

Unit 1 Making enquiries

1A Study section

- emails
- opening and closing a message
- subject headings
- asking for and sending information
- email style
- being polite

Initial task

The purpose of the task at the start of each unit is to give students a clear 'benchmark' by which they can judge their progress. They need to do this alone (possibly at home, before the class) and without your support. The task requires the knowledge and abilities which are presented and practised in this section. At the end of the section, they will have an opportunity to look at it again and compare it with what they can do as a result of their work on the section.

Explain to the students that this is simply a way for them to see what they have learned – it is not a test! All the students should be encouraged to do it, but at this stage they do not need to show their work to you or anyone else. You may need to go through the task with them to check that they understand what they have to write. Once they have written their email, they should put it away until the end of the section.

1.1 Intercity Bank ask for catalogues

Read through the questions with the students and then allow them a few minutes to study the emails silently before eliciting the answers.

Answers

- a Intercity Bank are expanding their offices and need new furniture.
- b He is sending some catalogues by normal post and has attached a price list to his email.
- c Orders placed through a website are generally cheaper to administer than orders placed in person, since employee time is not used in taking the order. Many businesses therefore encourage website orders.

1.2 Email: the basics

- 1 Before the students do this exercise, you could look at the emails in 1.1 again with them and point out standard 'form' items. They can then do the exercise to confirm their understanding.

Answers

1 b 2 f 3 e 4 g 5 c 6 a 7 d

- 2 You can ask the students to look at the emails again and decide on their answers to the three questions.

Answers

- a Paragraphs start at the left margin. They are not indented.
 b Paragraphs are separated by a line space.
 c Each email opens with *Dear ...* and closes with *Yours ...* as letters do.

1.3 Dear ... / Yours ...

Read through the table of openings with the students. Stress that a *Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss* opening should be followed by the family name. A general rule for closing an email or letter is: if you know the name, you end *Yours sincerely*; if you do not know the name, you end *Yours faithfully*.

The students can work alone on the practice exercise. While they are working, you can circulate round the class, giving help and guidance where necessary.

Answers

- a Yours sincerely b Yours faithfully c Yours sincerely d Best wishes
 e Yours sincerely f Best wishes g Yours faithfully

1.4 Subject headings

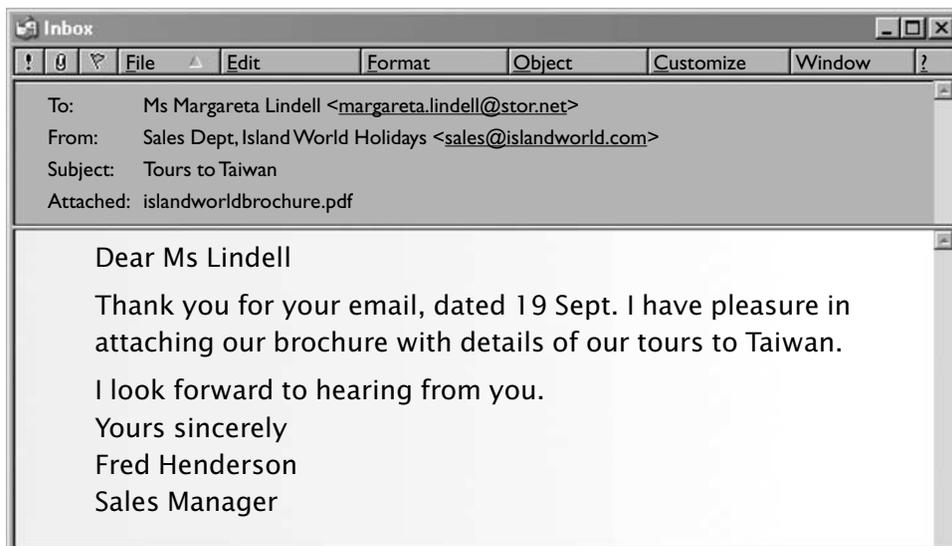
You can first ask the students to look back at the subject headings in 1.1 as examples and then read through the notes here before they do the exercise.

