

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE TESL PROGRAM
TEACHING SKILLS I

“ I’M WRITING TO COMPLAIN ”
Writing Lesson Plan

BY Larry Bilokrely
December 13, 2006

Writing Activity Plan

Class Description

Based upon the fact that the students will need to be familiar with forming paragraphs. I would target this lesson to a high intermediate level (6 or 7).

Audience

This piece of writing will be directed at the person in the company assigned to handle complaints. Company support person (e.g. a customer support representative).

Communicative Objectives

At the end of the lesson the students will:

- Recognize words related with forming complaints
- Develop skills in producing letters of complaint

Text:

E-mail message. The format of the body of the message would be the letter of complaint format.

Materials

Handouts, chart paper, markers, overhead.

Pre-Writing Activities

Explanation

Last winter I decided to go on a vacation. I went to a travel agency. The travel agent said that the weather in Costa Rica was wonderful and he could get me a deal to stay in a wonderful modern hotel. However when I got there here is what the hotel looked like. [Hold up picture 2]. On top of that this is what the weather was like. [Hold up picture 1]. I talked to the manager at the hotel and he said that it is like this **every year** at this time.

When I returned home I was upset. I decided that I wanted to complain. I sent this letter via email to the travel agency. [Put up email on overhead]. In the letter, I told the company I was upset and I wanted them to refund part of the cost of my vacation. This type of letter is called a **letter of complaint**.

Class Survey

1. Hand out survey sheet.
2. Instructions to class: "This sheet contains 4 questions. Ask each person in the class the questions. Put a check mark beside their answer to the question"
3. Pick 2 students to perform the interview in front of the class.

4. Have the class survey each other
5. Put the survey on the overhead and get the answers from the class.

Mixer and matching

Form the class into groups based upon the answer to question 1. If there are too many in a group subdivide the group. Since they are going to be peer-editing, it might be advisable to keep the groups as an odd number.

Group Brainstorm

1. Hand out Group Answer Form
2. Instructions to class “Each person in the group will tell the story of their problem. The group will decide which of the stories to use. The group will fill out the form with the information about the problem they chose.
3. Ask someone to repeat instructions. Clarify if necessary.
4. Have groups fill out sheet.
5. Monitor for understanding.

Vocabulary Sheet

1. Hand out Vocabulary Sheet
2. Instructions to class: “In your groups, select the correct definitions.”
3. Have groups do Vocabulary Handout
4. Take up answers as a class. Answer key: 1a, 2b, 3c, 4c, 5a, 6b

Explanation of Form of Letter of Complaint

If you feel you have not been served well by a business, you should tell them. If it is very serious or you are not be listened to, you can send them a letter of complaint to see if your problem can be fixed. In creating a letter of complaint for distribution by email, you need to include the following parts.

Put up chart containing the information from the letter of complaint.

Put Email back up on overhead.

As you explain each step mark it on the overhead (See Email with Parts Indicated for example)

During Writing Activities

Instructions to the class

In your groups you are going to

1. You will write out a draft letter of complaint for the problem we have chosen. You will be using the format we discussed.
2. The group will edit the draft using the checklist I will be handing out
3. Correct any errors.
4. Create an email and send it to me. Hand in the draft and the edit checklist. Make sure everyone's name are on the sheets

Confirm comprehension of instructions

Ask each group to write the instructions for one step on the board. If they are unable ask the class. If class is not sure re-state the instructions differently.

Perform Writing Activity

1. Distribute sheet. Have groups start activity
2. Monitor Activity – Ensure that people are following format and if any additional vocabulary is needed.
3. Handout Checklist. Review elements on the checklist.
4. Review Model using checklist.
5. Review any vocabulary that people don't understand.
6. Have groups complete the checklist
7. Have Groups correct errors found in checklist
8. Have groups put corrected letter into an email and send it you. Remember to have them send email to your address.

Post-Writing Activities

1. Have them hand in the Group Answer Form, draft and the checklist
2. Have each group read their letter to the class
3. Have the class vote on the problem that needs to be solved first.
4. Ask class if they think you got a satisfactory resolution to your problem
5. Have the class vote.
6. For Homework have each person in the class think of how they would respond to the email.

