

Complaint Letters

When writing a letter of complaint:

- explain the reason for your complaint and include relevant details
- tell the reader how you are expecting him/her to resolve the issue
- state why you think your request should be granted

When responding to a letter of complaint:

- begin by acknowledging that the letter of complaint was received, and include the date. You can use phrases like: *Thank you for your letter dated ...*, or *This is in response to your letter of complaint dated ...* or *I am responding to your letter of complaint dated ...*
- summarize the nature of the complaint as you understand it
- if appropriate, include a statement of apology. For example: *We apologize for the problems you had with ...* or *We are very sorry that ...*
- include an explanation of how you have solved (or will solve) the problem in the body of the letter. For example: *I have asked the salesperson to refund your money as soon as possible.*

- 1 Write a letter of complaint for one of the situations below. Exchange your letter with a partner and write a response to his/her letter.



Situation 1

Complaint

You have been having problems with your cable TV service. You called the company and asked them to send a technician to look at it. The technician did not arrive at the scheduled time, and when he did arrive two hours late, he said he could not do the repair. Write a letter of complaint. Include all relevant details. State what you think should be done about the situation.

Response

You are employed in the customer service department of a cable TV company. You have received a complaint from a customer. Respond to the complaint.

Situation 2

Complaint

You would like to cancel a magazine subscription that you have had for the last three years. You called the subscription department and told them to cancel the subscription, but they did not. You have a charge on your credit card statement for the renewal.

Response

You work for a magazine publishing company. You have received a letter of complaint from one of your subscribers. Respond to the complaint. Write a letter to the customer apologizing for the mistake and telling him/her how you will solve the problem.

Grammar in Context: Articles

- 1** Fill in the blanks with definite or indefinite articles (*the, a, or an*). If no article is needed, put \emptyset in the blank.

Dear Mr. Lipias:

I am writing to express my dissatisfaction with ____ summer camp program at ____ Caukley Recreation Center this year. My daughter first attended this camp about four years ago and loved it! ____ children did a lot of fun activities and my daughter had ____ wonderful time. However, in ____ last two years I have seen ____ program at Caukley slowly deteriorate.

My first complaint is about ____ swimming schedule. ____ camp offers two hours of swimming three or four times a week. It seems that on most days, that time period is shortened by sometimes as much as half an hour as ____ form of punishment because some children are misbehaving. All of ____ children are made to sit against the wall in ____ pool area for 30 minutes while ____ counsellors are in ____ pool having fun themselves. This is completely unacceptable.

I am also unhappy with ____ programming offered at ____ camp this year. In previous years, children did ____ lot of arts and crafts. During ____ four weeks that my daughter spent at camp this year, she only did ____ art once when someone from ____ outside organization came to Caukley.

And my final complaint involves ____ behaviour of one of ____ counsellors named Sandy. My daughter told me that this particular counsellor was going through ____ children's lunches looking for ____ leftover snacks in ____ afternoon because she was hungry. My daughter said that ____ counsellor went into her bag without asking her permission. This is extremely unprofessional behaviour.

I am very unhappy with ____ Caukley camp this year and I would like to have my money refunded. I trust you will give this matter your immediate attention and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

- 2** Write a letter in response to the complaint. Proofread your letter and exchange with a partner for peer-editing.

- 3**  Search the Internet for activities or instructions about the use of articles. Review three websites that offer practice activities. Choose your favourite website and in small groups, present reasons you like it.

Possible search terms: *grammar + articles practice; articles + exercises*