

Guided Writing Teacher's Notes

Reading

1 To make the letter more meaningful for your students, bring a magazine photo of a young woman. Explain that her name is Carla and they are going to read a letter from her and they need to decide what type of letter it is. Students discuss their ideas in pairs, then elicit a few answers and ask students to give reasons before checking the answer in open class.

Answers

It is a letter asking for help.

2 Ask students to look at how the letter is organized and then to number the stages 1–5 in order. Students discuss their ideas in pairs before checking answers with the class. Remind your students that an informal letter to a friend should start *Dear* (+ first name) and end *Best wishes / Regards / All the best / Love*. In an informal letter, contractions (*I'm, you're*) are commonly used and the writing style is conversational.

Answers

a 4 b 1 c 5 d 3 e 2

3 Ask students to check (✓) the lies that Carla told her friend and then compare their ideas in pairs. Check answers with the class.

Answers

2, 3, and 5

Language

4 Ask students to look at the language box on reported speech. Recap the main rules of use. When reporting questions, the word order does not follow question word order, it follows the word order we use in statements. We don't use question marks in reported questions. Reporting words are usually followed by *if* or *why, where, who, what, how*. A question starting *Would you like ...?* is reported as *He / She asked me if I would like ...* or *He / She asked me if I wanted ...*. The tense of the main verb often backshifts (simple present – simple past, simple past – past perfect etc.). Ask your students to look back at Carla's letter and underline examples of reported questions. Check answers with the class.

Answers

Dear Emily,

I'm writing to ask for some advice. You helped Jemma and I really hope you can do the same for me.

This is my problem. I recently met a new friend. He lived in Thailand for four years and speaks five languages, including Thai. He plays bass in a jazz band. He is really interesting, but I have a small problem.

When we met, he asked me if I liked Thai food and I said I did. But I don't. Then he asked me if I had traveled much. I lied again and told him about my travels in South America. He wanted to know where I had been, and I told him I had lived in Colombia. When he asked if I spoke Spanish, I lied again and said I did. I didn't think we would see

each other again, but he's just called and asked me if I would like to go out with him and his friends this evening. They want to go for a Thai meal and then to the movies to see an Argentinian movie – in Spanish! What do you think I should do? I want to go, but I've told so many lies. What would you do if you were me?

Best wishes,
Carla

5 Ask students to complete the five questions in direct speech. These are the direct speech forms of the reported questions they just underlined in the text. Allow students enough time to do the exercise and then discuss their ideas with a partner. Check answers in open class.

Answers

1 Do you like Thai food?

2 Have you traveled much?

3 Where have you been?

4 Do you speak Spanish?

5 Would you like to go out with me and my friends this evening?

Draw students' attention to the language box on asking for advice. Point out that these are very common ways of asking someone for advice, and you would expect to see at least one of these in a letter asking for advice.

Writing

6 Ask students to write a letter to a friend asking for advice. Ask them to read the situation and then to decide how to organize the letter. Encourage them to refer to Carla's letter, as well as the checklist. Give students enough time to do the writing. You could also set this part as homework.

Checklist

Below is a quick checklist for you, the teacher, to use when looking at your students' letters.

There is also a quick checklist on the students' page. Ask your students to look at this, read their letters, and check (✓) the boxes if they think they have remembered to do / use the different things.

She / He has ...

- used reporting speech when referring to earlier conversations.
- started and ended the letter in an appropriate style.
- used contractions and informal language.
- asked for advice in an appropriate way.
- completed the task (i.e. topic focus).