Picture 1



Picture 2



Email

Larry Bilokrely

To: welietoyoutravelagency.com
Subject: Unacceptable Travel Experience

123 My Street Rd.
Toronto On
Y7Y 2Y3
Dec. 9, 2006

Customer Complaint Department
We Lie To You Travel Agency
1111 Nowhere Ave.
Toronto ON
X5X 6X1

Re: Unsatisfactory Vacation to Costa Rica

Dear Sir/Madam:

On January 12th of this year, I went on a vacation to Costa Rica arranged for me by your representative Slick Sam. He assured me that the hotel I would be staying was of 5 star quality. He also said that the weather at this time of year was marvellous and it hardly ever rains.

When I arrived at my destination I was shocked. The hotel was little more than a shack. The facilities didn't exist. On top of that I discovered that it always rains in Costa Rica at this time of year.

I am thoroughly disappointed and angry. It is my belief that your company through your employee deceived me.

Therefore I would like some form of compensation for my disastrous time. I would like you to refund some part of the cost of my trip.

I appreciate your time and I look forward to seeing my problem being resolved.

Yours sincerely

Larry Bilokrely
Home: 416-123-4567
Cell: 416-987-6543
Email: greatteacher@school.on.ca

Email with Parts Indicated

Larry Bilokrely

To: welietoyoutravelagency.com
Subject: Unacceptable Travel Experience

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Yours sincerely

Larry Bilokrely
Home: 416-123-4567
Cell: 416-987-6543
Email: greatteacher@school.on.ca

Class Survey

1. Did you or someone you know have one of the following bad experiences?
 - a. A trip that didn't go well
 - b. A small appliance (for example a coffee maker) that didn't work well?
 - c. A salesperson that treated you very badly
 - d. Some other experience

2. How did you complain?
 - a. I sent a letter in the mail.
 - b. I called them on the phone
 - c. I went back to the store or business to complain
 - d. I didn't complain

3. If you did complain, what was the response?
 - a. The company apologized
 - b. The company gave me my money back
 - c. Both a & b
 - d. The company refused to do anything

4. If you didn't complain, what was the reason?
 - a. I didn't want to cause trouble
 - b. The company had gone out of business
 - c. I didn't think it was worth the effort
 - d. Some other reason

5. Were you satisfied with the response
 - a. Yes, completely satisfied
 - b. No, I think the company could do more

Group Answer Form

This sheet will contain the problem the group decided to work on.

What was the problem?

What was the name of the company?

What is the address of the company?

What is the email address of the company?

When did the problem happen?

How do you want the problem fixed?

Describe the problem in 1 sentence.

Editing Checklist

1	Did the letter have the address of the person writing the letter?	
2	Was the name of the person at the company listed along with their title? If not was the letter directed to the Customer Complaint Department?	
3	Did the letter say when the problem happened? If the problem happened on a trip, did the letter say when the person went on vacation? If the problem was with a product that was bought did the letter say when the product was brought?	
4	Did the letter say what the problem was?	
5	Did the letter say what they wanted the company to do?	
6	Was the past tense used when the problem was explained?	
7	Did the letter include the person's name?	
8	Was there a statement saying what the letter was about?	
9	Was the subject of the email filled in with what the email was about?	

Form of Letter of Complaint

[This should be put on chart paper]

1. Email address of Company
2. Subject indicating what the email is about
3. Your address and Date
4. Contact information for the company which includes:
 - a. Name of the person at the company you wish to contact, along with their title (for example John Smith President). If you don't have a person address it to the "Customer Complaints Department"
 - b. The name and address of the company
5. Statement of what the letter is about
6. Greeting
7. A short introduction paragraph: "I have been a customer in several years...."
8. A brief summary paragraph of your problem or complaint. State only the facts, as you saw them: "The lamp I bought will not turn on."
9. A brief paragraph stating why your problem should be fixed.
10. A brief paragraph saying what action you would like the company to take. Be specific: "I want a refund of \$44.59"
11. A brief paragraph stating that you are waiting for their response as to how they are going to resolve the problem.
12. Closing
13. Your name and any contact information

Vocabulary Handout

1. Complaint
 - a. Statement of unhappiness
 - b. Statement of regret
 - c. Statement of completeness
2. Resolution
 - a. A problem that happens again
 - b. An answer to a problem
 - c. To solve a problem again
3. Compensation
 - a. A type of writing
 - b. The finishing of something
 - c. Something that makes up for something else
4. Representative
 - a. A person that give presents away that they have received
 - b. A person that gives a presentation again
 - c. A salesperson for a company
5. Unsatisfactory
 - a. Not acceptable
 - b. A type of factory
 - c. Standing up
6. 5 Star
 - a. A type of decoration
 - b. Top- quality
 - c. A grouping of stars