Example answers

- a Vietnam holiday b Spirit ZX98: prices c Charges for a transfer to Japan
 d Woshiba Radios spare parts

1.5 Practice

The email should look like this:



1.6 Asking for and sending information

When the students have finished, elicit the answers.

Example answers

- a Many thanks for your email dated ... I have pleasure in attaching details of our mobile phones that include a camera.
- b Thank you for your enquiry. I am attaching details of the mobile phone accounts that we offer.
- c Please can you send me more information about the new MI300 Henrison mobile phone. Please could you also tell me when it will be available.
- d Please could you send me a list of service centres for your air conditioners.

1.7 Message style

It is important to emphasise that a friendly, polite style is essential in business correspondence. The notes here show some ways in which English-language learners need to be aware of *how* they express themselves.

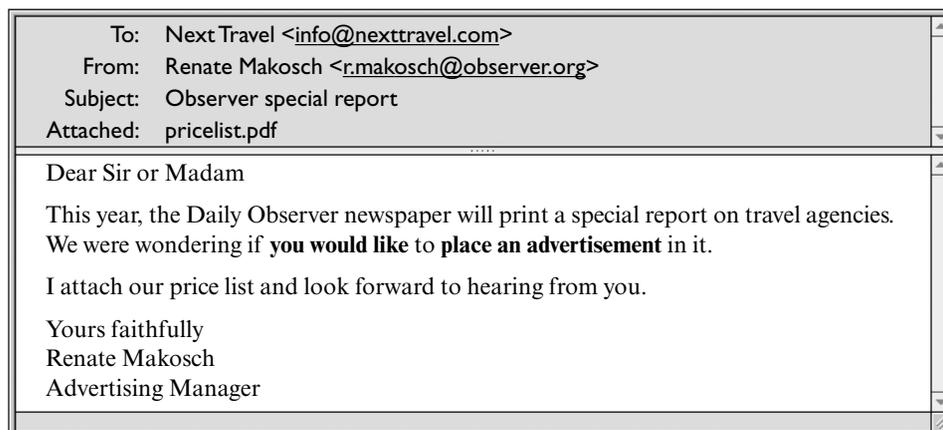
Example answers

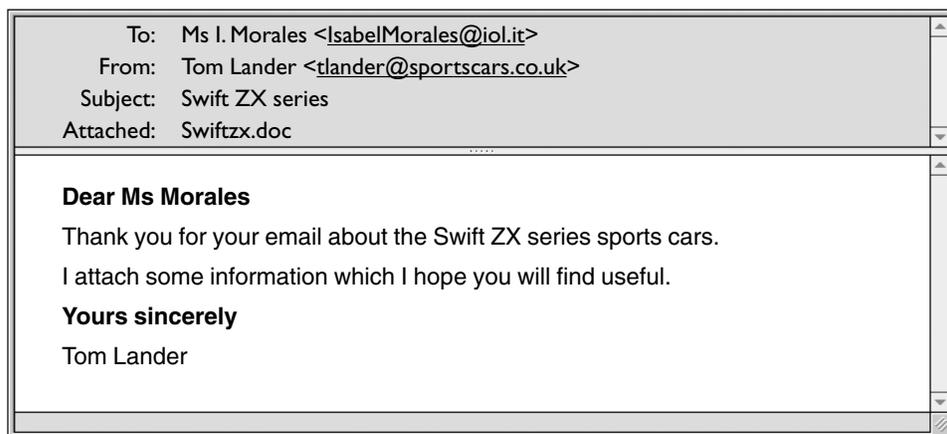
- a Dear Steven
Thank you for your email. I am glad that you received the package without any problems. I am also pleased to hear that you like the photographs.
- b Dear Mr Wilson
Thank you for message of 15 June. I can confirm that we have now sent your order to you.
- c Dear Sir or Madam [*or name*]
Thank you for your email. I have passed your message to Mr Bill Smith, our accounts supervisor, and he will contact you shortly.
Yours faithfully / [*name*]
- d Dear Ms Brown
Please could you let us have the address to send your order to.

