	Vocabulary that is technical, or context/subject-specific, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>...plea for mercy...</i> • <i>...oil producers... plantations... nonsustainable...</i> • <i>...these are my words of farewell.</i>
Features that replicate spoken language, such as ellipsis, discourse markers and some non-standard forms, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>'OK...what time?' 'Eleven.'</i> • <i>Well stop right there!</i> • <i>"C'mon, he wasn't doin' nothin'!"</i> 	Nominalisation (use of nouns rather than verbs or adjectives), for example <i>The arrival of the mysterious stranger caused considerable excitement,</i> rather than <i>We were very excited when the mysterious stranger arrived.</i>



Commentaries

The following 4 pieces provide evidence for the statement *managing shifts between levels of formality through selecting vocabulary precisely and by manipulating grammatical structures*.

Pig Palaver!!! (newspaper report)

Commentary:

- An appropriately formal style is used to present the more serious business of the impending trial. This is achieved through the use of agentless passives (*were taken into court; It was later discovered that; will either be set free or taken to jail; are being held in court*) and the perfect form of verbs, sometimes combined with a modal verb (*claim to have had their ...houses blown down by Mr Wolf; claimed to have had chronic asthma; could not have vandalised*).
- Appropriately formal vocabulary choices reflect the subject matter (*Citizens of Leicestershire; committing murder; malevolent; surreptitiously attempting; oblivious to the fact that; plea for mercy*). In contrast, witness comments (typically incorporating characters from other traditional tales such as Goldilocks and Little Red Riding Hood) use contracted forms (*wouldn't; hadn't; C'mon; doin' nothin'*), non-Standard English (*wasn't doin' nothin'*), and diminutives (*Wolfy*), adding an element of humour through the unlikely characterisation of these familiar 'heroines'.
- Occasional, but controlled, glimpses of informality, such as the question directed at the reader in the opening paragraph (*were they really to blame?*); and use of the present tense to describe past events (the historic present) to introduce the pigs' side of the story (*the pigs' version of events goes like this:*) hint at the humorous intention that underpins the whole report.

In the following 3 pieces, vocabulary and grammatical structures are sustained and adapted to reflect the level of formality appropriate to purpose and audience. They do not, however, provide evidence for the statement *managing shifts between levels of formality through selecting vocabulary precisely and by manipulating grammatical structures*.

The Pie (short first person narrative)

Commentary:

- This short narrative establishes and maintains an appropriately informal style throughout, with vocabulary choices in keeping with the character and situation of the young first person Victorian narrator (*the last shilling we've got; If looks could kill, I'd be dead right now; the words are stuck in my throat*). The use of the present tense, with simple present and present progressive forms, and non-finite (-ing) verbs, conveys urgency and immediacy in this brief but pacy narrative.

The Creation of the Chelegonaffe (narrative)

Commentary:

- The immediacy of the opening dialogue plunges the reader directly into the midst of the villagers' plight, effectively replicating everyday speech through the use of contracted forms and repetition. The opening narrative comment (*That's Old Bess... they're a nightmare, those wolves*) maintains a degree of informality, albeit juxtaposed with an element of semi-formality (*must have been taken*) hinting at the gravity of the situation. The confiding voice of the narrator, who goes on to introduce himself as the village doctor, invites the reader not only to share the village's dilemma, but also to trust that the narrator may have a solution to it. The transition to a more formal style (*sheep have been taken; the village is in uproar; the hunting dogs are tiring early; starting to feel despair*) resonates with the narrator's education and status in the village, in contrast with the distraught villagers and the other two men, Sammy and Bob.
- Precise selection of evocative vocabulary (*a guardian that will protect the village; the sound of two pairs of footsteps echoing off the track; a disgusting stench*) and use of more formal grammatical structures (*to a visitor this village would appear normal, but to me it is full of despair; out of the depths of the cauldron, rose the strange creature*) evoke an unfamiliar setting, seemingly distant both in terms of time and place, which is reinforced throughout the narrative.
- As the preparations for the doctor's plan are made, informal dialogue once more imitates the patterns of speech and creates a sense of urgency with its use of ellipsis, sentence fragments and discourse markers (*Hey, Sammy, Bob, you there? "...Will it work?" "I think so."... "OK...what time?" "Eleven."*). In contrast, the repetitive structure of the chant, suggesting a tone of solemn concentration, uses a more formal style, as does the doctor's greeting of the Chelegonaffe where his language reflects the more antiquated mood established earlier (*"Go, protect our village, our herds and our flocks; become our guardian, mighty Chelegonaffe"*). These more formal grammatical structures and almost biblical vocabulary are entirely appropriate to this story of a mythical creature, created to save the village and its livestock.

