

Unit 1: Emails to friends

SUMMARY

You can use this summary to guide the learning objectives and target setting for your class.

Can-do statements

By the end of this unit, students will be able to say:

- I can write a response to an email from a friend.
- I can identify the use of colloquial language in emails.
- I can use appropriate colloquial language in emails.
- I can use modals to give advice in an email.

Style

Colloquial language: *How's it going? Sure. ..., innit? Tell me about it.*

Grammar

Modals: *can, could, might, will, should*

Function

Giving advice: *You should ..., you could...*

Opening emails: *Hi, Alek. This is James. Hi, I thought I'd write to say ... Hi, How's it going?*

CLASSROOM EXTENSION IDEAS

You can use some or all of these ideas to check and enhance your students' understanding as they work their way through *Unit 1 of Writing B1+ Intermediate* in class.

Using Before you start

1. Ask the students to read the *Before you start* section first.
2. Get students to discuss with a partner if they can suggest any rules for writing a 'good' email. They may have various ideas, or may alternatively suggest that it depends on whom you are writing to.

Using Understanding

1. Before asking students to do the questions in *Understanding*, get them to scan read the email on page 5 for the following information:
 - Who is the sender?* (Nicole)
 - Who is the recipient?* (Katy Alvarez)
 - What is it about?* (a new job)
2. Feed back with the whole group.

Using Writing appropriately and the Colloquial language/Writing informally note

Before the *Writing appropriately* exercises:

1. Get students to read the *Colloquial language* note (page 5) and discuss the examples of vernacular speech presented.

2. Ask if they have heard them used on TV, in real life, etc.
3. You can also discuss the subtle difference between informal language (which may be recognizable across the English speaking world) and colloquial language, through to slang and street talk (which might be increasingly opaque to the listener/reader).

After the *Writing appropriately* exercises:

1. Put students in small groups to write four new sentences or phrases that could be used as the first line of an email (as in *Exercise 3*).
2. They can then swap them with another group to see if they can identify which situation (a-d) they relate to.

Using Modals - advice column and Language focus

There is an opportunity for students to do extended writing in *Get writing* after *Language focus*, but you can use this modals writing activity for further practice.

1. Photocopy the *Modals – advice column* worksheet below so that you have at least one problem situation for each student.
2. Students can then read the problem and write a response using appropriate modals.
3. If you can, distribute the problems so that at least two students share the same problem, so they can compare their responses.
4. Feed back with the whole class.

Using Get Writing

1. Get students to work individually to write their answers to *Exercise 1* on five separate bits of paper, without saying which opening paragraph and closing sentence is which.
2. Students can then pass these to a partner who can try to identify which is which.
3. Monitor the exercise but also allow partners to help each other with error correction.

Exercise 2 is an activity for students to do individually, but get them to compare their replies in pairs or small groups when they have finished. Working in pairs makes it easier for you to set this stage of the activity up as a proofreading exercise.

You can extend the *Get writing* activity by getting students to write their own informal emails.

1. Write down a few words for the 'Subject' field of some informal emails. You can tailor these to your class but here are a few suggestions:

New flat

New boyfriend/girlfriend

Love ... what's the point?

Job offer ... shall I take it?

Urgent: Can I borrow your car?

I think you gave me the flu Urghhh!

I am NEVER going out drinking with you again!!!

Party at mine – 13th.

2. Alternatively, you can cut pictures from magazines to provide one or two picture prompts to initiate your students' emails.
3. Write down the modal verbs practised earlier in the unit on separate bits of paper and get students to pick three or four from a hat, bowl or bag. Tell them that their emails must include those words.
4. If you are completing this activity in class, you can ask students to exchange their work with a partner and then reply to their partner's email.

An alternative idea for homework is to get students to work in pairs or small groups to develop a survey questionnaire about email usage.

1. Ask pairs/groups to think of a range of questions with multiple choice answers for a questionnaire about emailing. For example:

How many emails do you send each day?

None, I don't email.

One or two.

Three to ten

More than ten.

Who do you write emails to?

<i>Friends:</i>	Often	Sometimes	Never
<i>Family:</i>	Often	Sometimes	Never
<i>Colleagues:</i>	Often	Sometimes	Never
<i>Business:</i>	Often	Sometimes	Never

Which method of written communication do you prefer? (Put them in order 1–5, 1 being the most preferred.)

Email

Post

Twitter

Instant messaging

Text

2. You can ask students to gather answers from friends and family as homework and feed back to the class in the next lesson.
3. You can also ask students to show their results in the form of a poster with pie charts or bar graphs that could be displayed in class.

PHOTOCOPIABLES

Modals – advice column

My flatmate is a terrible cook. I cook half the week and she cooks the other half. I've tried to tell her I'll do all the cooking but she really enjoys it and I haven't the heart to tell her. What should I do?

I split up with my boyfriend six months ago and I haven't been out with anyone since. We had been going out for eight years. Now my friend has organized a blind date for me. I'm totally out of practice: what should I wear? What can I talk about? Argghh ... maybe I shouldn't go at all!

My dog is very old. Recently, she hasn't been seeing well. I took her to the vet and he said there is an operation that would help her sight but it would cost 1,200 euros. I can't afford it. What should I do?

I am worried about my brother. He is spending too much money. He has a job so he can afford his life, but I think he should be saving so he can get his own flat and move out from mum and dad's place. He's twenty-six!!!

I'm sick of my job. I want to do something creative, but I'm stuck behind a computer screen adding up bills all day. How can I leave this rat race behind and find my 'inner-artist'?

My mother is getting too old for her house. She loves where she lives (she's been there for thirty-eight years), but it has three flights of stairs and I'm afraid that she may fall one day and there will be no one there to help her. How can I persuade her to find somewhere new?