1.8 Practice

Answers

- a Observer special report b Yours faithfully c Swift ZX series
- d Tom Lander





1.9 Be polite!

Before you look through this section with the students, you could start a brief discussion on politeness in the students' mother tongue(s). How is politeness shown? How direct can you be in letters or emails in their own language(s)? How necessary is it to say *please* and *thank you*? You could then continue the discussion by looking through the notes in the Student's Book and asking the students if the example sentences would seem polite or impolite in their language.

Example answers

- a Dear Mr Brown
We have received the goods that we ordered from you (order no ...), but unfortunately these arrived very late. We would be very grateful if, in future, you could ensure that our orders arrive on time.
- b Dear Sharon
If it is convenient for you, we could meet next Monday at 1 p.m. I can make a reservation at The Mousetrap restaurant. Unfortunately, I will have to leave at 2 p.m., as I have another appointment.
- c Dear Ms Mustapha
Thank you for your letter. I have now sent the goods to the address you gave. You should receive them on Tuesday.
- d Dear Mr Smith
Please could you send me your price list for I would be grateful if you could send it as soon as possible, as we need the goods urgently.
With thanks ...
- e Dear Sir or Madam
Please could you tell me your price for a Delphi ZX45 modem? I would be grateful if you could give me a fully inclusive price, including tax, packaging and delivery.

Cambridge University Press

0521609763 - Company to Company: A Task-based Approach to Business Emails, Letters and Faxes, Fourth Edition

Andrew Littlejohn

Excerpt

[More information](#)

1.10 Consolidation: a complete email

This final exercise aims to draw together what the students have learned in this section. After you have read through the instructions and the email message, you could discuss what the students need to write and what they need to remember to do. You can look back at the practice exercises in this section to remind them. You could make copies of the blank emails on page 125 for the students to write their message in.

Example answer



What have you learned?

At this point, the students can now make a 'before and after' comparison to see what they have learned. Ask them to compare the email they wrote at the start of the unit ('Test yourself') with the email they have just written. They could work in pairs to do this and go through the points listed, checking against the examples in this section.

1B Activity Misplaced orders section

- 1 Read through the paragraph and questions with the students and get them to look at the notepad.

Answers

- a/b There are no correct answers to the first two questions – the notepad is intended to show that it is not clear who ordered what and that mistakes can easily happen.
 - c The layout of the orders could be improved by clearly placing things in columns (customer, item, quantity, contact).
- 2 The students should compare the goods on the invoices with the notes on the notepad. The questions here are intended to remind the students of some of the points covered in Section A. Let the students make a note of their answers before you go through them.

Answers

- a Again, there are no right or wrong answers, as the notepad is so unclear.
 - b Mr Stefaan Ghislain; Dear Mr Ghislain; Yours sincerely
 - c The Manager (*probably*); Dear Sir or Madam; Yours faithfully
- 3 Read through the instructions with the students, making sure that they understand the situation and what is going to happen. Then divide them into groups and set them working on their first cards. The cards provide a lot of guidance in what to write, but point out to the students that many additional details that they will need (such as names, addresses and order numbers) can be found on the notepad and invoices in this section. As the students begin, move round the class checking that they understand their cards and what they are going to do. See pages 8–12 for further guidance. To increase the sense of authenticity in the activity, you can photocopy the email templates on page 125.