Bacon News

PIG PALAVER!!!

On Monday 6th June, 2016, the Three Little Pigs were taken into court for the supposed murder of the Big Bad Wolf; however, the one question is: were they really to blame?



The Three Little Pigs being hanged

Porkehop and Sausage (two of the three pigs) both claim to have had their hay and straw houses blown down by Mr. Holy earlier that day, whereas Mr. Holy claimed differently - he claimed to have had chronic asthma so could not have vandalised the houses. Citizens of Leicestershire (Porkehop, Sausage and Bacon's hometown) have mixed feelings about the event.

"They wouldn't have survived if they hadn't baked him, even though they were committing murder!" protested Goldilocks.

"Poor Holy! C'mon, he wasn't doin' nothing!" commented the late Mr. Holy's firm friend, Little Red Riding Hood.

Similar to various quotes, the pigs' version of events goes like this: the pigs were relaxing in Bacon's brick house, after having their houses blown down by Mr. Holy, when Porkehop spotted a silhouette in the small yard.

Suspiciously, the silhouette was highly tall; it had scrappy tufts of fur sprouting from its jagged ears and a long, dog-like snout. It was later discovered that the shadow was the notorious Big Bad Holy, surreptitiously attempting to knock the brick house over with his juggle pyggs. Once he found that

the house was well-structured, he sneakily crept down the chimney; oblivious to the fact that there was a bubbling black cauldron, as jet black as a dark cat at night at the bottom.

"Porkehop, Sausage and Bacon were in the know and purposely put the cauldron there!" insisted Mr. Holy as he was circled and smiling in agony.



(See above)

Further quotes remain to be seen and the Three Little Pigs will either be a free or taken to jail. Meanwhile, they are being held in court with a plea-rory and a trial looming ahead.

5. The Pie (short first person narrative)

The Pie

I am on a mission. A mission to buy a ~~£~~ pie with the last shilling we've got. I am darting along, silent as a shadow, creeping in and out of a mixture of the poor and rich. My eyes fall on their baskets full of food, wondering how on earth they could have ended up with so much money. Anyway, I need to concentrate on the task in hand: getting to the meat pudding shop. The bright ^{electric} yellow candles flicker as I sweep past them, my breath coming out like clouds of smoke.

Two minutes later I am turning the last corner, being flung with grey, muddy, ~~melt~~ melting snow and being chased by a pack of starving boys. At last I reach the battered wooden door and fling it open, as I step inside tiny snowflakes swirl round the room from my thin ^{shorts}. If looks could kill, I'd be dead right now because ~~at~~ Mrs Hodder is glaring at me through her glasses, held together with string. I ~~insert~~ ^{am} my coin, too terrified to speak. Realising that what I ~~was~~ ^{am} standing on (rotten, damp, slippery, blood stained hay) I shifted around, my feet ^{so} blue with cold that they ~~had~~ ^{have} gone numb. I thrust the small shilling at her, knowing perfectly what I want to say, but the words are stuck in my throat. She silently ladles thick, ~~a~~ delicious - smelling gravy over a fat meat pie. I quickly snatch the pie, covered with a cloth, from her and slip out of the shop.

The Creation of the Chelegonaffe

"They've taken the sheep, they've taken the sheep!"

That's Old Bess, another flock of sheep must have been taken: they're a nightmare, those wolves.

Flocks of sheep have been taken for about a month now; the village is in uproar: children are starving, the hunting dogs are tiring early, even the cats are starting to feel despair. For a week, I have been wondering how to stop these wolves; I now have a plan, and I think it will work...

I am the village doctor, so am not that bad at making potions; my plan is to make a potion to create an animal, a powerful animal, a guardian that will protect the village, the flocks and the herds. I just need to persuade two other men that this plan will work.

I put on my shabby coat and walked out of the door. The sunlight sparkled on the cobbled street, shining through the windows and down the alleyway; to a visitor this village would appear normal, but to me it is full of despair.

"Hey, Sammy, Bob, you there?" I called over a wall, "Yes, doctor," came the reply. I went through a gate, into a small, square garden. "Meet me at the black cave, tonight," I said. "We're going to brew a potion to protect the village, and our livestock." 1

"Will it work?"

"I think so."

Bob and Sammy looked uncertainly at each other.

"OK," said Bob, "what time?"

