

Formal vs. Informal English

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 10



Quick Review

Formal English uses full words, polite phrasing, and no contractions or slang — good for teachers, principals, and school emails. **Informal** English uses contractions, slang, and casual tags (*okay?*, *like*, *yeah*) — good for friends and family. Every choice below is a real, grammatical sentence; the difference is REGISTER.

PRACTICE

Choose the sentence that best fits the situation. All options are grammatical; only one matches the register the situation calls for.

- Which sentence is the most FORMAL way to ask for a pencil?
 - Could you toss me a pencil?
 - Could you please pass me a pencil?
 - Could I bother you for a pencil?
 - Hey, can I grab a pencil?
- Which sentence is the most INFORMAL?
 - I would like to attend the event.
 - I am writing to ask about the trip.
 - Thank you for the invitation.
 - Yo, you going to the thing?
- You are writing an email to your teacher. Which opening fits best?
 - Dear Ms. Park,
 - Hi Ms. Park,
 - Hey Ms. Park!
 - Ms. Park —
- You are texting a friend about a movie. Which fits best?
 - I would like to inform you that the film commences at 7 p.m.
 - Greetings. The motion picture begins shortly.
 - Movie starts at 7 — see ya there!
 - The cinematic feature is scheduled to begin at 7:00 in the evening.



5. Which is the FORMAL version of “*I wanna go to the library.*”?
 - A. I’m gonna head to the library.
 - B. I would like to go to the library.
 - C. I plan on hitting the library.
 - D. Library — let’s go!
6. Which version is INFORMAL?
 - A. Please return your book by Friday.
 - B. Kindly return all materials by Friday.
 - C. Books are due Friday.
 - D. Bring the book back by Friday, okay?
7. You are writing a letter to the school principal. Which closing is best?
 - A. Later!
 - B. Cheers,
 - C. Sincerely,
 - D. Take care,
8. Which is the INFORMAL version of “*I am very tired.*”?
 - A. I’m beat.
 - B. I am quite fatigued.
 - C. I am exhausted.
 - D. I require some rest.
9. Which sentence is the most FORMAL?
 - A. Thanks a million!
 - B. Thanks so much for helping out.
 - C. Big thanks for all your help.
 - D. Thank you for your help with my project.
10. Which sentence fits a speech to the whole school?
 - A. Hey everyone, what’s up?
 - B. Good morning, students and teachers.
 - C. Hi there, friends and folks.
 - D. Sup, school — listen up!



Answer Keys

- 1 A B C D
- 2 A B C D
- 3 A B C D
- 4 A B C D
- 5 A B C D

- 6 A B C D
- 7 A B C D
- 8 A B C D
- 9 A B C D
- 10 A B C D

Explanations

1. B	All four are grammatical and polite to some degree. B uses <i>please pass</i> — standard polite formal phrasing. A uses <i>toss</i> (casual verb); C uses <i>bother</i> (apologetic but colloquial); D opens with <i>Hey</i> and uses <i>grab</i> (both informal).
2. D	All four are grammatical. D stacks slang (<i>Yo, the thing</i>) and drops the helper verb (<i>are</i>). The others are full-sentence formal forms.
3. A	All four are real ways to open. Dear ____, is the standard formal opening for school emails. <i>Hi</i> is friendly but informal; <i>Hey!</i> is too casual; the bare name + dash is abrupt and impolite for a teacher.
4. C	All four are grammatical. C uses casual shortened phrasing (<i>see ya</i>) — perfect for a text to a friend. The others are over-formal for a friend (A and D sound like business letters; B sounds like a newspaper headline).
5. B	B uses <i>would like to</i> (the standard polite formal phrasing). A keeps the casual contraction <i>gonna</i> ; C uses the slang verb <i>hitting</i> ; D is a friendly exclamation.
6. D	All four are grammatical. D adds the casual tag <i>okay?</i> — typical of friendly spoken speech. A and B use formal politeness markers; C is neutral and factual (not slangy).
7. C	All four are real letter closings. Sincerely , is the standard formal closing. <i>Later!</i> is slang; <i>Cheers</i> , is friendly/casual (and British-flavored); <i>Take care</i> , is warm but informal — for friends, not a principal.
8. A	All four are real and grammatical. I'm beat is everyday slang. The other three keep formal vocabulary (<i>fatigued, exhausted, require</i>).
9. D	D uses the full polite phrase <i>Thank you</i> and a complete sentence. A is a friendly exclamation; B uses the casual <i>so much</i> and <i>helping out</i> ; C uses the casual <i>Big thanks</i> .
10. B	B is the standard formal public greeting. A is casual (<i>Hey, what's up</i>); C is friendly but uses casual <i>folks</i> ; D is full slang.



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