The sequence of cards is as follows:
 Slembroeck BVBA: **61-44-36**
 The Court Hotel: **2-18-58**
 ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd: **30-51-10**

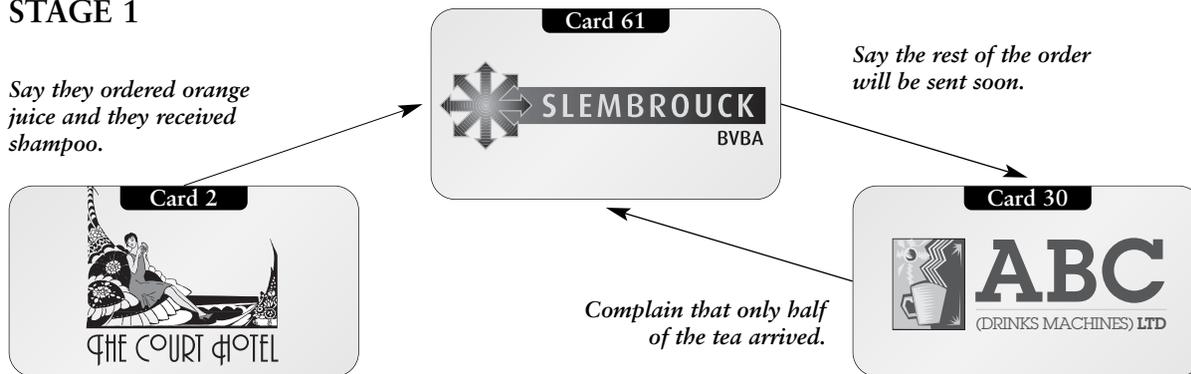
Plot and example messages

For easy reference and to give you an overview, the diagram on page 22 summarises the sequence of cards and how the activity unfolds. Note that once the students have finished working on the first cards, the messages they write may be different from the examples shown on the following pages. This is because they may have already received a message from another group.

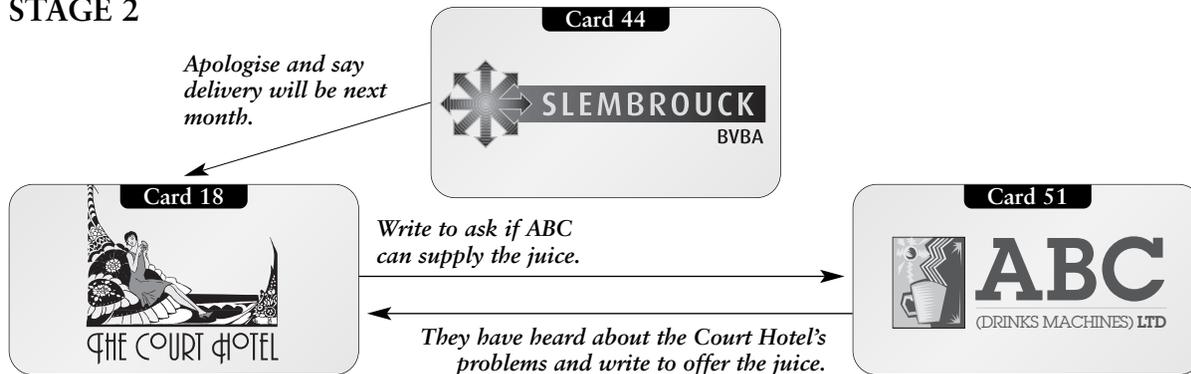
Activity: MISPLACED ORDERS

Basic plot: Slembrouck, a wholesaler's in Belgium, are very disorganised. Wrong or incomplete deliveries have been made to ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd and the Court Hotel. These two companies write to complain, and Slembrouck apologise and promise a discount. This does not help the situation, and Slembrouck lose the business. In the end, the Court Hotel buy from ABC, and ABC cancel all future business with Slembrouck.