"Eleven."

At five to eleven that night I walked up to the black cave, carrying a cauldron, a firelighter and some potion ingredients. "Maybe it will work, maybe it will work," I kept muttering under my breath.

When I got to the cave I placed the cauldron on the floor and lit a fire underneath it. I went down to the stream and filled a waterproof bag with freezing water; I carried it back up to the cave and poured the contents into the cauldron. Everything was ready.

Minutes later, I heard the sound of two pairs of footsteps echoing off the track: "Hey, doctor, you there?"

Piece F: Letter

The pupil wrote a formal letter of acceptance for an invitation to the Red House Children's Book Award ceremony that was held in London, and which the pupil attended on behalf of her school.

16th December

Dear Red House Books

Thank you for your invitation. I am really thrilled to have been chosen to attend the Red House Children's Book Awards in London next term. I have visited your website to find out more about the Award Ceremony, which sounds interesting and exciting.

Sophie McKenzie is one of the shortlisted authors for the Older Readers' award. I have read "Split Second" which I thought was a thrilling story: in fact, it is a real page-turner and I have recommended it to several friends. Switching between the perspectives of each of the two main characters helps the reader discover their own separate, imaginary worlds. Reading the story, it is easy to become confused by all the different strands, but the author helps the reader start fitting them together like a jigsaw, even though the characters themselves can't yet see the whole picture.

Attending the award ceremony will give me the chance to discuss my love of books with children from other schools; I know that I will enjoy socialising and chatting to people I haven't met before. I am also very proud to have been chosen for this role and look forward to representing my school at the event.

As you can probably tell, reading books and visualising every detail is important to me. Meeting some of the authors who bring my favourite characters to life makes this invitation even more special. I really love the fact that this book award is voted for by children; that must really matter to the authors!

Overall, the day sounds amazing and I can't wait for it to arrive.

Yours sincerely,

FXXXXXXXX DXXXXXXXX

Dear Sir/Madame

It is with great remorse that I am writing to inform you of the damage and distress inflicted upon my species: the Hyacinth Macaw (the species that is native to Brazil, South America). Over the past decades, the pet-trade has significantly reduced our numbers and I strongly request that this species (my species) is removed from your selling list immediately. Macaws are wild animals, born to roam free, and are not used to being in (as the police would say) custody. These exquisite animals are being illegally traded for a considerable sum of money and if this despicable, irresponsible action continues, the Hyacinth Macaw will most definitely become extinct. You disgust me - surely you can't find this acceptable?

Last weekend, after the so-called 'Animal Captors' had arrived, many Macaws found their beloved homes torn to the ground, the clothing encasing the trees had been carelessly stripped and those poor trees are now forever bare. One thousand years ago, there were over a million Macaws living in the rainforests, but now (thanks to you horrible, despicable humans) there are fewer than five thousand. Ergo, we are endangered. Seriously, how would you feel if we came - in our hundreds - and tore your life apart, desecrated your homes, your family?

informal
asides
well
managed
through
a formal
letter.

↳ shift in
formality

↳ shift
again

After finally overcoming the pain and destruction caused from the damage to our nesting area, the flock (and I) retreated and travelled to find a new place to live. However, it was found that more trees' innards had been exposed; the bark to be used for your human invention: paper (pronounced as papeer). Humans who care little for the lives of others have destroyed our forest and I, for one, think that you should care more about the environment and less about your human needs. Surely you can see that trees help us all to breath!

Later on in the day, in hope of finding long-lost family members (like in every typical cliché) the Hyacinth Macaws ventured deeper into the barren forest. Whilst being appalled by the state of their once-evergreen home, the species stumbled upon an orang-utan, lying on the forest floor, tasting the bitter air for food. The Macaws' offer of help was declined as the orang-utan's barely audible voice signalled that there was nothing that could be done. Further along the same stretch of barren landscape, the Macaws happened to stumble upon an animal market (your animal market) and were disgusted by the site: macaws were strung upside down; feathers plucked and wings torn. How dare you abuse us again and again! What has my species ever done to you?

If only you humans could see reason - you should be helping protect this endangered species, not killing it, not putting innocent families through such heartache. I am extremely angered and believe that it is justified not only to ask for a written apology but also to ask that a multitude of trees be planted in place of those that have been demolished. I look forward to hearing from you or seeing you in person (or as my species would say - in Birdon).

Yours Sincerely

Ms Hyacinth Macaw

✓ Again - now that you are listening to advice - your writing is going from strength to strength.