

# A formal letter

*I can write a letter of complaint.*

**1 SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Student A: Read the first letter. Student B: Read the second letter. Ask and answer the questions.

- 1 What is the name of the gadget?
- 2 Where did she buy it?
- 3 When did she buy it?
- 4 What is the problem with it?
- 5 What does she want the company to do?

11 Wood Close  
Newcastle NE13 7TY

14th May 2007

Customer Services Department  
Zenon Electronics  
London SW12 7OP

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to report a fault with the new Zenon ZK400 MP3 player that I bought from The Gadget Shop in Newcastle on 28th April.

It sometimes stops in the middle of a track. To make it start, I have to turn the MP3 player off and then turn it on again.

I am returning the MP3 player to you with this letter. I would be grateful if you could repair the fault. If this is not possible, could you please send me a new MP3 player?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

*Madeline Connor*

Madeline Connor

23 Marston Rd  
Bolton BO12 4FG

3rd January 2008

Customer Services Department  
Computers Online  
Manchester M5 5HJ

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to complain about an UltraFast modem that I recently bought from your website.

When it arrived, I connected it to my PC, but it does not work. I cannot access the Internet or send e-mails.

I am enclosing the modem together with the receipt. Could you please replace the modem as soon as possible?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

*Victoria Swift*

Victoria Swift

**2** Read the letters. In which paragraph does each writer:

- 1 explain the problem in detail?
- 2 say why she is writing the letter?
- 3 say what she wants the company to do?

**3** Complete the rules for formal letters with the words in the box.

Dear Sir or Madam    date    full name    Yours faithfully

- 1 Write the <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ in full, e.g. *14th May 2007*.
- 2 Start the letter *Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss*, etc. if you know the name of the person you are writing to, or <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ if you don't.
- 3 Do not use colloquial language or slang, e.g. *My mum bought me a CD player, and it's rubbish*.
- 4 Finish the letter with *Yours sincerely* if you used the person's name at the start, or <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ if you didn't.
- 5 If you type the letter, include your <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ at the end of the letter after your signature.

**4** Read the writing tip below. Underline the set phrases in the letters.

### Writing tip

We often use these set phrases in formal letters:

*I am writing to ...*

*I would be grateful if you could ...*

*Could you please ...?*

*I look forward to hearing from you.*

*I am enclosing ...*

**5** Imagine that you have bought one of the electronic devices on page 54. Then choose a fault from the ideas in the box below or invent your own.

you can't turn it off    the pictures are black and white  
there's no sound    it's very slow    you can't switch it on  
you can't play your old CDs / DVDs / games on it

**6** Write a formal letter of 130–150 words to the manufacturer using your ideas from exercise 5. Include this information:

- Say what the gadget is called, and where and when you bought it.
- Say what the problem is.
- Tell the company you are returning the gadget. Ask them to repair it or send you a new one.

### Check your work

Have you

- followed the rules for formal letters in exercise 3?
- included all the information in the task in exercise 6?
- checked your spelling, punctuation and grammar?
- written 130–150 words?