

Letters from the Wild: A Correspondence Challenge

Learning objective: To identify and use the formal features of a letter, including address, date, salutation, and sign-off, whilst using persuasive and descriptive vocabulary.

Read the letter below from Max the monkey, who is currently exploring a distant rainforest. Think about the tone he uses to describe his findings. Then, answer the questions to demonstrate your understanding of formal letter writing.

12 Canopy Court, Rainforest Canopy, 14th May 2024. Dear Nova, I hope this letter finds you perched comfortably under the stars. My current expedition is proving to be a magnificent puzzle of nature! I have been measuring the growth rate of giant ferns—they increase by exactly 5cm every three days. It is a marvellous sequence to observe. The humidity is high, and the sounds of the jungle are quite rhythmic. Please tell me, do the constellations look different from your vantage point in the barn? I look forward to your reply. Yours sincerely, Max.

Word bank: sincere · correspondence · expedition · magnificent · inquisitive · salutation · sign-off · perspective

1. Identify three formal features present in Max's letter. Explain why each is important for clear communication. (3 marks)

2. Max uses the word 'marvellous' to describe the ferns. Suggest two alternative adjectives he could use to enhance his description. Justify your choices. (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast the tone of a formal letter to a headteacher with the tone Max uses in his letter to Nova. What makes them different? (3 marks)

4. If Nova were to write back, what might happen if she forgot to include the date? Explain the consequences of this omission. (2 marks)

5. Max mentions he is measuring ferns. If he finds a fern that costs £2.50 per metre to study and he needs 4 metres, how much would it cost? Show your working out. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a post-box located in the middle of a dense, lush rainforest. Include details like vines wrapping around the post and exotic birds watching the post-box from the branches above.



Extension challenge: Imagine you are Nova the owl. Write a formal letter of reply to Max. You must include an address, the date, a formal salutation, at least three sentences answering his questions about the stars, and a correct sign-off. Use at least two words from the word bank in your response.