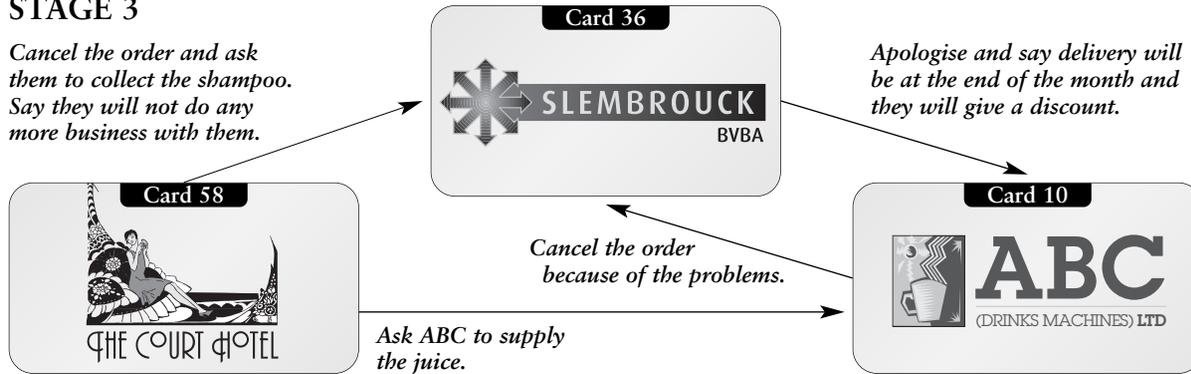
STAGE 1



STAGE 2

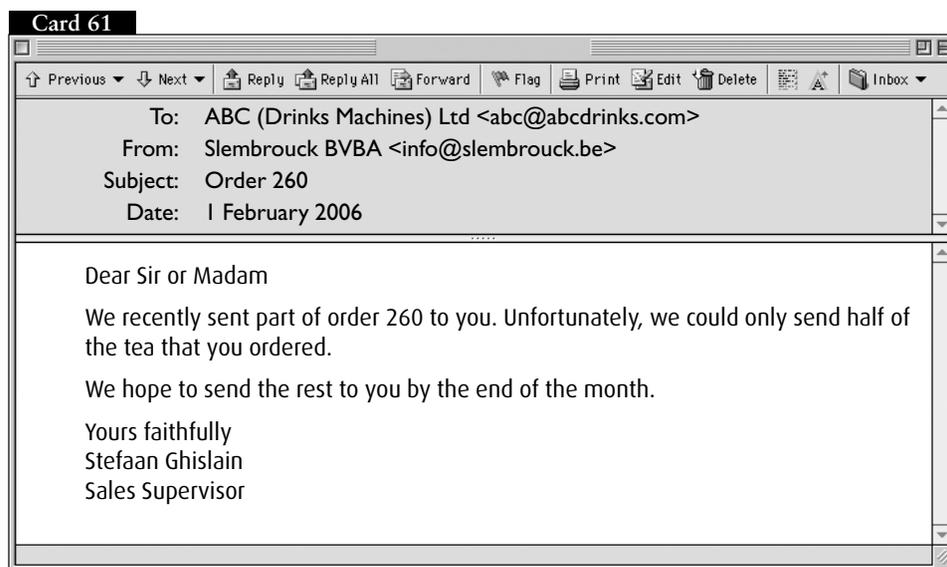


STAGE 3

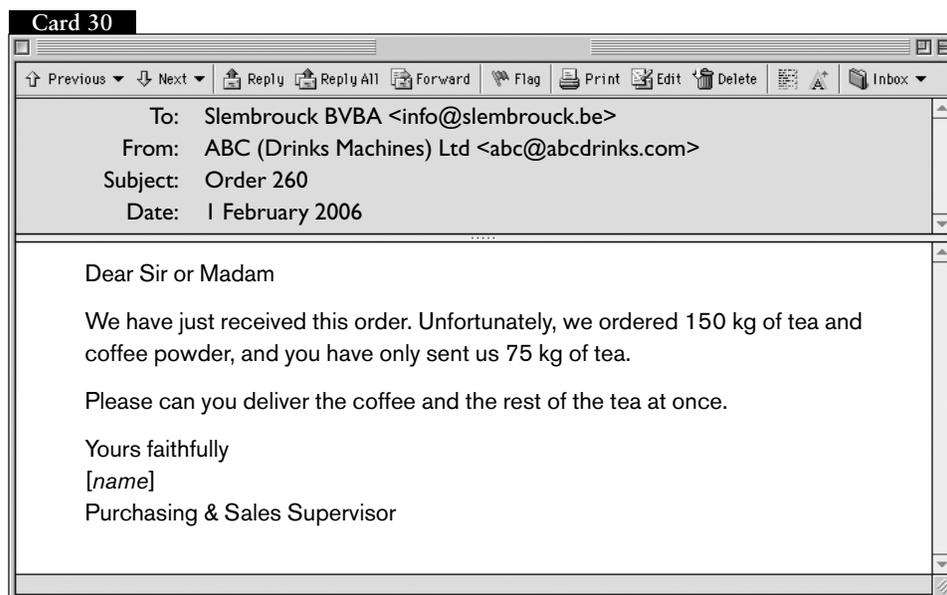


Both the Court Hotel and ABC (Drinks Machines) Ltd have placed orders with Slembrouck BVBA. Unfortunately, Slembrouck are very badly organised and they have sent the wrong items to both companies. In addition, they could only send half the quantity of one of the items that ABC ordered.

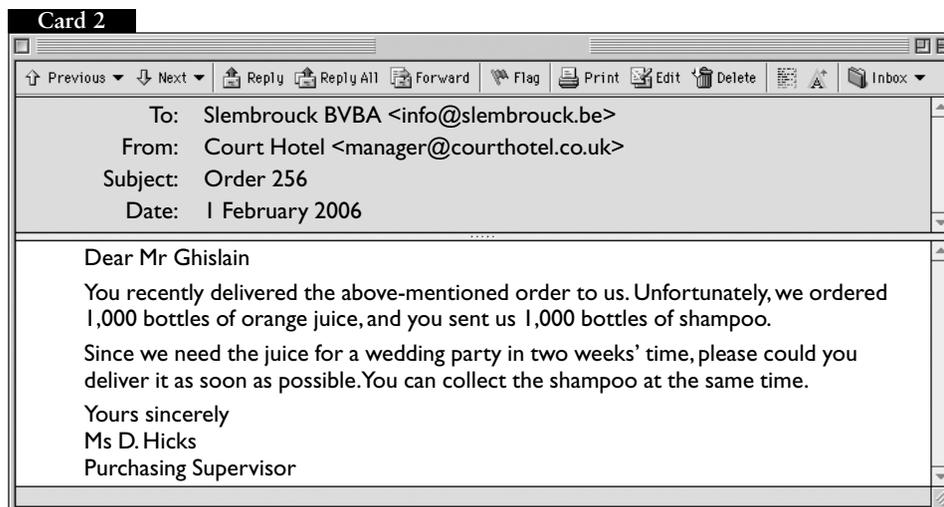
The activity opens with Slembrouck writing to ABC Ltd to say that the rest of their order will be sent soon (card 61).



In actual fact, however, ABC Ltd have not only received only half of the tea that they ordered, but they have also not received any of the coffee (card 30).



Meanwhile, the Court Hotel have received completely the wrong goods, and they write to Slembrouck to complain. They have a contact name on the invoice, so they address the message to Mr Ghislain (card 2).



As each group finish their message and deliver it to the correct group, they move on to their next card.

Note: The groups do not have to move on to their next cards at exactly the same time, i.e. you do not have to wait until all the groups are finished before you tell a group their next card number. It is, however, advisable to try to keep the groups more or less at the same stage as each other, hurrying them up as necessary. (Time is money in business!)

Slembrouck's second card (44) tells them they made a mistake with the order to the Court Hotel. (By now, they may also have received the Court Hotel's message.) They have a contact name (shown on the notepad in Exercise 1), so they address their message to Ms Hicks.



Meanwhile, the manager of ABC Ltd has heard that the Court Hotel need a large quantity of orange juice. ABC therefore write to tell the Court Hotel that they can help them (card 51).



This message probably crosses with an email from the Court Hotel, who write to ABC to find out if they can supply the juice (card 18).

